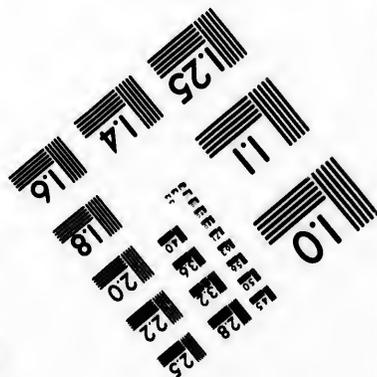
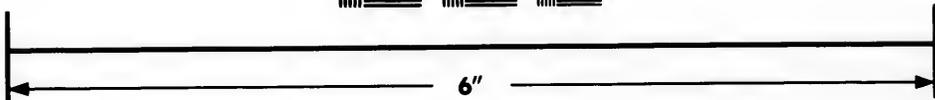
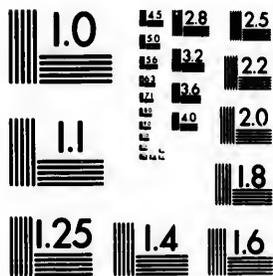


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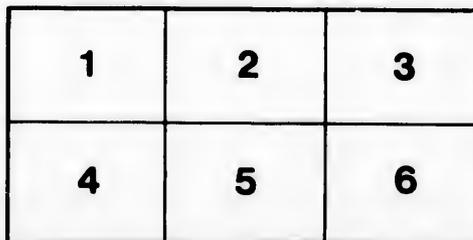
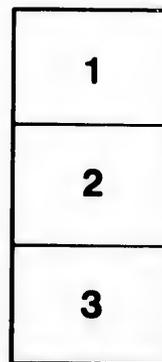
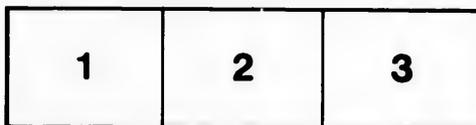
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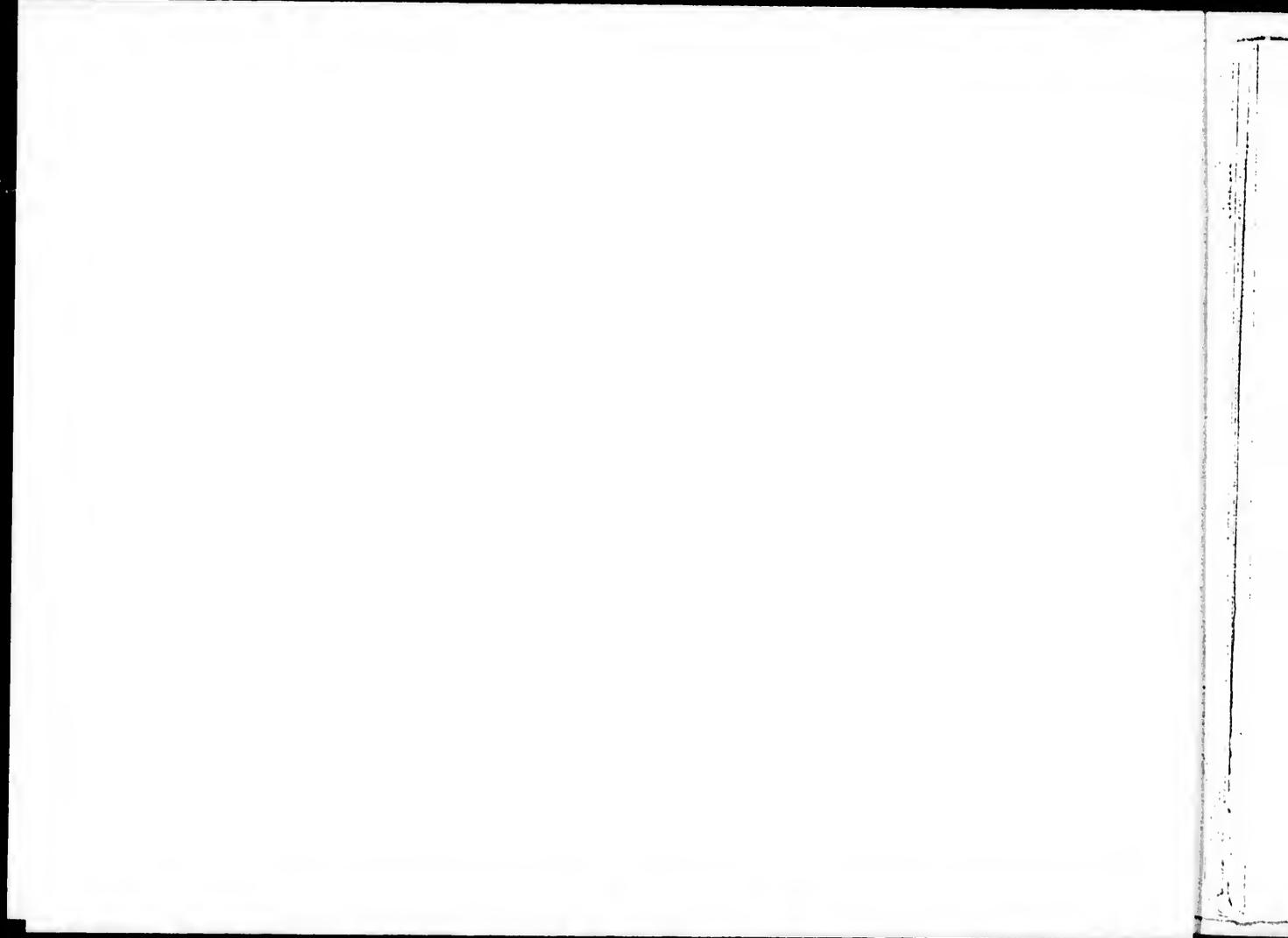
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A GLANCE AT
BRITISH COLUMBIA
AND
VANCOUVER'S ISLAND
IN 1861.

BY
A. J. LANGLEY.

LONDON:
ROBERT HARDWICKE, 192, PICCADILLY.
1862.

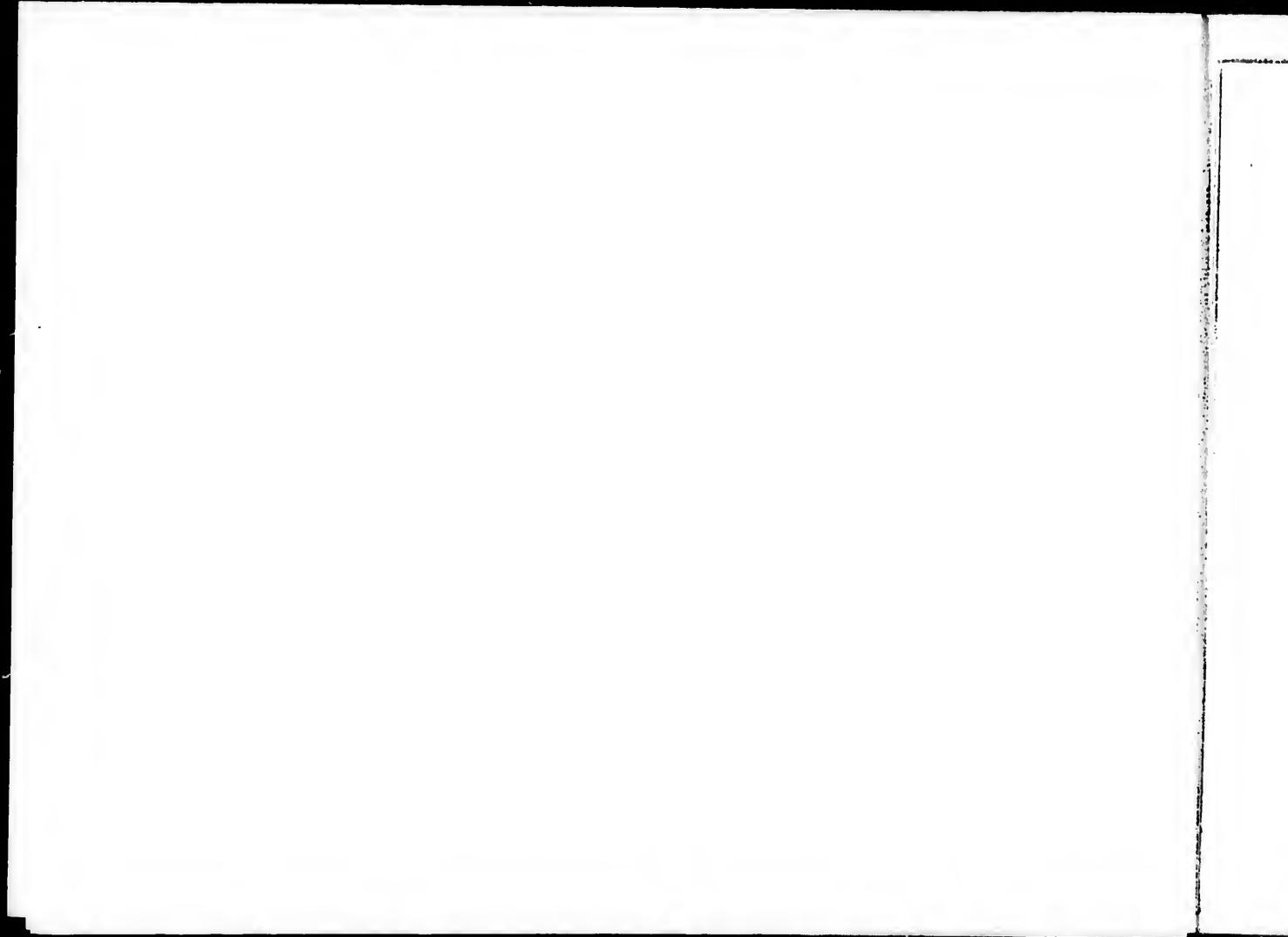
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PREFACE.

A NUMBER of letters have lately appeared respecting the two colonies of Vancouver's Island and British Columbia, and the public interest has been much aroused by them. The minute information respecting their climate, government, land-system, and their riches, contained in the very able and reliable letters of the correspondent of the *Times*, appears not to allow of more information on the subject being given; but the writer of the following hasty sketches is desirous of adding his "mite," and on the principle "that constant dropping wears away stones," publishes them with a hope they may prove interesting to parties who seek information, however slight, concerning these little-known colonies. His account is based on recollections of a two-years' residence, and on letters recently received from parties who have neither interest nor inclination to give a false impression; they tend to confirm the accounts given by the more able pen of "our own correspondent," in the *Times*, to which the reader is respectfully referred; they will be found in its issues of September 20th, 1861, and in those of the 5th and 6th of February, 1862.

Many strange questions are asked, and one finds



amongst the class most desirable as emigrants that many of them jumble together, Victoria in Australia, California, British Columbia, and Vancouver's Island; thus obtaining rather confused ideas. As an example of the prevailing ignorance respecting these countries, the writer of a popular geography, lately published, states that the "orange, lemon, fig, and vine, grow wild in British Columbia." They must be excessively wild, for one never even catches a glimpse of them, and a land of pine forests and severe frosts seems not a congenial home.

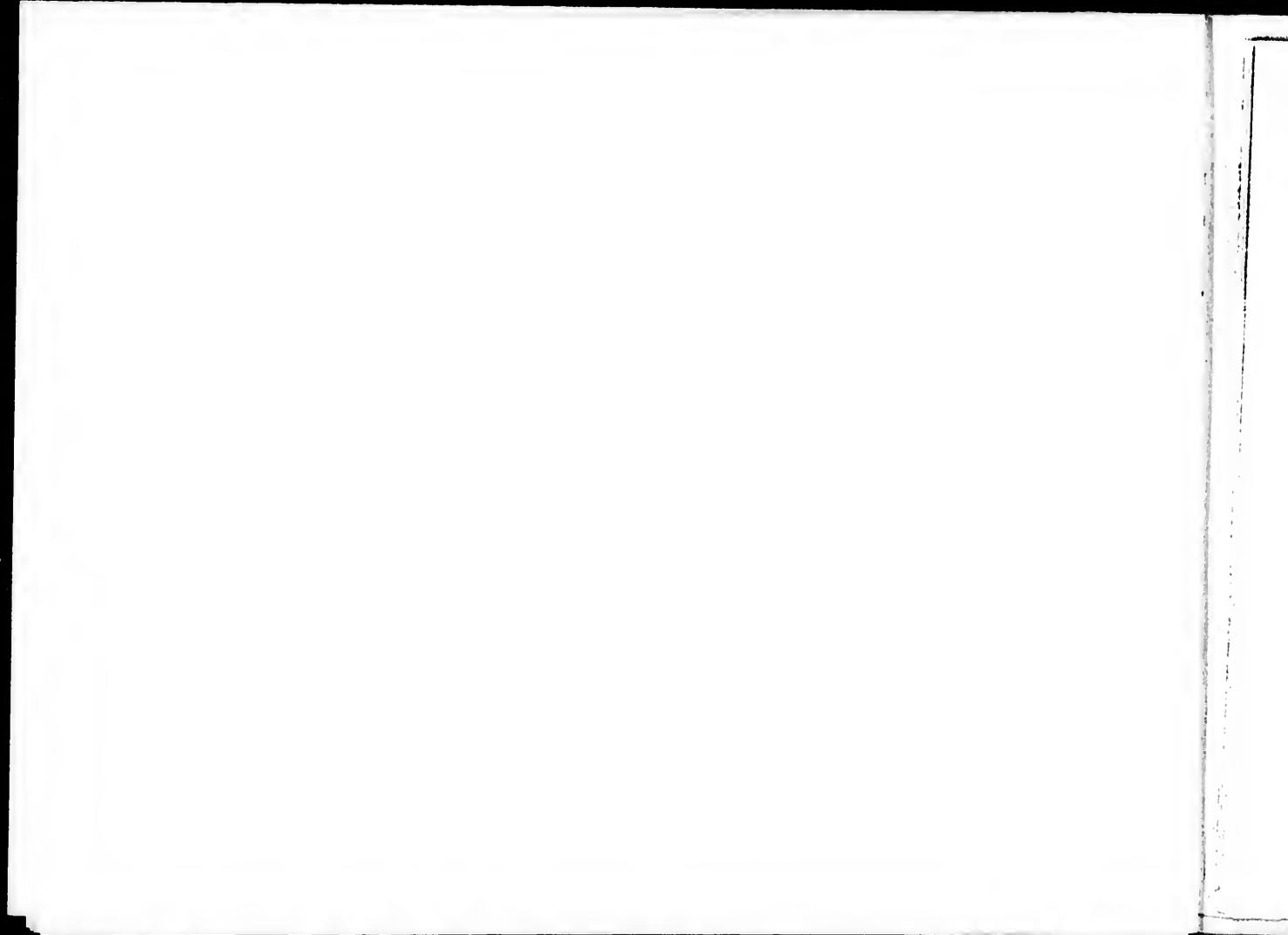
Another gentleman says, "the earth of Vancouver's Island is frozen forty feet deep in the winter," whereas sufficient frost to make firm roads would be a great boon.

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

This is a separate colony at present, and not "part of British Columbia." It has a governor, a judge of supreme court, legislative council, house of assembly, and other accessories to a colonial government.

Excepting some modifications to suit local peculiarities, the laws of England are those in use, and are firmly and impartially administered. The island is situate on the north-west coast of North America, is about three hundred miles in length, and of variable breadth, seventy miles, perhaps, being the greatest; it runs parallel to the coast of British Columbia, separated by the Gulf of Georgia, in a course nearly due north-west from its most southerly point; it lies between the parallels of 48° and 51° N. latitude, and 123° and 129° W. longitude; its coast is indented with numerous harbours; that of Esquimalt, at the entrance of Puget Sound, and near Victoria, being the most valuable.

The interior of the island is but little known. Approaching it from the sea, we notice a chain of mountains apparently extending through its centre, and covered with dense forests. As far as explored,



these are the prevailing features, varied by rich, open valleys, rocky barren extents, and numerous lakes. Away from the settlements, grouse, wild-fowl, elk, and other game are plentiful. The waters are, in places, alive with fish, and salmon, equal to any, is so abundant, that its price is nominal. There are no dangerous wild beasts, nor those pests, musquitoes: rattlesnakes are said to be found occasionally. Coal is plentiful near the surface; an excellent building-stone is being quarried; metallic copper, silver ore, and small quantities of gold, have been found at several points. In regard to climate, the Englishman makes, on the whole, a pleasant exchange—the spring vegetation is nearly a month earlier, the summer and autumn weather more agreeable, and the winters closely resemble those of England, but have more wet and less fog and frosty weather,—every winter, generally in January, the thermometer falls to 12° or 15° above zero for a day or two, and frost continues a week or ten days; but after this cold snap we can bid severe weather good-bye for twelve months. Snow does not remain on the ground, and cattle find food and shelter in the woods. The mildness of its climate may be thus accounted for: no part of Vancouver's Island is so northerly as London; the Pacific slope of the Rocky Mountains is considered to be about 20° less severe during the winter months than in the same parallel on its eastern, and the mountains in its vicinity, and the waters which surround it, moderate

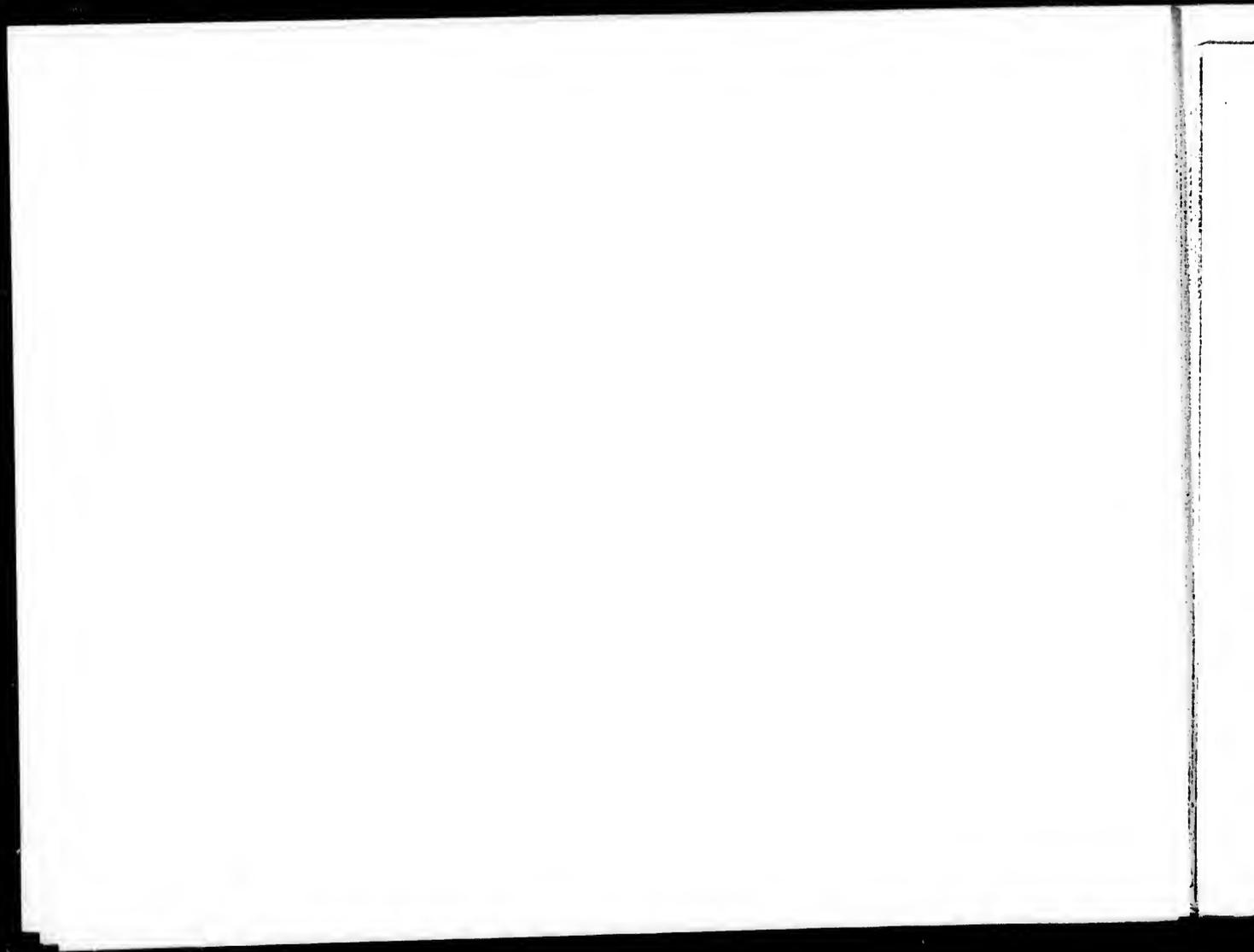
the heat of its summers. The soil, though rich in places, is generally light. As may be concluded from the similarity of climate, all those grains, vegetables, or roots which flourish at home, will do so there. Good authorities assure us, that they have raised wheat equal to any English, and the size attained by vegetables is extraordinary. Agriculture is in a very backward condition, for there has not been as yet a farming population. It is only within the last two years that orchards of fruit-trees have been planted, although the climate is so especially suitable. The principal greengrocer states that he cannot obtain sufficient vegetables to supply his customers. Butter is sometimes four shillings per pound, and eggs eight shillings per dozen. The woods can be turned to good account by making potash, and large quantities of turpentine might be extracted; they abound in wild and good-flavoured berries, strawberries, raspberries, bilberries, nuts, blackberries, and many other fruits of the forest.

The absence of roads has been a great drawback. This evil is now being remedied. Such as have farms near the coast find the frequent coves and inlets very valuable. Surveyed land is sold by the colony at 4s. 2d. per acre, payable in three yearly instalments. A bachelor is allowed to select 150 acres, a married man 200 acres, and for each child an additional 10 acres, providing these blessings reside in the colony. Should this quantity of land be insufficient,

he will be allowed to add an adjoining section, if unsettled upon, at the same rate;—it must be understood, however, that all choice land near the market has been already purchased; and should the new-comer desire such, he will either be compelled to pay from 20s. to 40s. or more per acre, or take a lease; he must be prepared to work himself, as labour is so high that a gentleman farmer would inevitably lose money: it is difficult to find good labouring men willing to work for £10 per month. Mechanics' wages depend so much upon circumstances, that it is hardly safe to give them; but the lowest pay for carpenter, black or white smith, tailor, shoemaker, and other artisans, may be safely reckoned at 10s. per diem, and during excitements this would be at least doubled. Indians can be employed at nominally low wages, and with good management their services become valuable. One can scarcely doubt that a steady, industrious, and prudent settler would in a few years render himself comparatively independent, that he might look from the window of his comfortable farmhouse over broad cultivated acres and well-stocked farmyard, be able to call it all his own, and admit that his industry had been handsomely rewarded.

VICTORIA.

This is the capital of Vancouver's Island, and its only town of any importance. It is doubtless destined to become a large commercial city, being a free port and easily accessible from the ocean: it possesses great advantages over any town north of San Francisco. It is a flourishing lively place, and though it contains but about 4,000 inhabitants, the stranger is struck with its active commercial appearance. The harbour is small and its entrance tortuous: by taking advantage of the tide, vessels drawing 16 feet can lie alongside its wharfs. The town should have been located at Esquimalt, distant some three miles, where the harbour is safely entered in the darkest night, is capacious and perfectly sheltered from gales blowing in any direction. Here a dry dock could not fail to be remunerative, as vessels requiring repairs are now compelled to seek the ship-yards of San Francisco, whose harbour is the nearest on a coast of 800 miles in length. There are many brick buildings in Victoria, but by far the greater number are of wood. A brick warehouse owned by the Hudson Bay Company is a prominent feature from the water, it having a frontage of 120 ft. and height of five stories. A couple of church spires over the town, an hospital near the harbour's entrance, an Indian village, symmetrical canoes, the long white bridge spanning James's Bay, and the overgrown Swiss cottages erected for government offices



near its right extremity, will also attract a stranger's eye.

The munificence of Miss Burdett Coutts, and numerous supporters in England of the Established Church, founded the bishopric of British Columbia, probably under the prevailing idea that the two colonies were identical, as are their interests undoubtedly. At present, the best field for the bishop's labours being in Victoria, it forms his principal residence, and under his guidance much good is being effected for the rising generation of Indians. The saying that "you cannot teach an old dog new tricks" seems particularly applicable to adult savages. Not that endeavours to Christianize them are neglected, and some conversions are supposed to be made; but these appear to depend much upon attention to their temporal interests,—“Sambo, are you honest?” “How much massa gib me?” Until lately they were governed by their own laws in quarrels amongst themselves. The chief replied, “White man put rope round neck bad man and kee-oooh! Indian man give him knife; all the same,—kloosh (good).”

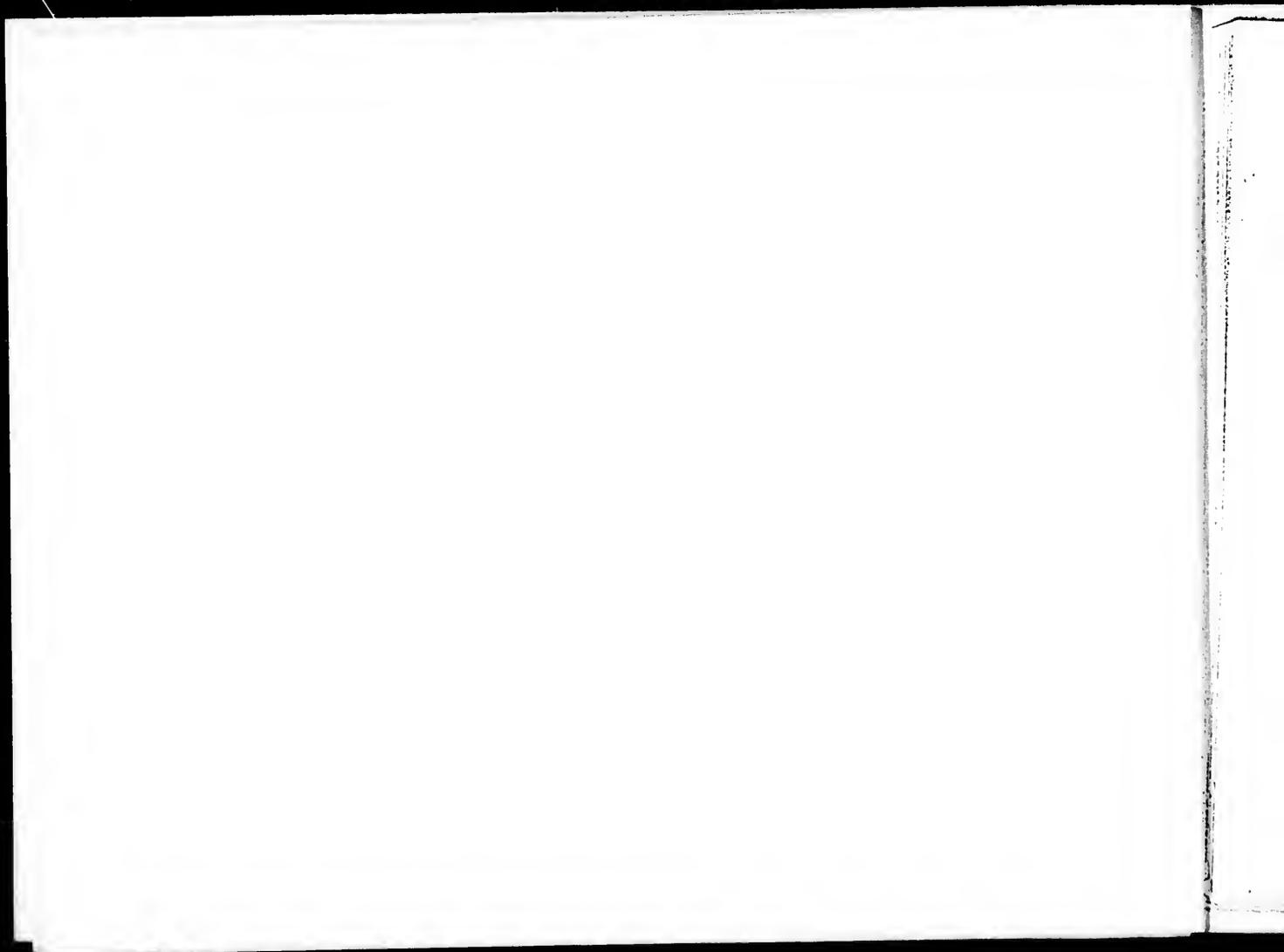
There are two episcopal churches, one of iron (a great mistake) and the other of wood, in a commanding position: neither has an attractive exterior. Under the superintendance of Dr. Evans, a handsome Wesleyan church has been erected: the spire is an ornament to the town. There are also a modest Catholic church, a Presbyterian, and a Congregationalist church. All the ministers are zealous in the good cause; the

accommodation for worship is ample, and the Sabbath is as well observed as in London. All churches are supported by voluntary contributions, as is also a well-conducted hospital, where, under the skilful treatment of Dr. J. Trimble, much suffering has been alleviated, and many lives have been saved. The medical men attached to her Majesty's ships are always glad to give their valuable assistance in extreme cases: the complaints have almost invariably been the effects of such hardships, intemperance, or exposure, as would result in any climate; for a more invigorating, health-giving atmosphere could not be found than that of Victoria.

The schools are excellent and numerous; their charges very moderate; and they teach from the rudimentary to the highest branches of education.

There are an iron-foundry and machine shops; and gas-works are being erected. The number of the legal and medical fraternities is too great, and there are sufficient tradesmen for wholesome competition,—so, at least, they generally believe.

A library and lecture-room has lately been established; there are a Jockey Club, a periodical race, a Philharmonic Society, an Horticultural Society, giving annual exhibitions and prizes, two fire companies on the voluntary system, a well-supported gymnasium, a pretty little theatre, a St. Andrew's Society, and a Freemasons' "lodge." Dancing is a favourite pastime in the winter,



and the numerous billiard-tables, and one or two bowling-alleys, are seldom idle.

There are two newspapers, the oldest established of them being the *British Colonist*, published every morning (Sundays excepted), at Victoria, V. I. Terms:— per annum, in advance, by mail, £2; for six months, £1 4s.; per week, payable to the carrier, 1s.; single copies, 5d. Its editor and proprietor is Mr. Amor de Cosmos, a Nova-Scotian; its size is one-fourth that of the *Times* reading sheet, and three-fourths of its columns are mostly advertisements.

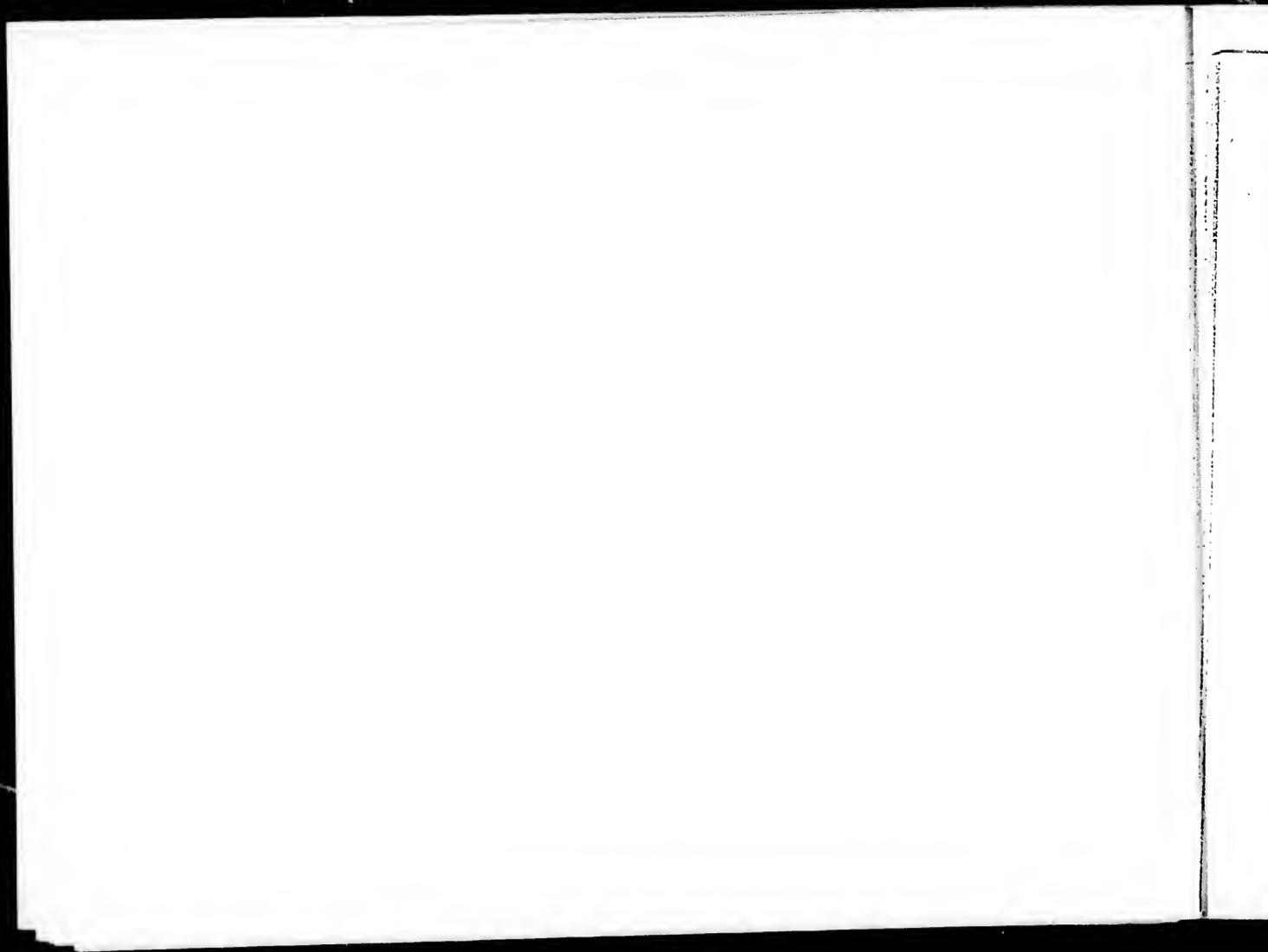
Provisions are much cheaper than in England; a dinner of soup, fish, a cut from the joint, and pudding or pie, can had at the restaurant for 2s., and a French dinner of four or five courses and dessert for 4s., equal to those given in Paris for the same. Should the emigrant live at the cheapest hotel, it will cost him 30s. per week; many miners and economizing labourers are contented to live in shanties of about 10 ft. by 12 ft., and, cooking for themselves, a few shillings per week supply their wants.

The market is well supplied with fish, beef, mutton, pork, and game in the season. Vegetables, hay, and fruit are largely imported from California, where the weather may be called perpetual summer, and its market is generally glutted with them. The Vancouver's Island potatoes are so peculiarly superior, that they are sent as most acceptable presents to friends in that state, although its own are not by any means of poor quality.

The wages of mechanics and labourers are very high. This is likely to continue, as the surplus supply finds its way either to the neighbouring gold district, or to California. The class which has been too numerous is that of carpenters, as any one with a fair amount of gumption, and a hammer, saw, chisel and plane, was equal to the rough work of building a wooden town: however, this is a well-to-do class; for, being able to turn their hands to many useful purposes, they are seldom at loss for a job of some kind. It can be readily supposed, a new and extensive country requires a very large amount of labour; for towns, houses, bridges, roads, fences, &c. &c. &c., have all to be built or made; and with a wonderfully rich gold district near by, to entice away the muscular mechanic and labourer, only a high rate of wages will tempt them to work: fortunately, on several accounts, the mining harvest only continues some four months in the year: this, and the arrival of those who have not means to take them further, causes labour to be procurable at the present high rates.

Rents are very extravagant; but the frugal labourer can soon save sufficient to purchase a lot within a quarter of an hour's walk; and as planking is only 60s. per 1,000 feet, he can speedily occupy his own house.

Female domestics are very rare, and readily obtain £5 to £6 per month. Asiatic bachelors number about one hundred to one spinster in that region, it is likely to be some years before the soft sex will be in excess as



domestic servants. Another reason that this rate should be maintained is, that in California, which is the only labour market reachable, corresponding wages are given. Every man will at once see the great advantage of taking a wife out with him; and the more numerous his family the better. The lowest price for washing is 10s. per dozen pieces; the barber charges 1s. for a shave; 1s. pays for blacking your boots, and a glass of ale costs 6d. Copper money has not been introduced, and its want is not felt except by children. Clothing is 75 per cent. dearer than in England, as at present most of it comes from the United States; but this cannot long continue, as the absurdity of importing into a free port goods which have paid a high duty is apparent.

Books are cheap in Victoria, especially those the copyrights of which have not expired in England, as there is no international copyright law with the United States.

This appears wrong in a British colony; and though Victoria is a free port, it might be easily arranged to give the author some remuneration.

The *Illustrated London News*, *Bell's Life in London*, the *Weekly Dispatch*, and other English papers, are received about six weeks after publication, and sold at a considerable London price.

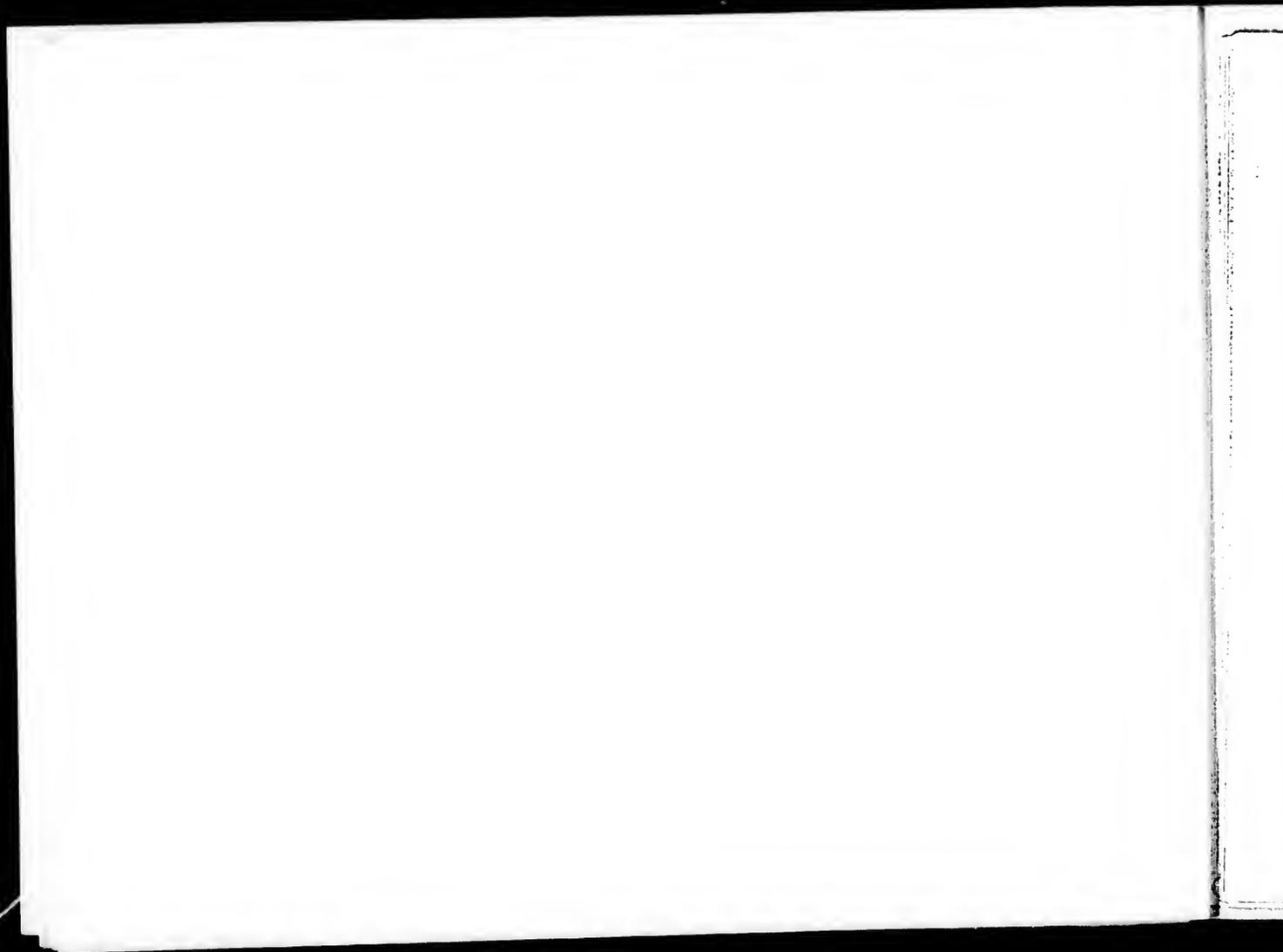
The prosperity of Victoria mainly depends on its being a free port, and all other interests than those of commerce are very secondary in importance. This

renders direct taxation necessary. The people are perfectly awake to their own interests, and nowhere are taxes more cheerfully paid. Rents and wages may always remain high, but provisions and manufactured goods, especially the latter, are likely to be cheaper than elsewhere on the Pacific coast. Their willingness to be taxed is shown by a desire for the town to be incorporated. This would be likely to double the taxes, and the advantages gained appear inconsiderable.

The present taxes are on real estate, improvements thereon, and a small license for carrying on business. The license for taverns is heavy (£120 per annum, payable quarterly): this does not prevent their being numerous, and deteriorates the quality of the spirits.

The facts of labour being so well paid, whilst provisions are cheap, there being a bright prospect always before the willing mind, the entire absence of poverty, the fine healthy climate, the low price of land, and the protection of his own country's flag and laws, should be sufficient encouragement to a labourer who has resolved upon emigrating; but even here he must not be impatient; be willing to turn his hand to any honest means of earning, and keeping a steady determination to advance by industry,—his final if not rapid success is certain.

Education being a decided advantage, many young men possessing it and a sound constitution, yearly attain positions which would have occupied a lifetime at home. They certainly lose ground in the pursuits

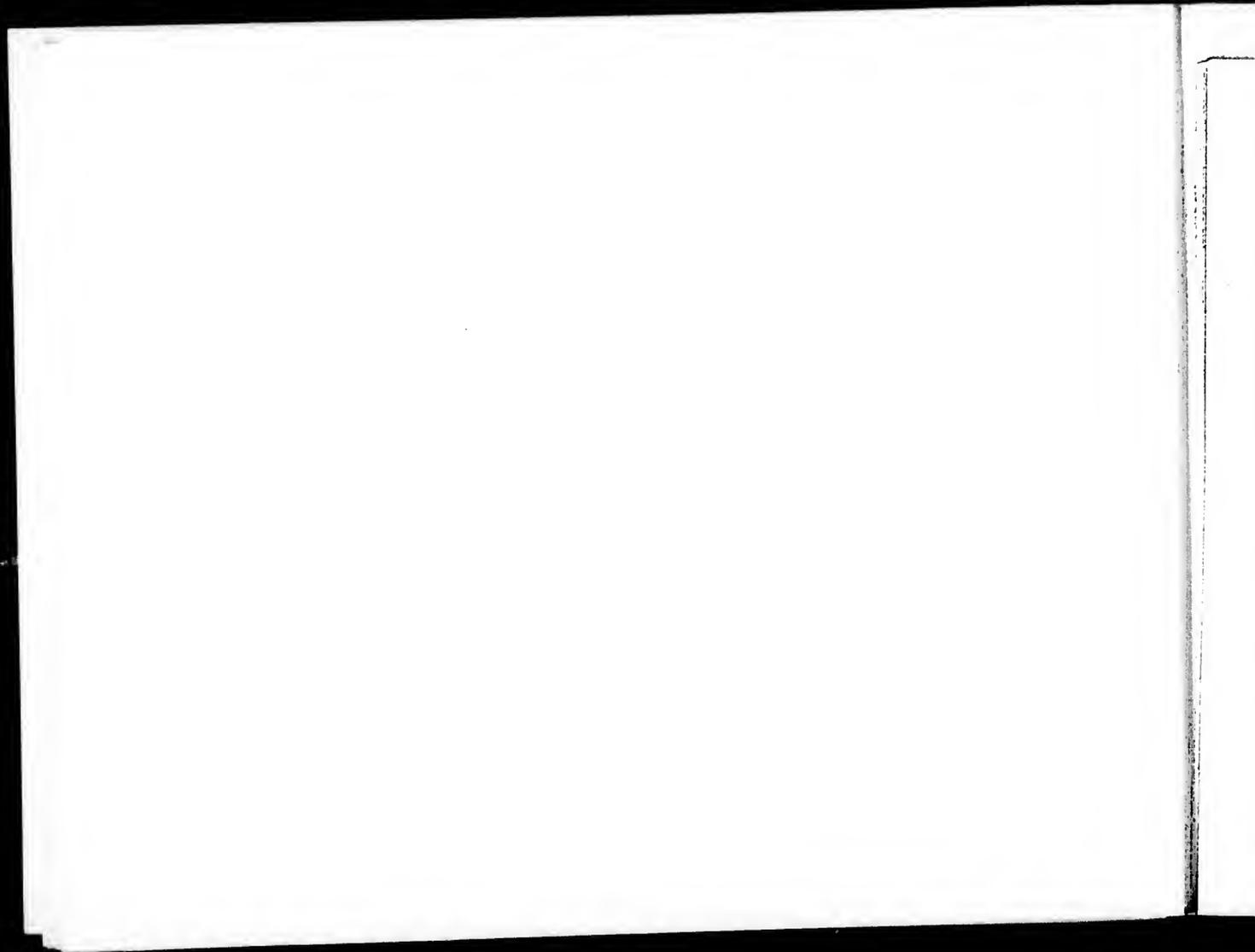


they abandon ; but the miner's life leaves much room for study, and any such idea as self-debasement, or that digging for gold is "infra dig.," is never entertained in those parts. To be employed by a master at so much a day in excavating a sewer, breaking stones, &c., is very different to labouring on one's own account amongst the rocks of the wilderness.

Victoria is very prettily situated on ground which gradually rises from the water for a few hundred yards ; it then becomes undulating ; but a ravine leading down to the harbour is an excellent drain. Its streets are macadamized, and the side-walks are of wood ; several of the shops would not disfigure Regent Street, whilst others would disgrace a country town, being merely large wooden boxes. Goods from all parts of the world are displayed ; those from Manchester, Birmingham, and Staffordshire, are beginning to be prominent, and will doubtless be the leading ones ere long. The advantages of a free port are more and more observable ; but the great want of a steam postal service has a tendency to blockade the harbour to all mercantile connection, except that with the adjacent sections of the United States. This will not be the case, however, during 1862, as the two colonies have granted a subsidy of £5,000 for the year, and George H. Cary, the Attorney-General, is empowered to make terms with some American steamboat company, for direct communication with San Francisco. The amount will be an acceptable bonus ; as the great number of passengers

to be carried during the summer would insure frequent steam communication without it, though probably not direct ones ; and the carrying of a mail-bag is little additional expense. The American boats carried the mail gratuitously for many months ; but finding there was little probability of recompense, the courtesy was discontinued. There are delightful walks and rides in every direction from town : a day can be spent very pleasantly in rambling over Mount Douglas, which is about eight miles off ; to obtain a view from its summit is well worth a little fatigue. The lakes, at four and seven miles' distance, are pretty and interesting ; an arm of the harbour extending to Esquimalt, divided only by an isthmus of trifling width, is a favourite resort for boating pic-nic parties, which are popular during the summer months, and when the berries are ripe. This arm, narrowing at one point to a few yards, causing rapids, widening at others into lake-like sheets, with its numerous islands and banks covered with woods, and its shoals with oysters, is very attractive.

The Californians are very loyal to the Washington Cabinet. Of this their magnanimity of protecting eastern manufacturers through the Morrill tariff, and submitting to enormous taxation that the star-spangled banner shall remain entire, is proof sufficient. Though our vessels cannot coast, and her market is closed to our coal, lumber, and other productions, Victoria is benefiting by her loyalty.



On the southern coast, two miles from town, there is a natural park of trees, chiefly oak and pine, surrounding, on three sides, a turf-covered elevation of some two hundred feet, called Beacon Hill: around its base is an excellent race-course and cricket-ground. The view from this mound is truly charming; across the strait of San Juan de Fuca, which is here about twenty miles wide, rise the snow-capped mountains of the Olympian range; on our left is the cloud-like summit of Mount Baker, eighteen thousand feet above the sea; canoes full of picturesque Indians, white sails of vessels; a steam-boat, or a majestic man-of-war, dotting the water, is all we wish as a mid-distance; and the lawn-like foot of the hill, with clusters of trees, grazing cattle and bold promontories, form a pleasing foreground. Turning towards Victoria, the cheerful verandah-fronted cottages, on rising ground to the right, glimpses of white buildings through the trees, and the tapering church spire, give another agreeable picture to the eye. But the great and particular attraction to this part of the world is the gold-fields of the colony of British Columbia, the Cariboo section of which, in a letter, dated December 3rd, 1861, is thus spoken of:—

“Whether you have read anything about them or not, it is a pleasure to me to inform you of the fact that from the work of less than 2,000 men during three to four months only, the San Francisco steamers have been taking away between two and six hundred thousand dollars per month for the last three months, which is far ahead of any other gold-mines ever discovered.”

From the *British Colonist* of November 18th:—

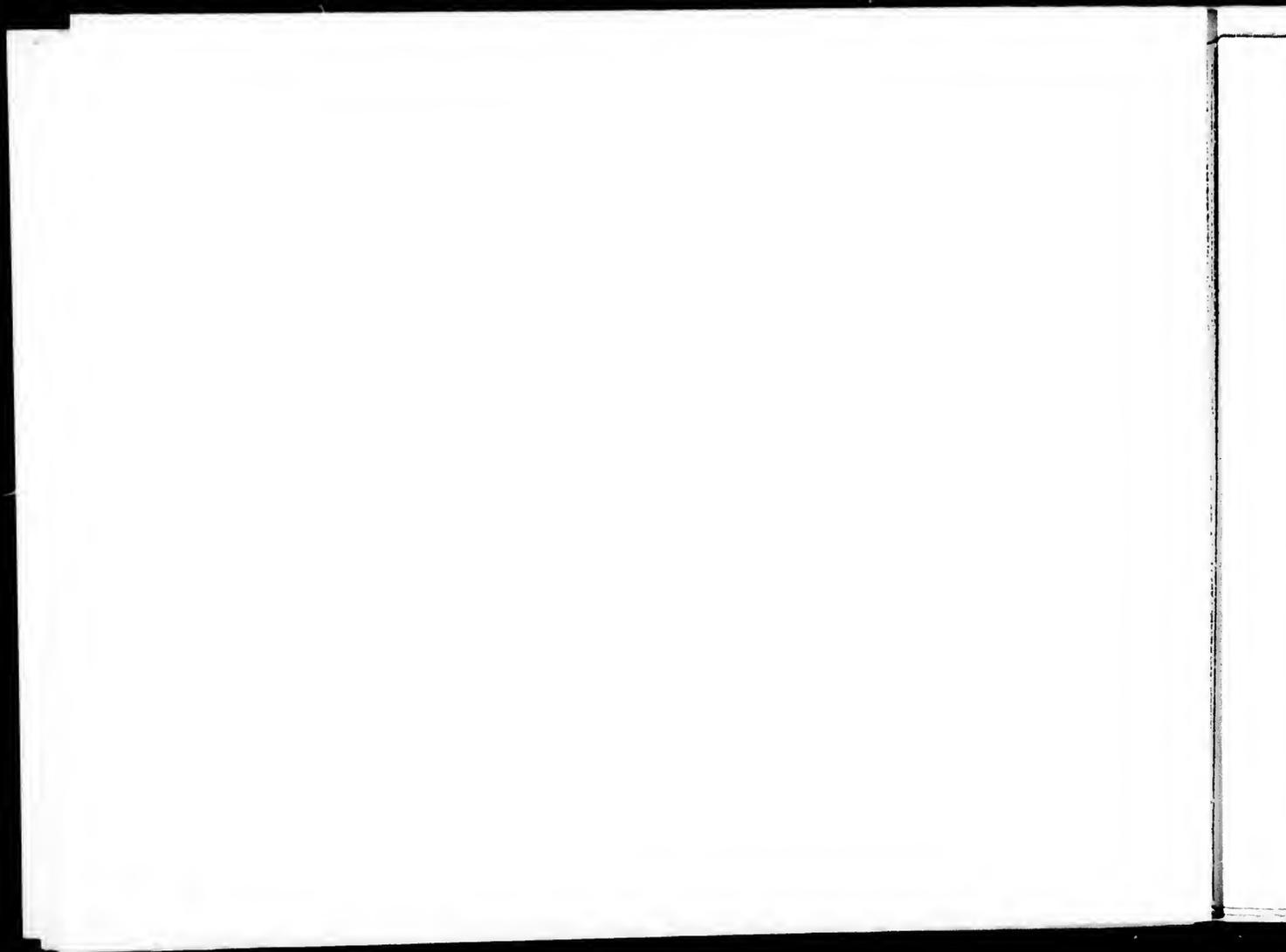
DEPARTURE OF THE PACIFIC.—The steamship *Pacific* went to sea yesterday morning, from Esquimalt, at 9 o'clock. She had on board nearly 200 miners and others as passengers from this place, and 120 United States soldiers from the Sound. Wells, Fargo, and Co. shipped 205,995 dollars in gold dust. The total shipment, including the amounts in private hands, will reach 400,000 dollars (£90,000).

The gross amount of £1,500,000 is estimated to have been abstracted from the various mines in the country by 5,000 or 6,000 men during 1861; thus giving an average of £250 for each miner's summer work.

Let us take a general view of this remarkable colony of British Columbia. It has the same Governor and Commander-in-Chief, James Douglas, C.B., who pays it lengthy visits each year; and the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, Colonel Richard C. Moody, R.E., resides in it constantly; each inhabited district has a gold commissioner and police magistrate, and New Westminster has a town council.

But little crime is committed, and the population, which has very few British subjects at present, is generally well satisfied with the form of government.

On the west of this country, whose area is about 200,000 square miles, is the Cascade range of mountains; on its east are the Rocky Mountains, of which the Bald and Peak mountains appear to be a spur; besides these great chains, huge mountains are scat-



tered about, as though the surface of the country had been in a state of gigantic ebullition and suddenly its stupendous bubbles had become fixtures; nevertheless, there are extensive plains, and the Frazer River runs in an almost direct line towards the south, receiving numerous tributaries, until it reaches Hope, where its course is turned to the west; and, a little above the boundary-line, it discharges into the Gulf of Georgia. Getting on to a steambot at Victoria and paying £1 passage, we glide by Discovery Island, and, leaving the disputed San Juan on our right, pass several well-wooded but rocky islets, observe the wood-clearing fires of Vancouver's Island settlers, and suddenly emerging from Plumper's Pass, whose waters are ever as smooth as a mill-pond, we are ploughing the rough water of the Gulf of Georgia, which is subject to very sudden squalls, and many lives were lost, by early adventurers risking a passage in small open boats. In about an hour we are on the constantly changing sands at the mouth of dirty Frazer River, annually contributing thousands of tons to form an island, the foundations of which are the present shallows. Thus, the land on each side appears to have been deposited; being subject to annual overflow, it is almost as level as a floor, and covered with coarse grass. About thirty miles up the river, on its left bank, on the steep side of a hill, is situate the town of New Westminster, capital and port of entry for the colony; here we arrive in eight hours from Victoria, distance about eighty miles. As

to the navigation, it is said to be perfectly safe for steamers drawing twenty feet, but the insurance on large sailing vessels attempting it would be worth as much as that from London to Esquimalt, and the length of passage from Victoria from a few days to a month; this may be remedied by the use of tugs when entire cargoes are consigned to New Westminster. At the back of the two or three streets running parallel with the river, gigantic pine-trees crown the hill; its side is thickly enamelled with the stumps whose heads have been burnt or chopped off. The extraction of these stumps costs from £1 to £3 each, and there are about fifty of them to an acre; this causes cleared land to be very valuable just about the town. Its site is not one which merchants would have selected, neither is the Assay Office in its right place; consequently, neither of them is in a very healthy condition. Whilst these twin colonies remain separate ones, it appears only natural that the Mint should be situated in that from whose soil the precious metals are obtained; as it is here, in this village of 300 or 400 inhabitants, and eighty miles away from the merchants of Victoria, the expenses even of its establishment are not paid by its business; but if at the seat of commerce, there would be considerable profit, as those who require its furnaces could use them conveniently. Such questions as this make palpable the advantages of Victoria, and create some jealousy against her by the people whose interests are centered here.

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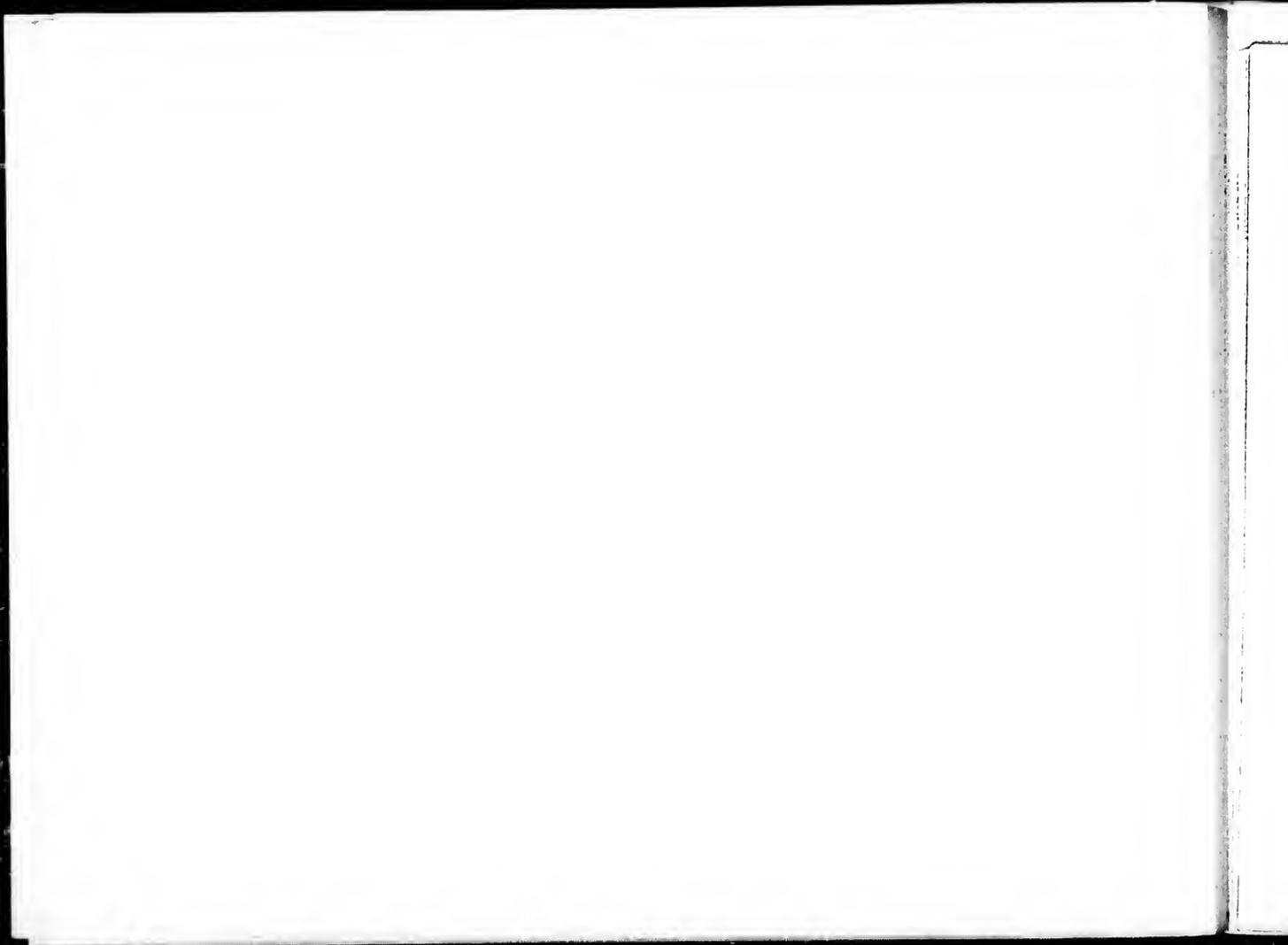
There are but one or two business streets in the town, and there are two or three wooden wharfs. The shops are nearly all of wood, tacked together: these first erections will soon be supplanted by superior ones, as the town prospers. There are an assay office, a custom-house, a treasury, and a pretty church, all wooden: a mint is about being established. The town is very lively during the mining season, and when its merchants have sufficient capital, they will probably cut off a portion of the direct trade with the mines, which Victoria at present almost monopolizes, causing New Westminster to be merely a forwarding-point; but the great advantages possessed by Victoria, which make her the principal seat of commerce in these parts, can never be overcome. About two miles from the town is a pretty wooden village, called the "Camp," where, under command of Colonel Moody, is a corps of sappers and miners, whose services have been very useful in surveying, making roads, &c.

Leaving this embryo city on a little high-pressure boat, we steam against a four-knot current between low wooded banks, and pass the deserted village of Fort Langley on the right. This location seems especially adapted for a town site; but for strategic reasons, the port of entry and custom-house being located at New Westminster, its business is no more. A few miles further and we arrive at the mouth of Harrison river, the clear bright blue of its water slowly mingling with the muddy stream of the Frazer.

Here commences "an entire change of scenery:" precipitous mountains from 1,000 to 4,000 feet high, whose peaks are capped with snow far into the summer, are on either side; the river winds amongst their bases with many sudden turns and greatly increased velocity, for fifty miles further, to the rapids above Fort Yale, where may be said to terminate the Lower Frazer division of the colony. Fifteen miles below Fort Yale is the town of Hope: both these towns are built of wood, and consist each of one business street parallel with the river; they have their busy season, when money is rapidly made, and even in their dull season the shopkeepers would by English tradesmen be considered prosperous.

Fort Langley, Fort Hope, and Fort Yale, are old posts of the Hudson-Bay Company, who seem to have been very happy in selecting the most favourable sites. Hopetown has probably the best of them, and for a great part of the year is the head of navigation. The level ground here is in the form of a triangle, the base of which, about a mile and a half in length, extends along the bank of the river, and lofty pyramidal mountains, covered as usual with trees, form its sides. At the lower end of the town a well-stocked, fine trout stream tumbles into the Frazer, and a waggon-road leading to the Similkameen district has been cut, blasted, and bridged along the side of the mountain.

During the early spring months, before melted snow swells the river, large canoes, manned by Indians, under a white captain, convey many tons of mer-

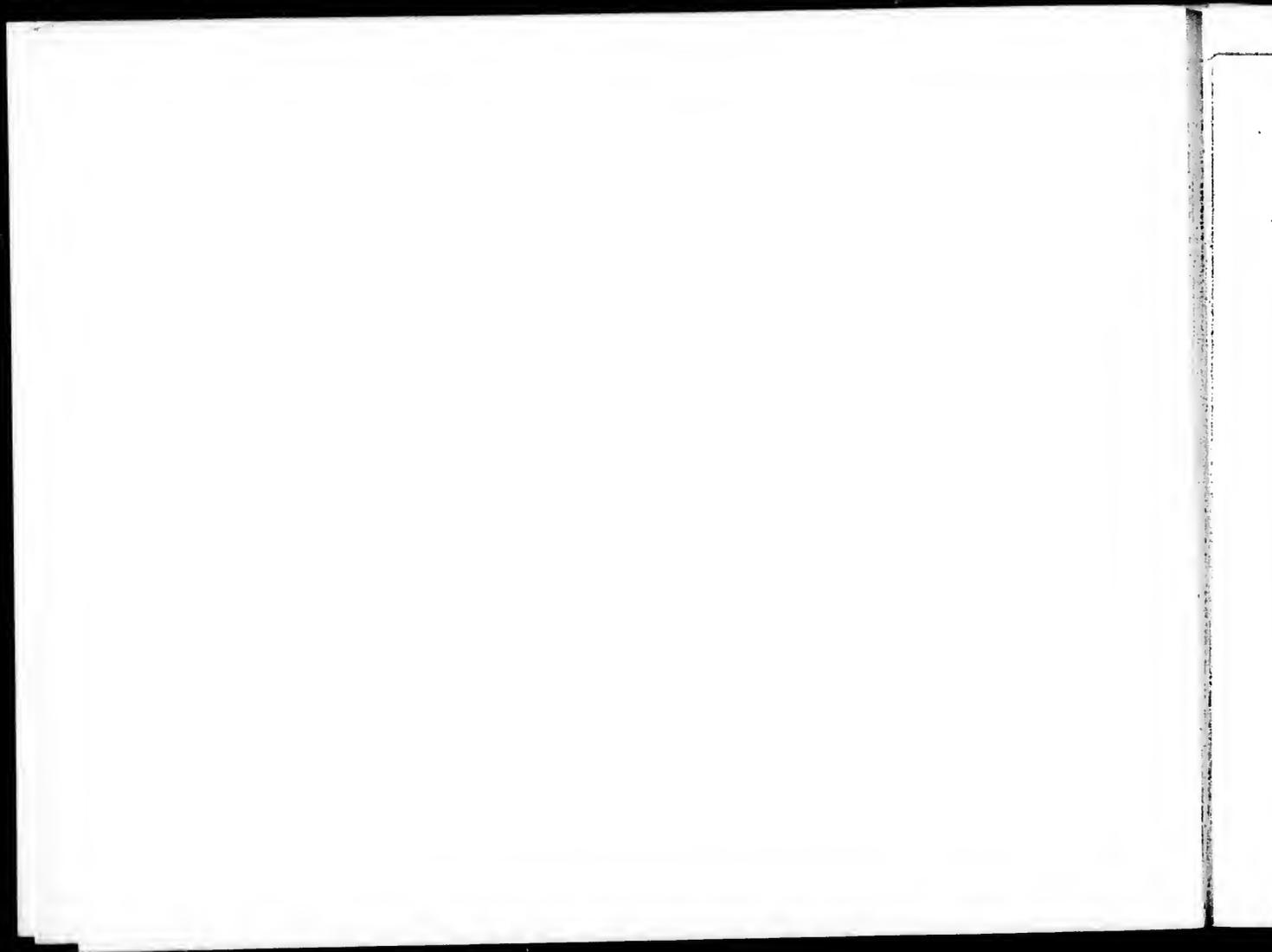


chandise through the rapids into the upper country. These rapids pass between the all but perpendicular bases of mountains, and the chasm is termed a canon (pronounced canyon). A trip on one of these canoes, when past the very dangerous canon, is a strong contrast to one on "thy stream o' Thames;" the great skill displayed in their management, the rugged and constantly varying mountain scenery, the tumultuous waters, and the merry red-painted Indians, who chat or chaff with other crews whom we meet or race against, and throw funny contemptuous remarks at the Chinese miners, whilst one luxuriously reclines on furs and smokes an after-dinner pipe, are apt to give pleasing and "new sensations." At a great expense, and with much engineering skill, a mule-path has been constructed along the side of the chasm beyond Yale, some 150 feet above low-water mark, and Indians are employed to pack themselves with about 100 pounds each. It is strange to find in this pass an old wall, the history of which no one knows. The scenery here is as wild as can be well imagined—mountains on every side rise precipitously into space, dotted with such trees as can find lodgement, and the roaring torrent foams along the dark channel below,—a singular spot for a man to choose living in; but a Frenchman has built his cabaret in a little nook of the mountain, cultivates flowers, sells beer and whisky to thirsty travellers, and is making his half-acre of ground into a large bouquet. Down below him is a rocky

obstruction across the channel, which would have been an effectual blockade to freight-boats; but, assisted by Government, Mr. George Dietz has constructed ingenious "ways;" and by making a portage, the boats continue their dangerous progress, lured on by the lucrative rate of freight. It was nearly to this point that our noble countrywoman and distinguished visitor, Lady Franklin, ascended when the good people of Yale held an aquatic *fête*, to do her honour, in 1890. The dangers of these rapids are well shown in the following extract from the *British Colonist* of November 28th, 1861:—

THE LAST CANON CASUALTY.—Fourteen lives were lost by the destruction of Dietz and Bullen's large freight-boat at the Three Rifles, in the *Big Canon* of Frazer River—Capt. Bullen, a Norwegian boatman, and twelve Indians. The boat was attempting to ascend on the left side of the Canon; the tow-rope had been made fast to the shore, and the crew were working at the capstan, when the boat took a sheer, ran partially across the river and went under. The entire crew were washed from the deck by the resistless force of the swift-rolling current, and swept into eternity in an instant's time. The boat then struck a rock, and breaking in two, floated rapidly down stream, and portions of her were picked up at Yale before the news of the calamity reached there. The goods which she was freighting up were not lost, a portage having been made previous to the accident. The news spread much consternation among the boatmen along the river, and Dustan's twenty-ton boat, which had reached the foot of the Falls in the *Little Canon*, was compelled to return to Yale, the crew, fearing to share a like fate, positively refusing to go further.

The Harrison river and lake route, with many portages, is another way of reaching the Upper Frazer,



and is the one most used during high water. The scenery on this route is still grander than that of the Frazer. From descriptions of the lake, one can imagine it equal to Como. The following distances will be found tolerably correct :—

From Victoria to New Westminster	80	miles.
New Westminster to Douglas, by steam	70	"
From Douglas to Cayoosh, steam on lakes	52	"
On the portages between the two places, stage	50	"
From Cayoosh to Fort Alexandria, on mule	180	"
Alexandria to Swift River, by boat	45	"
Swift River to Antler Creek (Cariboo)	40	"

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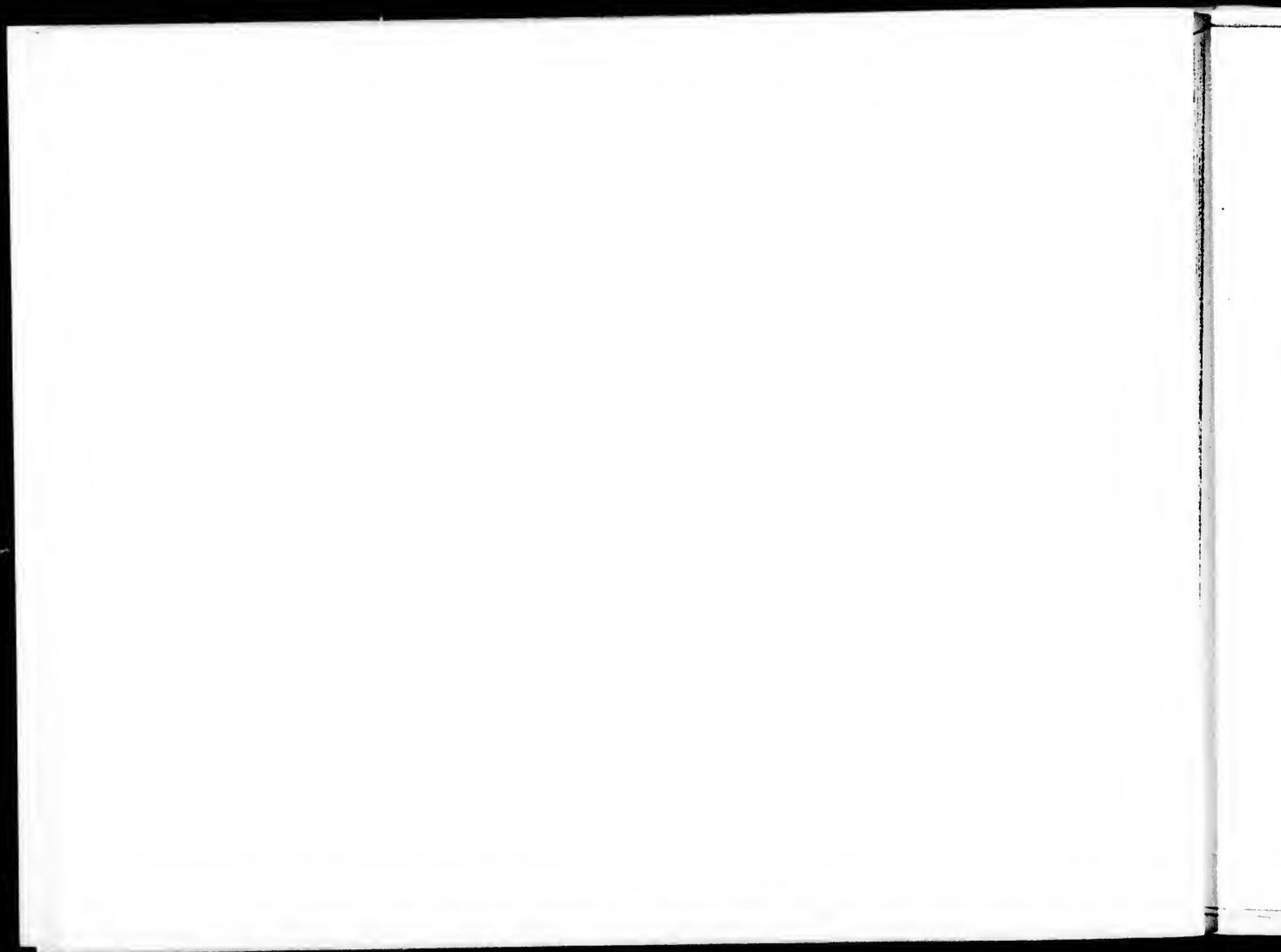
The surface of the Upper Frazer land is generally rough and broken, with occasional plains, and has many thousand acres suitable for stock-raising and farming; but when we get in the mining region of Cariboo, about 500 miles north of New Westminster, it is a perfect chaos,—rocks, swamps, lakes, mountains, streams, and felled trees, piled confusedly together; the air contains myriads of mosquitoes, and is cold enough to freeze mercury in winter, and gales of wind, with hail, sleet, rain, and snow during the summer; nevertheless man comes down after spending a season there, with ruddy complexion, increased rotundity, and contented face. The inducements to settle in this region must be great indeed, and we find only 200 out of its 2,000 visitors during 1861 remaining through the winter,—their reasons for doing so being

simply to avoid losing any time next season; but we must consider that they have been accustomed to a warm climate, and Canadians do not find this an intolerable one.

The following is a reliable account of the gold diggings at Cariboo, in the latter part of October, 1861, from the *British Columbian*:—

The next day, in company with a friend, I travelled some distance up and down Antler Creek, visiting several claims, and it struck me that if a few New Westminster croakers could witness for themselves what I saw, they would dry up on that old tune they have been harping at for the last two years. The best-paying claim on Antler Creek is that of Dud Morelan and Co., which has paid as high as 40 ounces to the hand per day. One day's work, the best they did, was 164 ounces. The next is that of Hazeltipe and Co., which has paid very well; and judging from the pleasant faces of the miners. I should say that the majority of them on the creek have no reason to regret their trip to Cariboo. Having heard so much said about Williams' Creek, I shouldered my blankets next morning, and started for the locality, distant 12 miles, over a very rough trail.

There are probably 350 miners on this creek, some of whom are doing exceedingly well; but out of the whole number I do not think there are one hundred washing pay dirt. Steele and Co, while I was looking on, in three days' washing, obtained the following result:—First day, 278 ounces; second day, 256 ounces; third day, 285 ounces. This, I believe, is the best-paying claim now working in Cariboo. Next comes Abbott and Co., who claim to have done the biggest day's work during the season, having taken out upwards of 296 ounces. The next is Fairbairn's claim; and these three claims, I believe, yield more gold than any other three in the country, although there are many others open which pay very well. On Lowhee Creek there are probably 70 men at work, most of them doing well. On Grouse Creek there are but four companies working with average success. On Last Chance, Burns, and



Chistholm Creeks, there are about 200 men doing very well. On Lightning Creek there are probably 200 men prospecting, but the claim of Ned Campbell and Co. is the only one, I think, that much will be taken out of this season. There are some 250 or 300 more men prospecting in the neighbourhood of those creeks, who will likely obtain good claims for next season.

Since Mr. Scott left Cariboo, the miners have left, and are nearly all on the way down.

This letter also, taken from the *British Colonist*, is interesting:—

“BROWN” ON CARIBOO. EDITOR BRITISH COLONIST:—In the letter taken from the *Ma*, which you published in your edition of yesterday morning, the following paragraph occurs:—

“In fact, it is as much as a person's life is worth to be there [in Cariboo] without money or friends to bring one back.”

Now, Sir, it is very evident that the person who concocted the above sentence has acquired but a very imperfect knowledge of the Cariboo country and the manners and customs of its inhabitants. It is the simplest thing in the world for a broken man to travel down from the mines to Lillooet or New Westminster without a cent in his pockets, and to live on the fat of the land on the road. I know one or two persons who left Cariboo in the above predicament, and who turned up as fat and hearty at Victoria as those who were troubled with a heavy swag of gold. The fact is, there was not a single house of accumulation in the upper country last year where a man would be refused a good meal on his informing the parties who kept the house that he was destitute of means. Cariboo men do not allow any one to go hungry if they have the means to relieve him; and from my experience there, I should say, a more liberal and better disposed crowd has seldom or ever been seen in a new mining district. The traders, especially, were, with few exceptions, very liberal in supplying goods on credit, to men, some of whom, just up from California, were entirely unknown to them.

These facts ought to convince Mr. Brown, that his valuable life would not be endangered by his being left without cash in Cariboo.

With regard to his sufferings in the snow, if he cannot rough it, and stand a considerable amount of exposure, he certainly is not the man to go to any new mines. The climate of Cariboo, although severe and unpleasant, is, nevertheless, a very healthy one, and, with the exception of a little rheumatism, there was scarcely a single case of sickness last season. Owing to the want of roads, and the difficult nature of the ground, Cariboo undoubtedly proved a hard mining country; but during the coming year things will go on much smoother. Even should the hardships be multiplied threefold, *the fact that the gold is there* will prove sufficient inducement for miners to go through. In this (the 19th) century riches do not suddenly cleave to men, unless they exert themselves, and dare a little to obtain them.

A COCKNEY WHO WAS AT CARIBOO.

Victoria, December 4th, 1861.

The mining-ground of the colony commences a few miles below Hope, where from 4s. to 30s. can be obtained per day. There have been large amounts taken out of banks, bars, and gulches, between this town and Yale. Above the rapids the gold-surface spreads to the right and left, up the large tributary of Thompson River from the east, and the smaller ones from the west; and it is continuously found on the main stream as far as its source through the Cariboo district has been prospected. As it is known to exist on the east slope of the Rocky Mountains, we can only conjecture what space the gold region covers.

The following is from the *British Columbian*, published at New Westminster:—

CARIBOO SURPASSED.—From a letter written by Mr. McLean, of Kamloops, we obtain the following interesting information:—A number of men have been engaged in mining upon certain streams

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emptying into the head-waters of the Thompson. Five men took out 1,100 ounces, or say 15,700 dollars in one day. 55,000 dollars by six men in seven weeks, and 14,000 dollars was taken out of a piece of ground 12 feet square. Two men had taken out 43,000 dollars in coarse gold, in which were the following nuggets—one 7 lbs., one 15½ oz., one 11¼ oz., one 10½ oz., &c., the smallest piece being 25 cents. The greater portion of the above gold had been placed in the hands of Mr. McLean for safe keeping, and the statement is perfectly reliable. This goes far to prove the correctness of the opinion held by gentlemen in Lytton, Yale, and Hope, that all that large region of country watered by both branches of the Thompson, as well as their numerous tributaries, will equal, if not surpass, the famous Cariboo.—*British Columbian*.

The prevalent impression on a miner's mind being that the great strikes are somewhere ahead, keeps him prospecting and exploring beyond his companions, so that this hitherto "terra incognita," and naturally all but inaccessible land, will become in a very few years, it is likely, intimately known as far to the north and west as is practicable. Very little gold has been found in the western section, causing the belief that its matrix is in the Rocky Mountains.

The gold of the Lower Frazer is properly called dust, and has to be caught with quicksilver: in the upper country it becomes coarser the nearer we approach the river's source: flatted, irregular-shaped pieces, and weighing a few grains, up to 7 or 8 lbs. weight, are found.

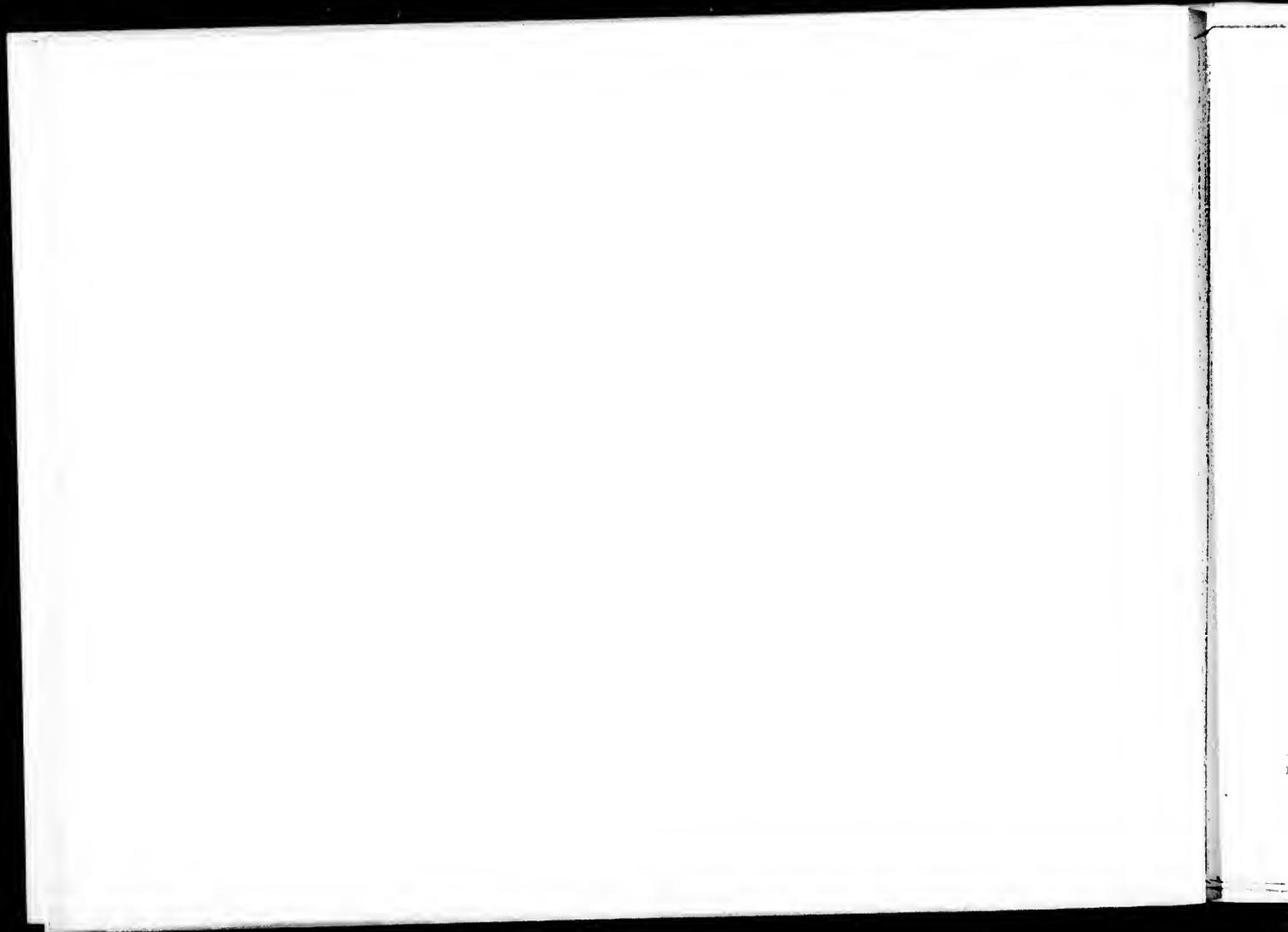
Towards the "Pounts," there are three or four benches, retiring step-fashion and extending for miles along the banks of the stream: they are composed of

gravel containing gold, have smooth, rounded, beach-like outlines, and are covered with grass. Their peculiar appearance has given rise to a theory that the river has, at three or four intervals, washed away impediments in its mountain course, and thus left these, its supposed former banks, exposed. Good pay dirt has been found on them in places.

The climate of British Columbia is as variable as its different elevations; in the southerly portion it is about 10° colder than that of the Victoria district, and the further north and more elevated, of course the more and more severe it becomes; the snow remaining in Cariboo until June, whilst on the lower land of the Frazer its spring is not much behind that of Victoria.

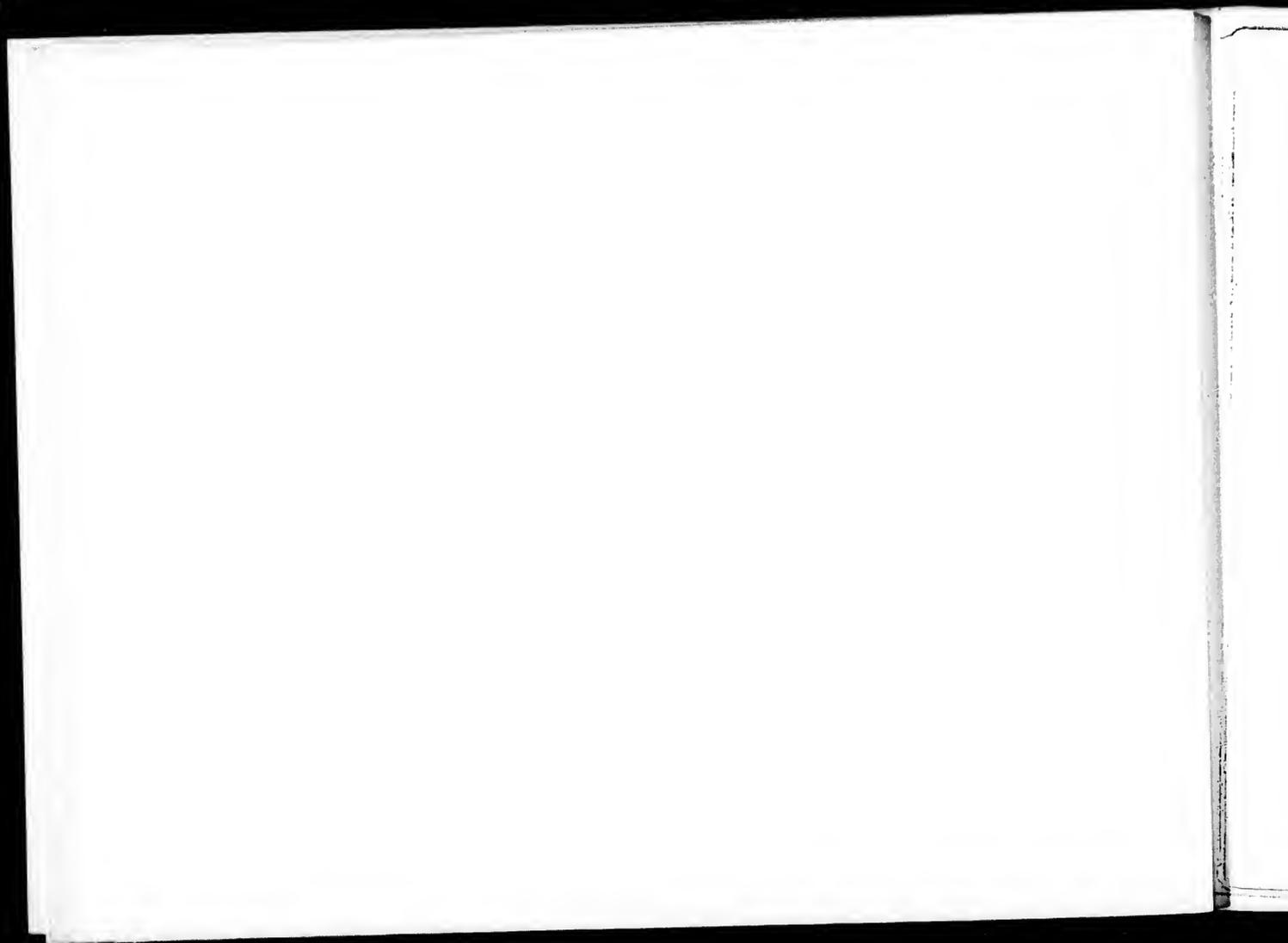
Musquitoes are a great preventive of bodily comfort; but however thickly we may be sprinkled with their venom, it is merely superficial, and after three months' constant exposure, if not compelled to leave the country, like one in about three thousand, we bear their attacks with more or less stoicism, but never cease to be annoyed by their beautifully constructed daggers, and the sound of their gradually approaching trumpets, which "oft in the stilly night" chases away "tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep."

The Indians, owing to the just and humane treatment of the Hudson-Bay Company, and their implicit confidence in and subjection to Governor Douglas, are a harmless and very useful population; they are in constant contact with the whites, and much amalgamation is taking



place: the law severely punishes supplying them with liquors, as it converts them into wild beasts. They are becoming self-conscious of this, and through the exertions of Catholic missionaries, mainly, great numbers have lately taken the temperance pledge, a paper certificate of which, pasted on to canvas, they carry about them, and prize highly. "Lo, the poor Indian," is not peculiarly applicable here, as they earn a great deal of money by their skilful management of canoes, by fishing, packing, carving curiosities, chopping wood, &c.; and being almost the only settled population, numbering six to ten thousand souls, and spending all their earnings in the colony, they may be considered, whilst ably managed, a very valuable body. From some historical cause they have a great respect for "King George men," though Americans and other foreigners are always well treated, providing they do not abuse them; the Pike-county man, therefore, who thinks no more of shooting a red-skin than if he were a deer, has to restrain this "proclivity" whilst in the colony. As the bulk of the population will naturally be in the upper country, the farmer can see at once what an excellent market is here offered; the land is equally cheap as in Vancouver's Island, and many unoccupied valuable farming-lands may be found. The freight alone on produce from New Westminster to even Lillooet and Lytton is about one shilling per pound: this itself, for potatoes, oats, &c., is highly remunerative. They who have been engaged in

farming since 1859 are now wealthy. Though there is much good agricultural and grazing land, British Columbia is essentially a vast mineral region; silver veins have been tapped on the Lower Frazer and on Harrison River; there are hills of plumbago on the coast; rich copper ore is found on Queen Charlotte's Island, and platina shows itself in some of its streams; but the number of its minerals and quantities are obscured and little noticed, whilst its gold is so abundant. The extent of even this is, as before stated, merely conjectured. Quartz, mica-slate, clay-slate, and other metamorphic rocks, are exposed, and granite mountains are common; limestone, coal, and sandstone, lie more frequently on Vancouver's Island. The rivers being swift and in places narrow, steamboats of peculiar construction are necessary: suitable ones will reap golden harvests for years to come, in all probability; they are required to be British bottoms. Setting aside the boats of the Hudson-Bay Company they have been built at Victoria, and with one exception San Francisco has supplied their machinery: three out of the six or eight have burst their boilers during the last two years. The necessary qualities for them to possess are ability to ascend an eight-knot current; not to draw, when loaded, more than twenty-four inches water, or exceed one hundred and twenty feet in length; be of narrow beam, that they may run near to shore in eddies; and carry, if possible, seventy-five tons. High pressure, tested 150 lbs. to the inch, and stern wheels



are the kind most in use. As there are but four or five at present in which to carry to and from the mines twenty to forty thousand passengers, at about ten shillings per head, besides the provisions, mining tools, &c., to supply this army of Cariboo—the price of freight being, at least, one pound per ton for one hundred and fifty miles—it is likely some twenty thousand pounds will be received by them during the present year. Allowance should be made for great numbers of the crowd passing through Oregon, by the “Dalles,” a route far from being equal to that *vid* Victoria; but these swarms of travellers scatter so much money on their road, that newspapers, traders, and others, more or less interested, use every art to divert it into their own section. In connection with steamboats, the price of fuel is of great importance; coal, though so near the surface, and easily extracted, being worth about thirty shillings per ton, owing to high wages. The little mining town of Nanaimo, called the “Newcastle” of this coast, is on Vancouver’s Island, nearly opposite the mouth of Frazer River. The river steamboats mostly burn wood, which is cut into four-foot lengths, and stacked in cords at different points on the river-bank: it is sold at about sixteen shillings per cord. This quantity is a stack four feet high, four feet wide, and eight feet long.

Several exploring parties have attempted to find a route to the new “El dorado” from the coast, and Captain Cavendish Venables appears to have dis-

covered one from the south arm of the Bentinck, and a still better one leading from Bute Inlet has been made known.

An old California pioocer, a Scotchman, named Downie, has been untiring in his efforts to make discoveries, which the Governor, particularly desirous they should be made, has assisted. Under the Major’s (his California title) superintendence, a company attempted to prospect Queen Charlotte’s Island; but its rigorous climate led to nothing further than the confirmation of the existence of gold-bearing quartz, which would require expensive machinery to work advantageously. Mr. Downie also took a party through from the coast, returning by Frazer River; thus establishing its practicability. He is supposed to have made a valuable discovery during the past year, whilst on a cruise in a vessel built for him by an enterprising merchant named Burnaby.

Competition amongst packers will settle whether either of them is better than the established route of the Frazer; and the Government is contracting for a good road between the points where the present terminate and the Cariboo district.

Instead of as at present occupying about three weeks to reach this section from Victoria, in another year it may probably be reached, without fatigue, in seven or ten days.

The Government of British Columbia has now authorized a loan of £100,000 for twenty years, bear-

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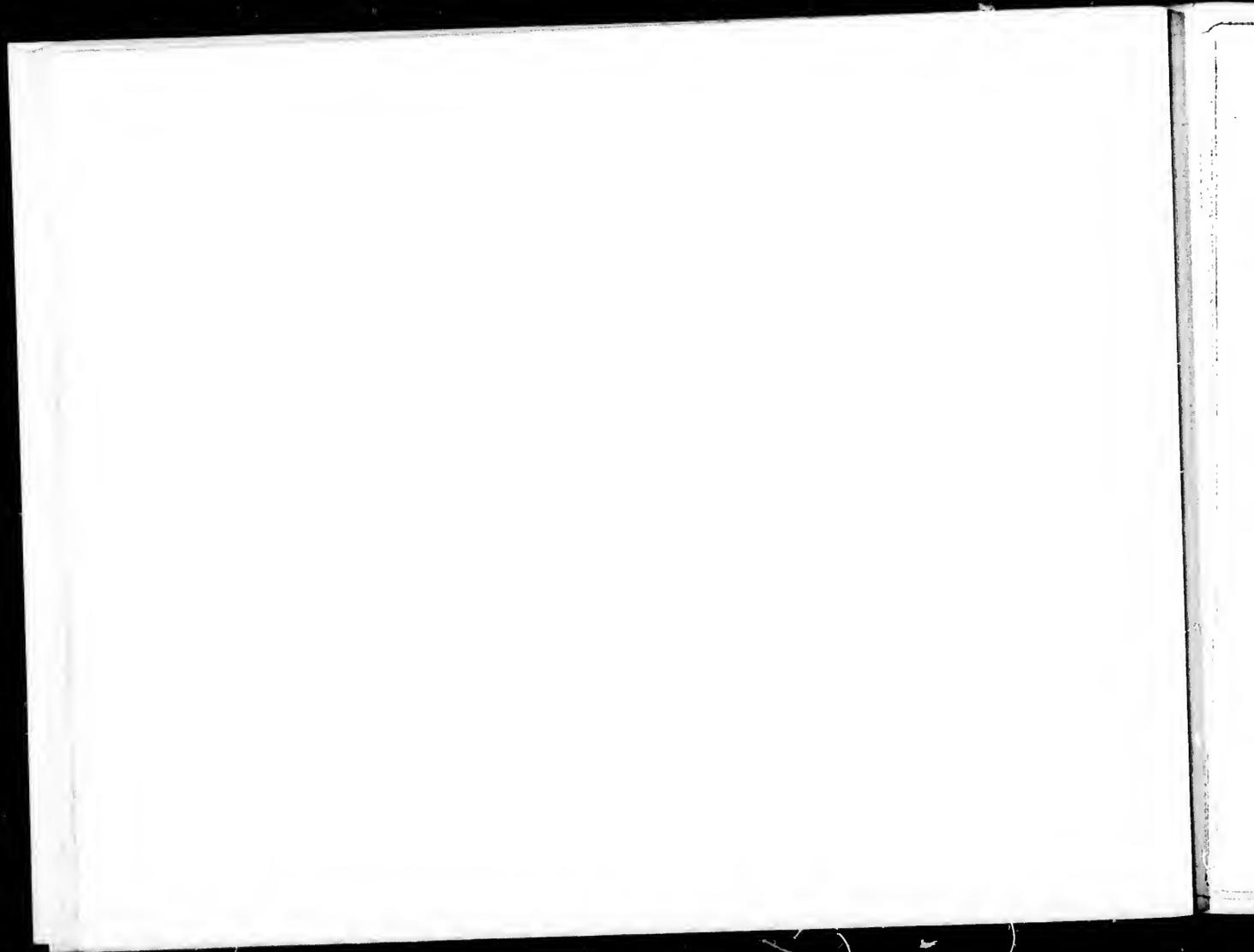
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ing interest at 6 per cent. per annum, which will doubtless be readily negotiated. A duty of 10 per cent. on merchandise, levied at New Westminster, a few tolls, and a miner's tax of £1 per annum, constitute the revenue of the colony.

During the spring and summer months of 1858 from 20,000 to 30,000 people, nearly all of them men in the prime of life, emigrated chiefly from California to British Columbia, *via* Victoria. This town was until their arrival a quiet English village, with a large picketed fort. It contained about three hundred whites, a few coloured people; and an Indian village across the harbour sheltered a varying population of the aborigines.

Previous to the gold excitement, exclusive legislation in California caused a number of well-to-do and more intelligent of its coloured population to seek a home on this British soil; some of them purchased building lots for £20, which, in a few weeks afterwards, were worth £600 to £800. These people are sometimes openly insulted by rowdies, which causes trouble, and their great desire to be on a perfect social equality with the whites, against the latter's inclination, produces an unpleasant feeling. They are an industrious and well-behaved class, and the outskirts of the town are ornamented with their neat homesteads. A great majority of the Frazer River prospectors remained on the banks of the lower part of its swift yellow stream, waiting for its subsidence. After risking their lives in

old tubs of steamships on the Pacific, and again in crossing the gulf, developing their muscles by pulling wearily miles after miles against the stream, stung intolerably by mosquitoes, and half-baked by a fiery sun, or drenched with rains, these men, living on coarse ship fare, had their patience buoyed up by imagining the glittering mines of gold before them, but not get-at-able just then; they planted sticks at the water's edge, to denote any change, and many hopes at a slight fall were blighted by sudden and vigorous rises: at length frost set in above, the banks and bars became bare, and their eyes were opened, for, excepting at a few places, all they could earn was barely sufficient to find them food, winter was near, and, panic-struck, declaring themselves victims of the greatest humbug ever got up by steamboat men and traders, they rushed through Victoria back to California as rapidly as two or three steam-ships a week could take them. Such was the haste to leave this "howling wilderness," as an eloquent barrister termed it, that several lives were lost and many limbs frozen by a rash attempt to reach Fort Langley over a supposed trail: the snow fell, they lost their way, the cold became intense; but making a fire, they passed a miserable night, and next morning they plunged forward through the snow and thicket until their strength gave way and they sank exhausted. Captain J. Wright, on his steamboat the *Surprise*, which, whistling, kept near the bank, was the means of saving many; but his utmost exertions



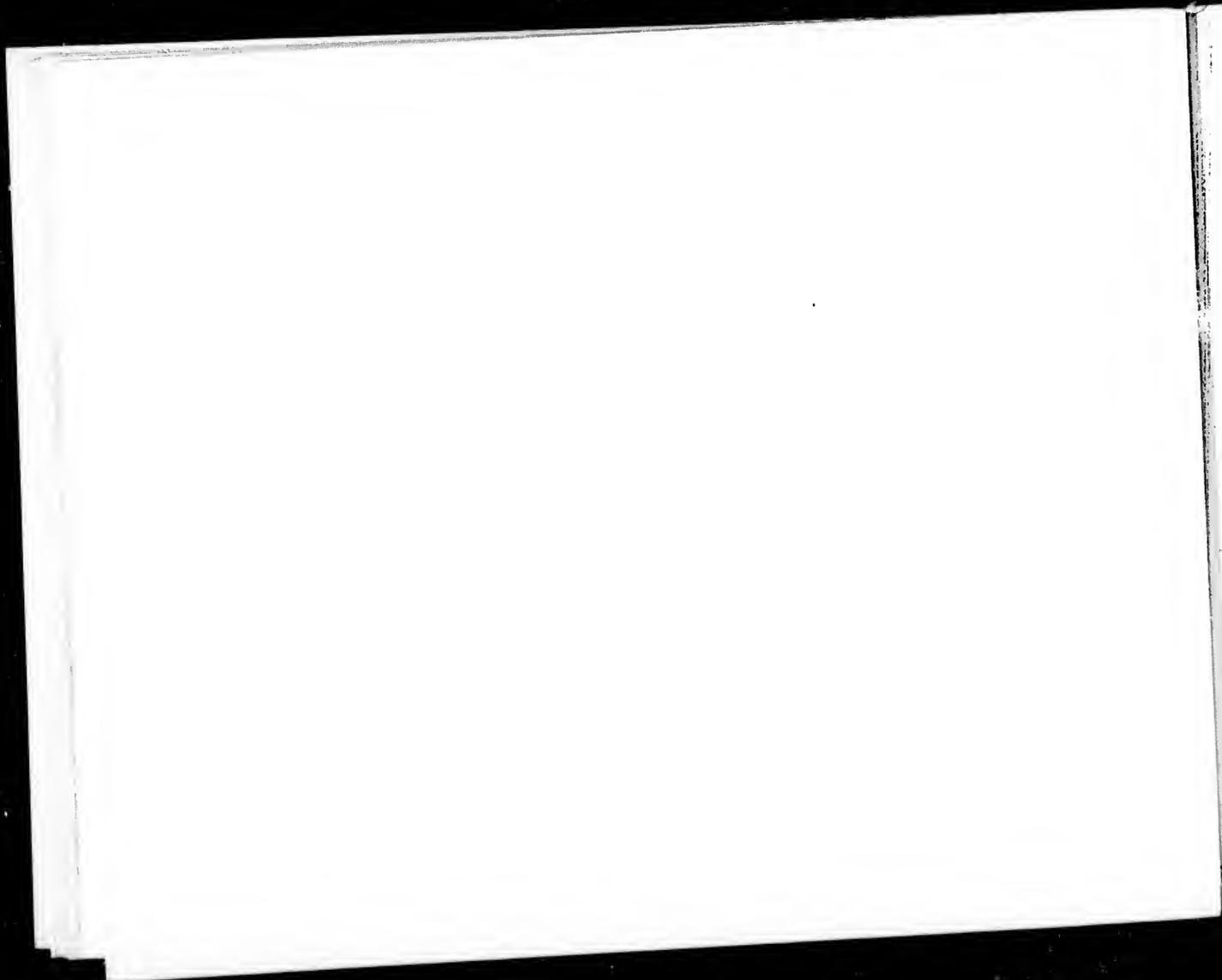
failed to rescue all. Out of the whole number of Frazer River adventurers, from one to three hundred remained in British Columbia and in Victoria, and at places in Puget Sound 3,000 or 4,000 others. This crowd of working men represented the mining population of California. Composed of men from many lands, they were generally intelligent, under very rough exteriors, and, accustomed to self-government, they behaved on the whole exceedingly well. They submitted to the laws passed from time to time, although some of them, arising from the Hudson-Bay Company's charter, appeared oppressive and unjust.

The hardy miners, with their long beards, red shirts, revolvered and bowie-knifed belts, and extensive boots, were to an European eye, or to the class they termed "the kid-gloved gentry," more picturesque than orderly in appearance. They had to undergo much chaffing in California, but covered their chagrin in good-humoured jokes; and as their loss would have been severely felt in the mountains of that country, they were cordially welcomed back. The country was but a hunting-ground, and not prepared for a sudden swarm of 25,000 omnivorous creatures. The prospector had either to pack his provisions on his back and get into the upper country, over a path only suitable for goats, or greatly risk both property and life on the dangerous rapids of the river. A common remark was, "that nature had endeavoured to make the country inaccessible, and had very nearly succeeded." If the roads which now give

easy access had then traversed it, instead of the 6,000 whites and Chinese in the colony during 1861, it is not unreasonable to suppose there would have been a population of 100,000.

Political feeling is tolerably strong in Victoria, considering its number of British subjects is but about 2,000, and a possibility of the interests of its residents, or their rights and privileges, suffering from neglect of the watchful community is very slight. There is the Government party, which the "Opposition Reform" party considers too "slow and sure;" the "Independent" party, whose only aim appears to be the public good; the "Anti-coloured" and the "Coloured" party, which latter is likely to be in a majority by its members becoming British subjects, and white ones not arriving. Besides these, there are one or two parties founded on personal feelings. In "New Westminster" and "Hope" the community seems to be divided into two parties, the one adopting the maxim of "Let well enough alone," and the other being desirous of a radical change. As the present form was understood to be merely *pro tem.*, it is likely some change will be made as it becomes more settled.

That the general legislation has been wise and the wants of the colonies carefully studied, is sufficiently proved by the prosperity of both, and the good estimation in which they are held abroad, a country where one's life and property is safe, and where civilized people find themselves at home.



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Many of the scenes of '58 are about to re-occur during '62. The Cariboo fever is raging in the neighbouring countries even more fiercely than that of the Frazer River; but the country is now better prepared to receive the estimated thirty thousand so affected, and the "on to Cariboo" will terminate very differently to that of "on to Frazer River." We may expect to hear of suffering from rashness, but nothing to the extent of the former "rush;" and during a year from this date be able to read that some £6,000,000 have been abstracted, two-thirds of which have enriched the neighbouring states, one-third of it sent to England, and the balance remains in the colonies.

It appears inconsistent, but it is a fact that money is considered cheap at 12 per cent. per annum, and they who make a business of loaning small amounts obtain 2 per cent. to 3 per cent. per month on security quite satisfactory. The bankers' rate in San Francisco, which is the commercial capital of a gold country fourteen years old, is 2 per cent. per month for short time loans.

Real estate in good localities of Victoria is considered there as safe an investment as in the Strand, London. A shop 20 feet wide by 50 feet, in a brick building, is readily let at a rental of £20 to £30 per month, and one in a wooden shell of £4 to £15 per month.

It is difficult to refrain from speculating on the future of these colonies; the mineral wealth of British

Columbia is incalculable, and there is agricultural land enough in various parts, especially from the Thompson River to the 49th parallel, to support millions of people; and the probability of acquiring wealth rapidly is greater than in any part of the world.

A line of telegraphic wires connecting Halifax in Nova Scotia with Victoria, and a railroad, or at least a good waggon-road, between British Columbia and Canada, have many advocates, and it does not seem improbable that Victoria will become the principal distributor of European manufactures throughout the North Pacific.

Americans and Canadians will flock to it, and ships from all parts of the world will discharge their cargoes and passengers at Victoria and Esquimalt; large towns will spring up on land now covered with forest, and many thousands of men now poor will be made wealthy in a few years. It is the "land of promise" for the labourer, but unfortunately very far removed from home: hence this class is to a great extent debarred by the expense of reaching it, and no assistance is rendered. As the gold district is so extensive and can only be worked during a few months each year, there is no danger of even the surface being exhausted for years to come.

Much alteration may take place in the rates of wages, and labourers may become too numerous by large emigration; on the other hand, a great increase of their populations, and the vast extent of mining ground,

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appear far more likely to cause a long-continued prevalence of the same rate of remuneration for physical labour.

The emigrant should carefully weigh these chances, and must use his judgment in concluding whether or not to adopt these colonies as his future home. His best time to arrive would evidently be during the spring months at Victoria, as then numbers leave it for British Columbia.

There are three routes by which to reach these colonies, and the prices of passage are as follows:—

Southampton to San Francisco, by steam, *via* Panama—

First Class	...	...	...	£65	0	0	and upwards.
Second Class	...	...	...	49	0	0	
Third Class	...	...	...	35	0	0	

Liverpool to San Francisco, by steam, *via* New York and Panama—

First Class	...	...	...	...	£59	0	0
Second Class	...	...	...	...	60	0	0
Third Class	...	...	...	...	30	0	0

London direct to Victoria, Vancouver's Island, direct, by sailing vessel—

First Class	...	...	...	...	£12	0	0
Second Class	...	...	...	...	36	15	0
Third Class	...	...	...	...	26	5	0

San Francisco to Victoria, by steam—

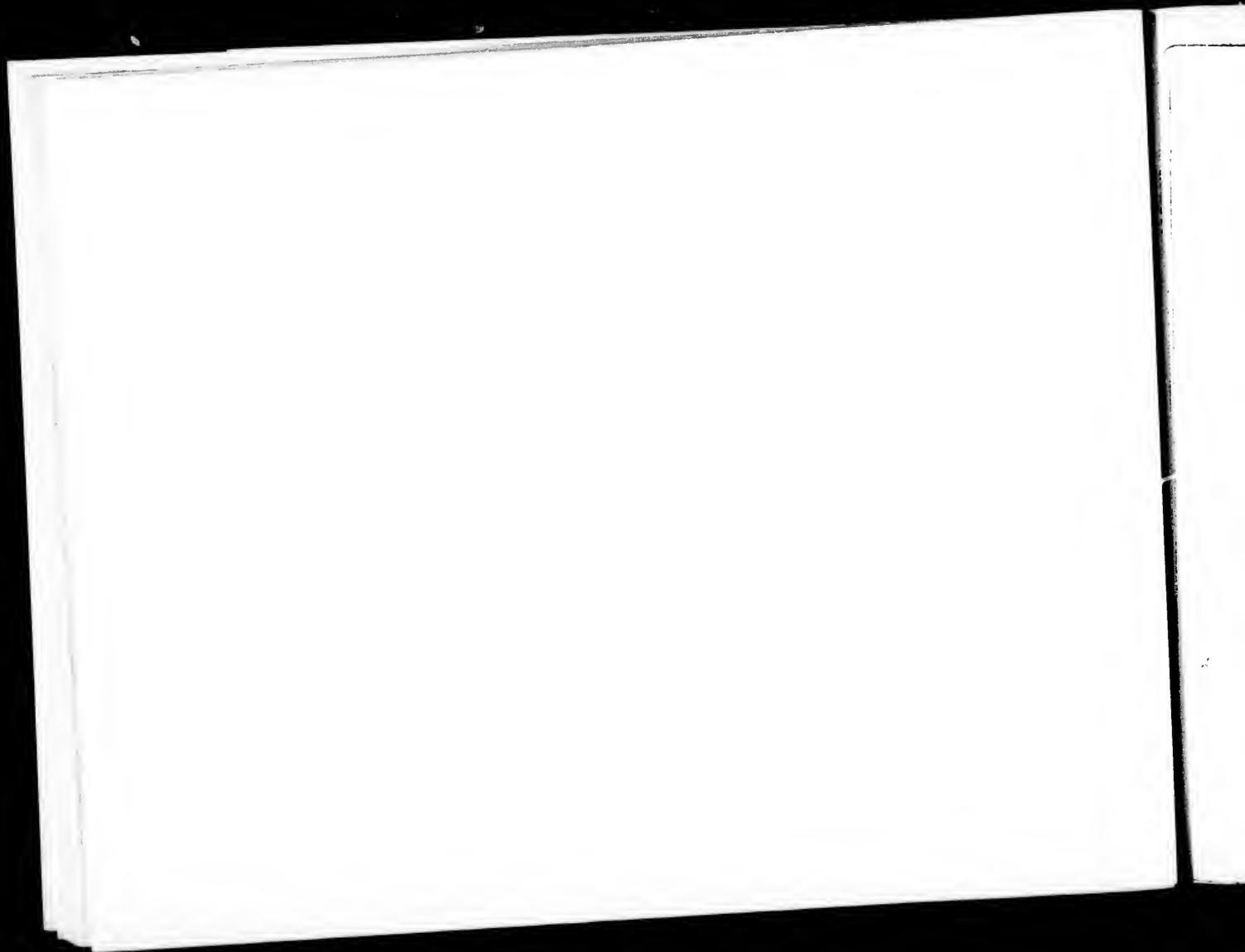
First Class	...	...	...	...	£10	0	0
Second Class	...	...	...	...	5	0	0

San Francisco to Victoria, by coasting vessel, £2.

It is thus seen that the lowest fare from England to Victoria by steamship is £35; and as the casual expenses cannot be estimated safely at less than £10, the entire cost by this method would be £45, of which £3 might be saved by taking a sailing vessel at San Francisco. The length of this steam passage is about forty days, which may be considered its only advantage as the comfort and food of a third-class passenger are more than equalled by those of a sailing vessel.

Steamship travelling has a great drawback in its high price of freight, all baggage weighing more than 50 lbs. is charged at the rate of £30 per ton, with an additional 5*d.* per lb. for crossing the Isthmus. By taking a passage, therefore, in a sailing vessel, and no casual expenses being necessarily incurred, the passenger arrives in Victoria for about one-half the cost of a trip by steam, with equal, if not superior, comfort; but the time occupied is about 150 days instead of the forty by steamships.

In travelling by either method, it is a mistake to encumber oneself with much luggage; the emigrant will find in Victoria every kind of clothing, furniture, or other necessary, and it will prove more to his advantage to purchase as required at the extra price, than to



expend his cash at home by laying in a superfluous stock, either on speculation or for future use.

The steamboat's charge for passage to Fort Yale or Douglas is about £1. 10s., and the passenger finds his own food, or pays 4s. a meal at the table of the boat. The cost of a trip to "Cariboo" is at least £6; but it would be barely prudent to attempt it with less than £10 at starting.

Steady men willing to work will quickly find employment at good wages; they who go with the intention of settling for years in the colony, not expecting to make their fortunes at once, are the most likely to succeed, in the mines particularly. This feeling, of "contented with little," assists a man materially, and the "runabouts," when they hear the amount of his "pile," at the end of the season, call him "lucky."

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GUIDE BOOK
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