

Nanaimo, where coal-mines, said to be "inexhaustible in extent," are being worked with very great success. Since coal is conspicuous by its absence from the Pacific shores of North America, its presence at Nanaimo in great, if not inexhaustible, abundance, confers an important distinction upon Vancouver's Island, which is very likely destined to become one of the chief commercial centres in its part of the world. The railroad from Nanaimo conveys the coal to the magnificent harbour of Esquimalt, two or three miles west of Victoria, the praises of which have been sung by almost every one who has seen it, and for which every one who is at all given to prophecy predicts a most brilliant future. Hitherto, indeed, the somewhat scanty traditions of Esquimalt have not been altogether glorious; the port seems to have first come into existence as a refuge for the ships and a hospital for the sailors of the British fleet which failed rather disgracefully in an attack made, with the aid of the French, on the town of Petropaulovski, in Kamschatka, during the Crimean war. But now fortifications are to be raised, and Esquimalt, which is large enough to hold a navy, made into a stronghold suited to the Power which has interests to protect in every sea, even in the North Pacific. The Pacific Ocean is, indeed, so large that one is tempted to doubt whether even Esquimalt will be able, as enthusiasts seem to suppose, to "dominate" the whole of it; and when one finds such an enthusiast pointing out that it is "but three weeks' steam from Sydney," one cannot help reflecting that, after all, this is three times as far as from Liverpool to New York, places which are not yet considered quite as neighbouring towns. However, there can be no doubt of Esquimalt's importance, seeing that in no very distant future it is possible that much of the trade between East and West, between China and Europe, may pass through Vancouver's Island.

Esquimalt, it is needless to say, is not an English,

but an Indian word; and it is to be hoped that as fresh settlements are made in the island they will be called as much as possible by their old Indian names, of which there should be plenty, since we are told that with the Ahts "every bend has a name, every hill a story, and every dark pool a tradition." We have Victorias enough in different parts of the world, and do not need any more Portlands and Newcastles, still less Smithtons and Jacksonvilles. And it is even easier to appropriate the names of the land than to appropriate the land itself.

There is one product of China which has already come to Vancouver's Island without waiting for the opening up of a trade-route, and that is the Chinaman himself. In Victoria a very considerable proportion of the (as yet) small population is Chinese; and this may become a serious matter, for, useful as the Chinese workman can make himself, his presence among Europeans cannot be regarded as an unmixed blessing, at any rate by European workmen. The question of Chinese labour, however, is one which affects British North America no more than Australia and America generally.

Should the Canadian Pacific Railway fulfil the hopes of its promoters, Vancouver's Island must become an important halting-place on one of the greatest highways in the world. Steamers from Yokohama can run to Esquimalt as easily as to San Francisco, and Esquimalt has the immense advantage of a vast supply of the best coal in its immediate neighbourhood. It is true that a country might be so situated as to attract a large trade, without being otherwise an attractive place to live in. But Vancouver's Island, as has been said, possesses a fine climate, delightful scenery, a large if not unlimited extent of fertile soil, and invaluable mineral treasures. There is, perhaps, no place in England's Empire more likely, so far as we can see, to provide a healthy life and a happy home for emigrant Englishmen.



VICTORIA, VANCOUVER.