

A COUNTERPART OF CALIFORNIA.

"In the course of a few years there was disclosed to the world a counterpart of California, equally rich, and extending at least from the Horsefly branch of the Quesnel and the Clearwater tributary of the Thompson at the south to the Canyon Creek tributary of the Fraser in the north-west, over two degrees of latitude in the direction of the range. But a new lesson was to be learned by the gold-miners. Hitherto the surface had been skimmed with the aid of rocker and sluice, and a few insignificant hydraulic enterprises had been undertaken on the benches; but in Cariboo the mystery and art of deep placer-mining in its true technical sense were to be practically studied and unravelled by means of shafts and drifts, pumps, and hoisting machinery. On the Fraser, as in the Columbia River basin, the richly concentrated gold-leads of the ancient rivers lay in buried channels below the level of the modern streams, and drifting underneath the clay strata in search of these deposits became in Cariboo the main feature of mining. Exceptionally raised strata on the streams had in several cases revealed the richer leads below; but this indication was not always found, nor was the lead continuous. Peculiar difficulties were encountered in following the windings of the buried channels, confused and obliterated as they were by glacial action, which had also frequently modified or altered the courses of the modern streams. From Yale to Lilloet, from Alexandria to the Quesnel River, the miners only left one kind of deposit to enter upon another. Thus the 'Fraser River Humbug,' was, nevertheless, a continued mining operation; it was a repetition of the history of gold-mining in California; and the transition on the Fraser, in view of the remoteness and inaccessibility of the diggings, was as speedy as it was successful.

"The significance of the discoveries in the Cariboo country did not become apparent at Victoria until very near the close of the year 1860. After the season of depression and depopulation which had been experienced almost from the commencement of mining on the Fraser, everything had the appearance of premature death and dissolution in the colony. But in November, 1860, with the return of the successful miners from the fork of the Quesnel, came bags of nuggets which revived the fainting hopes of the trading community by the sea. These were the assurances that the country was safe.

FRASER RIVER AND CARIBOO BECAME WIDELY KNOWN.

"Fraser River and Cariboo became as famous and as widely known throughout the world as Sacramento River and Ballarat, and miners from California and Australia were emphatic in their declarations touching the comparative merits of Cariboo. With a population of 1,500 people, the district shipped to Victoria before the end of the season of 1861 two millions of dollars.

"The first effect of these discoveries was to produce another movement of population from California and Oregon into the basin of the Fraser. The abundant yield of gold this time created a stampede for the new mines, which held out with every element of genuineness. The excitement was not fully started till the finding in January, 1861, of the extraordinarily rich prospects on Antler Creek, about twenty miles from the mouth of Keithley Creek, constituting the principal attraction of the rush of 1861.

"Incited by the discoveries on Keithley, Harvey, Antler, and Cunningham Creeks in the spring of 1861, a number of miners wandered farther in various directions to prospect. First Grouse Creek, forming with Antler Creek the headwaters of Bear River, was discovered to be equally entitled to attention, and from the head of this creek the valley of William Creek, on the headwaters of Willow River, was not only visible to the enterprising explorers, but within easy reach. The same ridge, culminating in Mount Agnes, disclosed to them on looking westward the valleys of