CANADA WEST.

Beautiful Victoria—Gold Mining Not All—Mr. Earle's Experience in Cariboo.

A Strong Imperial Fortress—The Chinese Quarter—A Man of Many Wives —Opium Smoking.

(No. 10.)

Vancouver, July 17.—My last letter said something about the gold fields of British Columbia. Further letters will have more to say about them. But it will never do to suppose that British Columbia is a gold producing province alone. A good deal of wealth has been accumulated by the residents of the Pacific coast. Much more is made every day, and the gold mines have no more to do with it than several other industries and interests. The largest fortune made by one man in the province was made out of coal, or at least with coal as a foundation and main source. The sportive salmon has made some men rich as wealth goes in this country, and I am inclined to think that the men who have made the most in recent years may have been the lumbermen. Of course money has been gathered and lost in trade. Also of course the gold mining industry has been, with the fisheries, the forest and the farm, the support of trade.

Most of the men of the sixties have had experience in gold mining. The later settler may know nothing about the personal hardships of a pioneer mining camp, but it is pretty hard to find a man who has not had some little stake in a gold or silver "proposition" somewhere in the province. Mr. Earle, one of the representatives of Victoria in the house of commons, was a pioneer. He is a comfortable looking elderly man now, but it is plain enough to look at him that he could take good care of himself in any gang of men when he was younger. He was an Ontario lad who had come across the Panama isthmus and up the coast at the time of the gold craze. He went into the Carriboo country with an "outfit," working his way slowly enough with the teams and spending some two months on the march. The first two trips gave young Earle no profit. In fact he came out each season poorer than he went in, though he hired out part of the time for ten dollars a day. This was half spent in buying food at the prices which prevailed. One man he knew spent his whole ten dollars a day for food and then did not get all he wanted. Mr. Earle in his third year tried trading. He got some supplies, such as were needed in a mining camp, and having procured teams he conveyed them up the Fraser river near to the scene of certain mining operations. About the time he seemed to have struck a really good thing some enterprising man found a way to force a boat to the spot over the rapids of the Columbia and was able to deliver supplies much cheaper than Earle could do it. The young trader disposed of his goods without profit and began the next year no richer than at first. Finally he got a good partnership in commerce, and in time he became one of the leading merchants on the coast. He is now said to be in good circumstances and is interested in the salmon industry and many other things. Mr. Earle has seen Victoria, which is regarded here as an old city, grow from a small cluster of cabins to a city of 20,000 people.

And a handsome city it has come to be. Vancover has as many people. Vancouver is newer and more stirring. But Victoria with her calmer ways, her greater wealth and larger leisure class, possesses an attraction like some of the towns in the mother land. Vancouver was a forest twelve years ago or so, and is now an almost treeless town. Victoria has reached the age when shade trees planted by the people have had time to grow. Victoria is, moreover, the capital of the province, which supremacy Vancouver seems somewhat to resent, though Vancouver does not need such assistance to vindicate her position as a future distributing centre for a great part of the Pacific coast. Vancouver made a hard fight for the seat at the head of the table a few years ago when new public buildings had to be built. The dispute was settled in favor of Victoria, though even then the mainland must have had a larger population than the island on which Victoria is situated. It will be many years before such a contest can occur again. The new government building provides for a great future. The house is not quite completed, but it is known that it will cost a million dollars. There are few finer buildings on the continent, and it is hard to believe that the white population of the province to which it belongs was not more at the time the work was commenced than that of Prince Edward Island.

Yet whatever doubt there may be as to the wisdom of building at Victoria there are no two opinions about the propriety of building a large and costly house. The people of British Columbia have unbounded faith in the future of their province, as indeed they have a right to be. The government of British Columbia has its own printing establishment, which does very good work. The province has a valuable library and a museum that is well worthy of a visit. The mineral department is to be separated and made an exhibit of itself hereafter, and no doubt it will receive great additions within a few years. The collection of wild beasts, fishes and reptiles, has been made with great care, and it is well worth while to notice with what artistic skill the curator, Mr. Fannin, has mounted the specimens. Mr. Fannin is an artist as well as a naturalist. He is also an authority on the customs of the native races and has in one of his rooms an interesting and instructive collection of Indian curiosities.

Victoria has a harbor of its own good enough for most purposes. The steamers of the Canadian Pacific line to China and Japan, as well as those for Australia, call here. Regular communication is kept up with San Francisco and with Alaska. Victoria is the headquarters of the sealing fleet, and is largely interested in the salmon industry. The largest wholesale business done in the province centres here, though Vancouver is coming rapidly to the front as a distributing point. The town has in the Driard one of the best hotels in Canada. It makes some boast of its opera house, and its park is well worth a visit. The eastern man will see with surprise how many varieties of trees and plants flourish on this coast that cannot be grown in the same latitudes on the Atlantic. The climate is described as the same as the south of England.

But if Victoria has a good harbor of its own, the empire has a much finer one four miles away, at Esquimault. There is an outer harbor well protected which connects by a narrow and deep passage with an inner basin large enough to hold the British fleet. This water has been appropriated for her majesty's navy. A first class cruiser and three gunboats were lying in this harbor when we were there. The dock yard is well equipped with all that modern naval science calls for in such places. The guns and other outfit necessary to convert the C. P. R. ships into cruisers lie there ready to be taken on board. Spare anchors, spare guns, and all the machinery of war are stored in readiness for instant use. The magazine is seen on an island on a point well out of reach across the harbor. The passage by which the basin is entered is protected by masked batteries. They are so well masked that even the explorer on shore cannot learn much about them. Torpedoes are planted carefully in the bed of the harbor. A system of signals discloses to the man who touches the button the moment when the enemy's ship is over one of these machines. The man presses the knob, and the ship without further notice starts out in a new direction, travelling by sections.

One of the numerous buildings belonging to this navy yard is a shed, which a marine railway connects with a ship or berth. Up this tramway are hauled the torpedo boats, two of which we found in the shed under shelter. They are wicked looking craft enough, and would appear to be rather uncomfortable for long voyages. They were brought here however by a crew who sailed them up the Pacific coast in rough weather. We were permitted to inspect the machinery by which these instruments of war go about their deadly work. The shed contained a great number of torpedoes, some belonging to the torpedo boats and some to the ships in the harbor. The officer who has charge of this department showed us a dozen different varieties, pointing out the modern improvements and changes and discussing the whole matter with the authority of an expert.

Her majesty has not yet joined the W. C. T. U. The word "Rum," in conspicuous characters, is found over one of the storehouses at this depot. Grog is still served daily to the men in the ships of war, unless they choose to take three farthings per day allowance in lieu of it. And this we were told very few of the gallant defenders do.

Everything about these imperial docks looks substantial. The masonry seems to be as solid as the neighboring hills. The woodwork is built to stay. The absence of sham and pretense is shown by the manner of the men who work about the machine shops, the hearty laugh of the marine as he pulls ashore in the boat, the solidity of the work that has been done, the frankness with which the world is informed that the sailors and soldiers are furnished with rum.

Captain Devereux, who is in charge of the dry dock, told us about the navy yard. He showed us also the equipment of the Esquimault dry dock a structure of which the country heard something during the McGreevy investigation of 1891. The firm of Larkin, Connolly & Co. made a quarter of a million in the construction of this dock, but the greater part of it was honest profit, due to the fact that the firm obtained excellent stone at less than half the cost that was expected by them and their competitors. And this at least must be said that the Connollys built a fine dock. Captain Devereux is a man worth knowing. He commanded transport ships in the Crimean war and saw service in many places before he became agent of the department of marine on this coast.

The imperial government made a good contract when free dockage was secured for ships of the navy in consideration of the payment of part of the original work. The admiralty has had occasion to use the dock somewhat extensively, and the payment of the regular rates would have been a serious bill of expense. As it is her majesty pays well. It is said that as much as five hundred thousand pounds a year of good imperial money is expended on this naval station, and that the intention is to make it one of the imperial strongholds. The thing is easily possible, for nature has done a large part of the work. It is important, for Esquimault is the point from which the navy would operate on the whole Pacific coast in the event of a war.

Victoria is entitled to mention as containing the largest Chinese population to be found in any Canadian city. The time has been when nearly half the population of the city was Chinese. When construction work on the Onderdonk contracts of the C. P. R. ceased the Chinese navvies flocked to the capital. At one time the Chinese population of Victoria was hardly less than eight thousand. It is but three thousand now, and these occupy as much room as three times their number did ten years ago. Yet they seem to be sufficiently crowded still. Through the favor of Mr. Earle an officer was found to show us the Chinese quarter in the evening. We visited some places where the happy orientals were playing some of their gambling games. We saw opium smokers "hitting the pipe," we visited the Joss house and saw some of the retail stores.

To the cursory observer the Chinese population is still packed close. They appear to be dwelling by dozens and scores in very small apartments. The shelf where four of them lay smoking opium might be eight feet one way by four the other, while the remainder of the room, which was kitchen, parlor and all the rest of the home, might be eight feet square. One sad looking smoker got his pipe fired and sucked up the smoke greedily. Then his pained look disappeared, and a smile dawned on the corner of his mouth. It spread until his whole face was glorified. When his pipe was smoked he handed it to his neighbor and became loquacious. It was not hard to follow the pigeon English which he addressed to our guide in response to his question: "Snatch 'em pipe much now?" No, no muchee, times bad, no money buy opium." He showed the little box from which he had taken the little portion of opium for his pipe. It contained six smokes and cost "four bittle." "When lots money smoke all that one day. Now one smoke one day." His fifty cents worth of opium now has to last him a week instead of a day.

Then Sam fell to moralizing, his face still illumined with the angelic smile. "Opium vely bad. If no smoke now feel bad here," puting his hand on his stomach. Then he held up his hands, causing them to tremble, and explained how the opium smoker's limbs shook when he went without the drug. Sam seemed disposed to discuss the effects of bad habits at great length, as he lay on his couch apparently half asleep, but we left him smiling still in his divine ecstacy, while his companions lay langourously beside him half dreaming, like Tennyson's Lotus Eaters of the old days and the old home beyond the seas.

We strolled into the premises of a more opulent Chinese. He kept a fair assortment of wares. Up stairs he has a cigar making establishment. He kindly offered us each a cigar of his own make. My impression is that only a small piece was smoked from the end of those four cigars, but I would not like to say anything to interfere with the trade of the manufacturer. This merchant also made complaint of hard times. Presently there appeared a neighbor attired in the best of Chinese clothes. He was a merchant also and well known in the English part of the city. His English was perfect, and except for a slight hesitation while waiting for a word his language would not indicate his foreign origin. From his point of view bad times largely resulted from a reduction of the United States duty on opium. The duty was formerly twelve dolars per pound. The drug could then be bought for some seven dollars in Victoria, and the smuggler cleared ten dollars or so by shipping it over the line. But now the duty is so low that the business does not pay for the risk. Then there are no great public works going on, and those Chinese capitalists whose business it is to buy or lease their countrymen and then hire them out by hundreds to contractors have lost a chance to make money in that way.

This intelligent Chinaman was asked where his wife and family were. "They have gone back to China," he said. "I have now," he gravely added, "two wives in China, and not long ago I married another who lives here." He was chaffed a little about his matrimonial extravagance, but smoked his cigar quietly and then explained: "The Chinese have an idea that when a woman is forty or fifty years old she is no longer active enough to attend to matters about the house. They consider that it is more—more—convenient to have a young and strong woman to manage things." The man of affairs added that his nine children were also in China, presumably getting educated.

On all this coast there is a strong feeling that the Chinese should not be allowed in the country. Yet those who proclaim this doctrine the most energetically employ Chinamen to do their work. Many families employ them constantly as servants. The best are reputed to be faithful and honest, zealous for the interests of their employers, always at hand when wanted. They are clean and are good cooks. They receive about twenty dollars per month as domestic servants, and probably do as well at that as at anything. But there remains this problem, which must be solved sooner or later: "If Chinamen are employed in the same work as English laborers and artisans how can their competitors preserve a standard of life higher than the Chinamen? A Chinese coal miner or gold miner or cannery operative, or fisherman, or railway navvy can live on a dollar a week. How can an Englishman who competes with him in the same vocation live like a Christian, bring up a family, pay his taxes and preserve a standard of life that is necessary to his comfort and self-respect? The Chinese question is likely to demand the best powers of our statesmen before it is finally settled for this country.

S. D. SCOTT.

Rossland, July 24.—In going westward from the Rocky Mountains the run down the Columbia is made by the side of a fast flowing stream, and the usual course is followed by the railway in running on the margin of that stream. In all the work of construction through these successive ranges of mountains, the railway engineer follows nature. Where some convulsion and natural readjustment has made the waterway, there the railway takes its course.

After following the Columbia, along the base of the Selkirks, the while seeing a favorable chance to attack that chain, the railway suddenly leaves the river, to follow a stream which falls into it. Up the side of this stream, and then up the side of another which connects with it, the railway goes, continually gaining higher and higher along the steep shoulders of the hill, until it crosses the brooks running down these shoulders at tremendous heights, finally going over Stony Creek, 300 feet above the waters of the torrent flowing below. Now nearing the summit of the pass, we find a constant succession of snow sheds, built of such heavy timbers that they can resist the weight of avalanches which in the Selkirks have been a great source of danger, delay and expense. At the summit of the Selkirks there is a profusion of mountain peaks and glaciers on all sides, some of the rocky faces on each side of the track, and only a small distance apart, rising one and a half miles in almost vertical height. On the north these higher peaks form an empitheatre high among the clouds, with a sculptured cornice of glacier surmounting and overhanging the curving walls. Now the descent to the Pacific commences, and a rapid run of two miles brings the traveller to the Glacier House. Here under the shadow of peaks over 8,000 feet high, with one of the largest glaciers to be found in any temperate zone almost within reach, and plainly within sight, with snow-clad peaks in all directions, and with a glacier steam falling like a veil of lace thousands of feet, directly in front, are the most level green lawns, the most delightful fountains, the grand and mighty trees of the famed forests of British Columbia, and a charming home-like chalet hotel. Everything that is grand and sublime in nature, and everything that is bright and delightful and tempting in civilized life, brought together and made conveniently accessible to man by the wizard-like power of the C. P. R., for whose courage and care and attention nothing is too great and nothing too small.

From Glacier to Revelstoke the scenery is still grand, and the ingenuity of the engineering is always a source of pleasure, but really in the end one realises that there is a surfeit of grandeur, and it will suffice to say that to the city of Victoria the traveller is never out of sight of snow-clad peaks. Were it not that the constant succession of views of mountain scenery, unequalled elsewhere in the world, have in a measure exhausted the capacity of the sight-seer, then most surely the wondrous beauty and interest of the course of the railway down the canon of the Fraser from North Bend to Yale, would well reward the voyager for a crossing of the continent. The ranges of hills and mountains above the Fraser are great in height, and they are splendid in beauty. The hills are covered with mosses, bushes, trees; and such trees. The rocks, where exposed, are of so many softened and harmonizing shades of yellow, brown and red, that in a way the sense of immense height is overpowered by the charming features of the scene. Of the trees of British Columbia it is not safe to speak. They are so large in girth and in height that the figures seem almost incredible. In all parts of this province the vegetation is profuse, and the growth reached is immense. High up on the hills are groves, forests of trees, four, five, six feet in diameter, while exceptional trees reach a diameter of 16 feet and a height of 300 feet. In the park at Vancouver may be seen trees 12 feet through and over 200 feet high. The forest wealth of British Columbia is incalculable, and it seems shocking to see these magnificent trees perishing by thousands through forest fires and through the absolute necessity of burning them to clear the land.

The constant presence of great features of natural beauty or grandeur, or of the profusion with which the earth in this rich province produces, is not allowed to absorb the undivided attention of the traveller. In all human experience there is a mixed and endless variety. The serious, the grave, the tragic, are relieved, enlivened and made tolerable by the constant play of incidents, trivial, humorous and entertaining. In British Columbia you are not allowed long to forget that you are in the land of gold. The conversation of your fellow passengers, and their history, where you learn it, tell you that the passion for wealth brings nearly all these people, who are gathered literally from all parts of the globe, into this country. There are some tourists, there are some sight-seers, there are certain globe-trotters; but the mass of the travellers are here on business. Naturally the great subject of talk is mining. If you who are a visitor be anxious to listen and to learn, you will assuredly come to share the opinions attributed to Mark Twain, who somewhere says "a mine is a hole in the ground and its owner is a liar," and again, "there are grades of liars, for instance, there is the liar and the d—d liar, and the mining expert." After you have had some experience of the stories lavished upon you, if you prove a good listener, you will feel that the classification as above is not a bad attempt to express the different capacities of different performers. I would suggest that the prospector might be classed with the expert.

The business of talking mines is carried on apparently by all. To do the matter justice and with the perfection of finish which is needed to distinguish the old-timer from the tenderfoot, there is required certain stage properties, as it were, and a certain vocabulary. The properties are not expensive and not cumbrous necessarily, and the vocabulary also is not expensive, and when acquired may be easily conveyed. Your outfit as an exponent of mining news consists of rocks, not titanic rocks, nor yet tiny rocks, but rocks of about the size produced in a hand-made lot of macadam. You will do well if you can arrange to have one or two of the smaller fragments carefully rolled up in paper and secreted in a pocket, or in a small bag, which may be of woven stuff, but which is much more effective if of leather, and old and black, evidently the companion of many a weary and sweat-compelling journey; why that is really a finished style. Your language must be technical and exact. You will do well to aim with practice, to speak easily, fluently, familiarly, without fear of reefs, ledges, lodes and veins; of the hanging wall; of topes, tunnels and shutes; of diorite and dolomite and molybdomite, and of the iron capping; but above all, and beyond all, you must be perfectly at home with propositions. You must know how to say easily and carelessly, as though it were your daily pleasure and pastime and duty to consider such matters, that at Rossland there are certain gold propositions; that at Slocom certain silver propositions are being considered or developed; with practice you can deal with silver-lined propositions; and when you have reached perfection a gold-silver-copper proposition will fall easily from your lips. "Proposition" is as necessary and important to the prospector or promoter in British Columbia as is "installation" to the gentleman who lies under the necessity of promoting electrical enterprises. To both these words are absolutely essential for the display of a finished style.

The extent to which the desire to get rich in a short time has brought people into this province is really surprising. In 1889 there were but a few people in the Kootenay West district. Today there are probably 25,000 in the towns and probably 5,000 more in the hills prospecting. We are told that in two years Rossland has grown to have 7,000 citizens, and Trail to have 2,000. The greater part of Rossland is not over one year old. The buildings, for the most part unpainted, are not yet weather beaten. The people are showing considerable confidence in their city. They are grading good, well laid streets where the conditions make such streets costly and almost impossible. They are supplying good schools. They maintain good order. They have fifty hotels, in which, so far as I could learn, there were fifty bars. They are talking of and arguing about the site of their city buildings, and it was told that the conference of the city fathers in the future of Rossland is so great that they have voted to themselves salaries of $400 each, and to the mayor $1,600. There is of course a good deal of doubt yet on a good many questions, but if the statement last made be correct, there will be no doubt about the amount of the civic salaries, as they will not be paid with time cheques.

Really the manner in which the people are rushing into and improving the district is simply surprising. There are in all these new towns, to be found in all parts of the province, including Vancouver, such comforts and improvements as may not be found in many old and well established towns in Eastern Canada. Electric light is a matter of course everywhere. The hotels are new, but are for the most part fairly well built, well furnished, and the food and the service are first rate, really surpassing some of the more pretentious hotels of the east. Roughing it has no terrors to the traveller whose clean napkins, elegant service of dishes, glass and china, and lengthy bill of fare, including all the usual courses, entrees, relishes, pastry and extras, winding up with vari-colored glass finger bowls, really leave nothing further to be desired. This is the fare of the traveller who takes the route through this country, along the principal lines of travel, and in the largest towns. There is of course another side to the life here. The men who first penetrated these mountains and whose finds made possible the development of today, like the thousands who are today scattered over almost every part of the Kootenay, both east and west, did not and do not enjoy luxuries. They are hard working, and do not lie on soft beds. They are in this favored, that the climate is mild and not suuject to violent change, but apart from the fact that capital and enterprise have made the principal points easily accessible by rail or by steamer, and have brought supplies to very many points to the great economy of time and labor, the labor of the prospector is severe.

The mountains are high and steep, the undergrowth is in places thick, and the covering of soil in some localities very heavy. To pay this army of explorers would tax the resources of a government. The passion for wealth, the desire to grow rich suddenly, the hope of a find to be measured by millions, furnishes the stimulus which thus, without direct cost to the country, turns the eager and intelligent scrutiny of an army of explorers to the task of exploiting the wealth, the undoubted enormous wealth of this province, as large as a kingdom. There is something very attractive for men still flushed with youth and rejoicing in the pleasure of exertion, in thus picnicking with the chance of great gain in a country whose climate and whose scenery are delightful, and those forests and streams also furnish abundance of food and sport.

It is not strange to find that this life grows attractive so that it is not easy to go back from it to the more settled and as, we think, to the more profitable pursuits of regular vocations. There is a charm in the freedom of the forest which is most attractive to young, vigorous men, and no doubt the ranks of the explorers will be ever recruited from that class in the east. For such there is endless room for exploration for years to come. The enormous mountain ranges which constitute British Columbia, and which reach towards the north for hundreds of miles, are almost certainly all metal producing. These cannot be fully examined for many years to come. It is now apparently a safe saying that the mining possibilities of British Columbia are simply incalculable. The people have great faith in the province, and great hopes for its future. They are building for a great future development, on which they believe, as it would seem, with good reason. They are devoting enormous labors to expose the now hidden treasures of their mountains. The influx of capital, in which the mountain country is so rich, joined to the exploring efforts of the people of British Columbia, may in a few years show a development which it would be unwise now to predict, because it would seem quite incredible.

A. C. B.

(Letter No. 12.)

Revelstoke, B. C., July 26.—Victoria is not so good a place as Vancouver to find men from the maritime provinces. Yet it is not without a savor of eastern salt. The premier of the province, Mr. Turner, if not exactly an eastern province man by birth, was one by adoption. He reached Vancouver Island by way of the island province at the other side of the continent. Prince Edward Island people of this generation may not remember much of Mr. Turner's residence with them, but he has not yet forgotten his first American home. The pastor of the first Methodist church in Victoria is Rev. John F. Betts, formerly of the New Brunswick conference, and a native of Nova Scotia. I caught him in the act of returning from a meeting of the board of governors of New Westminster College. He had with him his eldest boy, a native of Sussex, if I am not mistaken. Mr. P. C. L. Harris, a Halifax man and former student at Sackville, has charge of a Congregational church.

In the office of the Daily Colonist we found Mr. C. H. Lugrin, formerly editor of the St. John Telegraph and of the Fredericton Herald, and more recently of the fourth estate in Seattle. Those who remember the enthusiasm with which Mr. Lugrin when in charge of the department of agriculture in New Brunswick was wont to describe "the fertile belt" of his own province can imagine the fervor with which he now commends British Columbia to the enquirer. He has the map already at his finger ends, and is able to show that for twelve hundred miles, from the United States border to the Klondike, there is no ten mile belt across the country which does not contain gold in paying quantities. Mr. Lugrin is also strong on the agricultural possibilities of the province. He is making the Colonist an exceedingly influential and useful paper, not only in the city where it is printed, but in the province. Captain Cox, formerly of Maitland, Yants county, is well known as one of the leading men in the sealing business. He has made and lost a good deal of money in the pursuit of the seal, and did his share in bringing about the recent unpleasantness concerning Behring Sea. Captain Cox is not thirsting for Uncle Sam's gore. He does not yearn for international complications. But he yearns for seals of the Alaska variety and took so many of them in the early days that the Pribilov Island monopolists caused the United States government to violate international law by intervention in their behalf. The United States treasury will therefore pay the bills.

The second place in importance on Vancouver Island is Nanaimo. This is the location of the finest coal mines on the Pacific coast, and the abode of the Widow McManus. The coal fields of this island are a valuable piece of imperial property. With these mines and with the harbor of Esquimault fortified as it is, Great Britain for all time to come may defy the strength of all the navies that all the nations can assemble on the Pacific ocean. No other power, while New Zealand remains a British possession, and while coal is used to produce motion in ships, can have such a vantage point as Great Britain enjoys on this coast. The late Mr. Dunsmuir, who when a a poor man began the development of these coal fields, died worth several millions. The Dunsmuir family own the finest residences in Victoria, though the place contains other millionaires. But while making himself and his sons rich, Mr. Dunsmuir did his country a great service.

It is one the passage between Victoria and Vancouver that one begins to take in the extent of the salmon industry of the province. When we started from Vancouver for the island we saw twenty or thirty boats with seines drifting for fish. We got farther off and opened up new coves and areas of water. Now we ventured the opinion that at least one hundred salmon boats were in view. Farther out Mr. Bell doubled his guess. I began to count, and discovered over three hundred black spots on the water, representing boats, while far in the distance they trailed off into a blotch upon the water scene. We raised the number to five hundred, and then to a thousand, as new fleets came into view with each new variation of the coast line. At Victoria we mentioned our largest guess to a man who ought to know, and he had no doubt that at least 1,500 boats were on the water that day. He forms his judgment from the fact that double that number of boats have taken out licenses to fish for salmon.

The salmon is the stock fish of British Columbia. These fish are taken in the sound and at the mouth of the rivers, as well as far up the chief streams. The fish chiefly used for canning on the coast weigh five to ten pounds or so. They are caught in various ways, both by contrivances worked from the shore and by boats. The price which the canneries were offering when we were at New Westminster was ten cents per fish, but the fishermen wanted more. The run was then light and the men had not begun to make good pay. It is said that in good years two men with a boat often make twenty to thirty dollars a day right along. But though we sailed among them for two or three hours on our trip, and though we saw dozens of the fishermen pulling in their nets, we only noticed two fish which were so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of the enemy.

A few days later we were at New Westminster. It appeared that some fish had been caught, for we found them in one cannery in the hands of the inevitable Chinaman. The Chinese were cutting off their heads and taking out their inward parts. They were dredging them about in the constantly running stream of water. They were pitching them about on tables, cutting them up into sections convenient for stuffing into the cans. They were fitting on the covers, cooking, soldering and attending to all the details of manufacture. The Chinaman is great on salmon canning. It is an industry which requires attention, skill and care, and does not call for an exercise of much physical strength. John fills the bill exactly, and as he works cheap and lives cheap, it suits him and he suits the employer. But as suggested in a previous letter, it is a question whether the interest of the country is served by degrading labor to a standard which makes it impossible for a self-respecting white man to engage in a great industry. It may be said that without Chinese labor the industry would not be carried on in competition with the busi-