

Since the time of which I am now writing the old Hudson's Bay Fort has been pulled down, and a more commodious one erected in its stead. The officer in charge of it had only one chamber to serve for both sitting and bed room; and late at night into this and the presence of Colonel Moody, Captain Grant, Mr. Begbie and the Hudson's Bay Company's officers, gathered round the fire, we made our way, looking, I dare say, pitiable objects enough. With the ready kindness which I never failed to meet with from the Company's officers in British Columbia, Mr. Ogilvy soon equipped both of us in suits of dry clothes and seated us before a hot supper.

In a subsequent chapter I shall have occasion to speak more fully of "bars;" but as the word occurs frequently in this book, I may here say that all those places where gold is found and worked on a river's bank are called by that name. This term has become the recognised one, and is not mere miner's slang; all proclamations referring to gold-extracting, etc., being addressed to the "mining bars" of such and such a district.

Bars are formed simply by a deposit of heaps of detritus at various bends of a river flowing through accumulations of irrupted rock, and between mountains whose sides have been broken down by former great convulsions. The rushing river tears away mass after mass of this rock and gravel, and, carrying on a natural combination of the "sluicing" and "crushing" processes, deposits the gold, with its ever-accompanying black metallic sand and a certain quantity of common earth, at intervals along its banks, carrying most of the lighter sand, etc., out to its mouth, there to form sand-banks and flats. It will be easily understood, therefore, that these bars are formed at every place where there is or has been anything to catch the drift as it comes down. But what is somewhat curious is the very different value of the deposit at various bars, or even parts of the same bar, some being very rich, others very poor, even where they are close together; and this happens not in the vertical section, which would be to some extent intelligible, but at an equal distance under the surface. One part of a bar may "give out," while another part will be worth working 20 feet deeper.

Thus all bars are formed in the same way, even although the rivers which deposited some of them have long since ceased to flow,