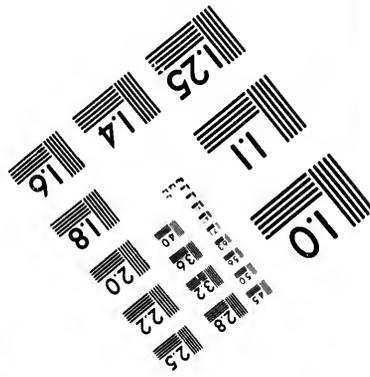
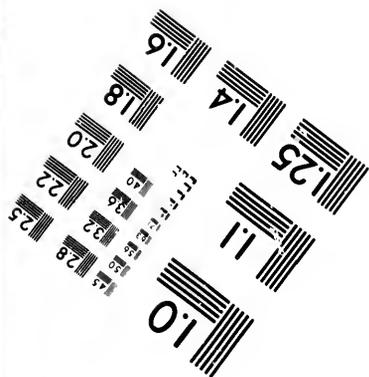
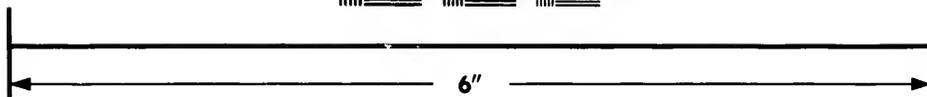
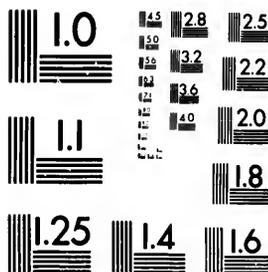


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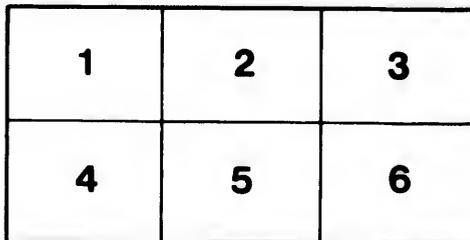
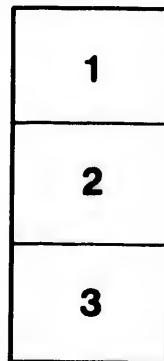
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THE  
**Fraser Mines Vindicated,**  
OR,  
**THE HISTORY OF FOUR MONTHS.**

BY  
**ALFRED WADDINGTON.**

**PRICE, FIFTY CENTS.**

"Scribitur ad narrandum non ad probandum."

Quintilianus

**VICTORIA:**

PRINTED BY P. DE CARRO, WHARF STREET.  
1858.

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**TO MY FELLOW PIONEERS,**

**FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCE.**

I OFFER you the first book published on Vancouver Island, and I recommend it to you. Not for its own merit, which I value at no more than what it has cost me, that is to say a few days scribbling at spare hours; but on account of its object. The circulation of truth can but be useful; so I invite each of you to buy a copy, which shall be carefully put down to your account of patriotism, and also to that of the printer.

**ALFRED WADDINGTON.**

**VICTORIA, Nov. 15, 1858.**

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\* When the above was written Judge Cameron's Book of Practice had not appeared.

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THE  
FRASER MINES VINDICATED;

OR,

THE HISTORY OF FOUR MONTHS.

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"Scribitur ad narrandum non ad probandum."

QUINCTILIAN.

WE hear every day that Victoria has caved in; that the country has caved in; that the gold mines are a humbug; that our soil is poor, the climate Siberian; that Victoria is no port at all, and that the city will have to be removed somewhere else; in short, that the bubble has burst, and nothing more remains to do, but to go away.

Luckily assertions are not facts.

Like many others, who feel attached to the country, I was in hopes that such a torrent of invective would exhaust itself, or produce a reaction, or that some more fitting person would take up the pen; and in the absence of any public organ apparently willing to vindicate the country and show things in their real light, would assume its defence, and manfully point out those who were at fault and where the blame should attach. Meanwhile the uncontroverted falsehood is daily carried abroad, to be circulated, commented upon and exaggerated, and since nobody else will come forward to put a stop to misrepresentations, which might ultimately blight our prospects for years; and also a little because I have been mixed up with our first beginnings, I will attempt to undertake the task.

The moment is favorable, and now that our dreams of fortune are gone bye; that we have passed from the fever of overwrought excitement to the dull calm of reality, that idlers who had no business here have left, and detractors, who had still less so, are gone to find fault somewhere else; now that things have about found their level, and we can soberly reflect on and appreciate our situation; let us pause for a moment, and, casting a glance on the past, and also on the probable future, examine whether we are really so badly off as some will have it.

It would be a long story to go over all the blunders that have been committed; and yet it is the only way to come at the causes of our present disappointment, and show that they have nothing to do with our future prosperity. I will, therefore, relate things as they have taken place, in all truth and sincerity, endeavouring at the same time to be as brief as possible.

The first fault was decidedly committed by the California miners, in coming too soon in spite of all they were told, and when it was neither possible to get to the mines, nor to do anything when there. This gross mistake has been commented upon often enough. It has been one of the great sources of all their losses and disappointment; and I will only add here, that they did no worse than the traders and merchants after them. For some time past labor and capital had been at a discount in California; both were in a hurry to find a remunerative employment, and the miners naturally came first. The greater part of the country drained by Fraser river strongly resembles all other very mountainous countries, and more especially those in the same latitude of western Europe, such as Switzerland for instance; where the streams are invariably the lowest during the winter, and only begin to swell and overflow about June. Now, as all the diggings were at first concentrated in the bed of the river, it was impossible under such circumstances, to have chosen a worse time than the month of June to begin them in. Before this however, and as early as March or the beginning of April, when the river was at its lowest, parties of Canadians and adventurers from Puget Sound had managed to get up the country with a small stock of provisions,

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and had worked some of the richer bars below Fort Yale, and even higher up than the Forks of the Thompson.

The existence of gold had been known to the Hudson's Bay Company for some years, and nuggets had been found by different parties and shown to the officers; but, as far as I can collect, the invariable answer was, that supposing the gold to exist, the Company had no particular interest to work it. The Indians, however, used to exchange small quantities for blankets and provisions, and I have seen gold myself in the hands of an Indian chief in 1854. It is generally supposed, that the Company has collected more gold in this way, and for a mere trifle, than it is willing to make known. Since then, a few Canadians from Fort Colville, or that neighborhood, going over the country by the way of Fort Thompson and Bonaparte river to the Fraser above the Big Falls, prospected on the way; and meeting with gold almost everywhere, and in some places in sufficient quantities, made up their minds to tarry among the Indians and work it. It was the report of these men, which getting abroad, decided the above adventurers to start in the early season and try their luck also; and these having succeeded beyond expectation, the news soon spread over the Sound, and from thence was carried by the steamers to San Francisco.

It may be useful here, and before going any further, to give the reader some outline of the country where these gold discoveries are situated; and which at that time, and even now, has hardly been explored.

Fraser river takes its rise in the Rocky Mountains, on the northern slope and nearly at the foot of Mount Bruno, in lat. 52.20 and long. 149. From thence, taking a N. E. direction towards the Russian territory, it pursues a nearly straight line for about 75 miles along the western slope of the Rocky Mountains, till it attains its highest northern latitude at 54.20; when it makes a turn to the west, following that direction for about 20 miles, and then, as if uncertain of its course, suddenly turns in a south-westerly direction towards Fort George, situated in lat. 54, at which point it receives the waters of Stuart river. In the course of this semi-circular route the Fraser re-

ceives one or two affluents which take their rise in the Russian territory beyond 51.40 and of which Stuart river is the most considerable.

From Fort George, Fraser river continues its S. W. course for about 20 miles more; and then describing an irregular turn, takes the S. S. E. direction, which it constantly maintains for 4 1-2 deg., or 320 miles, to Fort Hope. At this point, the river makes a gradual bend towards the west, which direction it continues to the Sound; and after receiving the waters from Harrison lake, 55 miles lower down, empties itself into the Gulf of Georgia, 80 miles below Fort Hope.

Returning to Fort George, and about 100 miles below, or to the southward, we find Fort Alexandria, situated on the Fraser about lat. 52.40. This is the extreme northern limit of the gold region explored up to this time; indeed only a few adventurers have penetrated so far, though gold is well known to exist much further north.

From latitude 52.20 down to the Big Falls in lat. 50.50, Fraser river and its affluents, the Joses, Pavilion and Fountain, on the east side, and on the west, the Chilcoaton, Bridge river, and other streams, have been partially prospected, and gold found on all of them, as well as in some of the neighboring hills. The first diggings, however, that have been worked to any extent, are at the Fountain, six miles above the Big Falls, where the river is precipitated over a ledge of rocks. From thence down to the junction of Thompson river, about 60 miles below, the valley of the Fraser opens to 4 or 5 miles in width, and some few dry diggings have been prospected here and there and paid well. Indeed they are well known to exist, but almost all the gold has been so far taken out of the bars on the river. These have been more and more worked as we approach to the Forks of the Thompson. Considerable sums also have been taken out on the bars of the Thompson itself up to Nicolas river, about 45 miles higher, but I am not aware that they have been worked any further. Gold is well known to exist, over a large extent of country in this direction, both on the Thompson and its tributaries. This river falls into the Fraser from the N. E., in lat. 50.40, and as before said, about 60 miles below the Big Falls.

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Most of the bars from the Forks of the Thompson, and for 35 miles below, down to Fort Yale, have been more or less worked. It is between these two points, that the two famous canons, or defiles, have proved such insuperable obstacles, both to the navigation of the river, and the forwarding of provisions upwards. About eighteen miles below the Forks, and at the entrance of the Upper Canon, the river plunges into a series of defiles, forming miles of the most violent rapids; the whole surrounded by a chain of mountains and precipices almost equally impracticable. The lower or Little Canon, is situated one mile above Fort Yale, and extends 4 or 5 miles upwards, presenting on a smaller scale the exact counterpart of the upper one. Now that the river has fallen these canons though dangerous are more or less navigable for canoes, and present the only means of sending up provisions during the winter.

From Fort Yale down to Fort Hope is a distance of 44 miles. The river runs here between two ranges of less elevated mountains, but it presents nevertheless a suite of dangerous rapids. It is between these two points, that the greatest number of miners have been occupied.

At Fort Hope, as we said before, the river takes a gradual bend towards the West, entering the only chasm which traverses the Cascade mountains north of the Columbia; and runs through some majestic scenery for about 50 miles. Four miles below Fort Hope, Murderer's bar and one or two others are the last and only ones that have been worked as yet, but good bars are known to exist down to the entrance of the Harrison or Lillooet river 35 miles below.

The reader will have observed, that all the diggings that have been worked up to this day, have been strictly speaking river diggings; and lye between Murderer's bar, 4 miles below Fort Hope, and the Fountain, 6 miles above the Big Falls, stretching over a total length of 44 miles: and that the three quarters of them have been worked over a distance of 44 miles between Fort Hope and Fort Yale. It is also important to recollect, that all the country above Fort Yale has been nearly inaccessible till quite latterly; the mule trail from Fort Yale to the Forks of the Thompson having been only opened on the 10th of September, and the other by the Lillooet route only last week, that is to say, in November.

This last route was begun in consequence of the difficulties and delays of the Fraser river route, and because it remains open and free from snow all winter: whereas the new pack trail just mentioned from Fort Yale over the mountains is already impracticable with the rains, (Nov. 6th) and will soon be closed with the snow, the river, which is dangerous, alone remaining open. The Lillooet route starts from the head of Harrison lake, follows the Lillooet valley to the lake of the same name, and from the head of that lake turning to the north-east, traverses the mountainous district by a low pass or thalweg, in which are two lakes, which form part of the connection, and then joins Fraser river below the Big Falls.

Here is therefore the point of junction, where the two routes, after having been separated for 175 miles by a vast parallelogram of lofty mountains, meet together again. They are destined, to supply the Upper Fraser and all the Northern mining region. With respect to the country itself, the whole mining region is mountainous in the extreme, though less so above the Forks of the Thompson than below, is in general heavily wooded, the climate cold in winter, and the Indians, though thieving and treacherous, not by far so hostile as has been reported.

I will now proceed with my narrative, and come to the second blunder that was committed.

To whatever cause it may be attributed, the first feeling after the gold discoveries became known in California, was to give the preference to ANY American port on the Sound, suitable or not suitable, so as to avoid an English one. Something might perhaps be said about the preference thus given to an American port, when English gold was the object, but the thing was natural in itself. Unfortunately, the more respectable a feeling and the more capital can be made out of it by some men, and speculators were not wanting to find this out; so to work they went to build a big city. Port Townsend was the first place chosen, probably on account of its Custom house, and as being the port of entry of the Sound; and forthwith streets were laid out, houses went up, lots too went up, and were sold and resold, and every body flocked to Port Townsend.

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There were other speculators, however, who were not idle elsewhere. These wished to build a city at Watcom, and easily pointed out the faults of Port Townsend; her open roadstead, her uncertain anchorage in the stream, and above all her distance from Fraser river. Watcom was certainly much nearer, but what was to give the greatest attraction to Watcom was the Bellingham Bay trail, which had just been started.

This trail deserves some mention, for of all the extraordinary ideas that have been broached, that of cutting a perilous, and finally impracticable, trail 120 miles long, over high mountains and perpetual snows, in order NOT to make use of a navigable river close by, is about the most extraordinary. But what may appear more extraordinary still is, that so many people believed in its success, and what is worse, in its superiority! The whole scheme was got up under the specious cover of American patriotism; so those interested, and who perfectly knew the contrary, THOUGHT IT MIGHT SUCCEED, and the California papers gladly repeated the hope. The Bellingham Bay trail dragged on a long existence, and was continued till every body got tired of it. It was the greatest humbug of the season, and the first of a long series of disappointments to the California miner.

In the meantime numbers of adventurers began to assemble in both these places, and merchants hesitated whether they should ship their goods to Watcom or to Port Townsend. Watcom, however, got the upper hand, for the reasons aforesaid. Besides, those interested in the new city proved somehow or other that its very inconveniences were advantages; that the three-quarters of a mile mud flat in front of it was useful, and the exposure of the bay to the south winds more convenient than otherwise. The steamers, however, soon found out that the mud flat was not so very convenient; and in order to avoid it, a new city was proposed and started about a mile off, at Sehome. This town though intended to be the third big city, attained no great importance, nor ever rose above the rank of an annex to Watcom.

Hundreds of miners from all parts of the Sound and from California, to whom we may add a good stock of gamblers, pickpockets,

swindlers, and men of broken down fortunes, were now congregated at Watcom, anxiously waiting for the opening of the trail. And as the trail did not open, nor was very likely to open, people got tired, and some of the longheads began to think of moving the city a step further on towards the river, and planting it in Semiahmoo bay. This last choice was perhaps the best. But the laying out of this fourth or fifth city (for two rival cities were started nearly at the same time on opposite sides of the bay) was reserved for other parties. Most of us may remember having seen exhibited in the streets of Victoria, a plan of one of the cities of Semiahmoo, handsomely laid out and colored, with lots to be sold to those who were willing to buy them.

In the mean time a few modest traders, who were acquainted with the Sound, and the advantages of Victoria as a good harbour, and an English seaport withall, had made up their minds to go there and try their fortunes. The writer was one of that small number, and if any of them has since had cause to complain, it has been his own fault. I was acquainted with the country—I knew there was gold, and plenty of it; I knew it from the best sources. I communicated my information to my companions, and they were confident enough to believe it. There was no great merit in all this, but when I have since heard people say, they were merely lucky, I can only think, that sound judgment is something more than mere luck.

Leaving this aside, I naturally come to the next blunder, or rather to the immediate consequence of the former one; namely, that in the midst of this invention of big cities, nobody had ever thought of Victoria. Indeed at that time the name of Victoria was hardly to be met with in a California newspaper. And yet after all Victoria was the place for the big city, as every body might have found out a good deal sooner, and as we shall presently see.

The port and canal of Camosack were selected for the site of Victoria as far back as 1842, by Chief Factor James Douglas, our present Governor. The situation, to quote his own words, is not faultless, or so completely suited for a place of settlement as it might be; but, as he observes in his report dated 12th July, 1842, and after discuss-

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ing the merits of various other ports on the Sound. "He despaired of any thing better being found on the coast, and was confident that there was no seaport north of the Columbia, where so many advantages could be found combined." This favorable opinion was confirmed by Sir George Simpson in his despatch, dated 21st June, 1844, in which he says: "The situation of Victoria is peculiarly eligible, the country and climate remarkably fine, and the harbour excellent." And again in June, 1846: "Fort Victoria promises to become a very important place."

It cannot be denied that the entrance to the harbour is difficult, and that in the beginning a good pilot would have been useful. But now that the entrance has been better studied, we see steamers come in that could not do it before, and ships of 12 and 1500 tons, such as the *Léonidas* and the *Oracle*, have been anchored in the roadstead for three weeks to discharge their cargoes. We are also told that the harbour is of small dimensions, and only fit for small craft. Let us see how far these objections are founded.

The port of Victoria is composed of three harbours, the Outer, the Inner, and the Upper, or the port above the bridge. The difficulties in the entrance to the outer harbour, consist for large vessels:

1st. In a long shoal of white sand which projects from the east, or Shoal Point, across the entrance. This sand bank is covered at half tide, and is marked by a buoy. Its continuation under water forms a kind of bar averaging 12 feet deep at low water: the whole of it could be removed with a dredger, and that easily, for less than ten thousand dollars.

2nd. Opposite this shoal, and at about 200 yards distance in the middle of the channel, is a sunken rock marked by a buoy. To turn round the shoal at right angles without grounding and pass within side of this rock, is the difficulty, and a ship is obliged to take the shortest turn possible, which, however, brings the head of a large vessel close up to the rock. This rock could also be easily blown up, and its removal, together with that of the shoal, would form a clear and safe entrance to the harbour, the opposite side of the entrance being deep though rocky.

**ROADSTEAD.**—The open roadstead outside the harbour has good holding ground, but is exposed in winter to the south and south-westerly winds. A vessel, however, could easily take refuge in the outer harbour.

**OUTER HARBOUR.**—This is at present unoccupied but will soon be turned to account. The opening within the entrance is broad and deep. Immediately inside Shoal point, and near the wreck of the Major Tompkins, is a first rate anchorage, with deep water and safe from any winds.

**INNER HARBOUR.**—This is the only one at present made use of, or on which there are wharves. There are two small sunken rocks in the middle of this harbour, between the Hudson's Bay Company's wharf and the point or extremity of the Indian reserve. They are dry at spring tide, and consequently easy to blow up.

Another sunken rock, and more dangerous, because never uncovered, is marked by a pole, and lies 50 yards nearer the town. It is on this last rock that the Pacific got aground. These three rocks should be removed immediately; they impede the circulation of vessels in the harbour, and are most inconvenient. The depth at low water in the inner harbour varies along the wharves from 8 to 20 feet, with a muddy bottom and good holding ground.

**PORT ABOVE THE BRIDGE.**—This port is separated from the former one by the bridge and also by a kind of small bar, but the water inside the port and along the east or town side is deeper than in the inner harbour. The two last ports united and the bridge removed, would present a town frontage three-quarters of a mile long, with a depth of water, at low tide, beginning with 8 feet at the south end near James' bay, and increasing rapidly to more than 25 feet at the north end. Few cities could boast of such a splendid wharf, forming as it might have done a straight line, or rather two straight lines meeting at a small angle in the centre. Strangers will be astonished to learn that the whole of this magnificent frontage has been parcelled out and sold to private parties by the Company; each one having made his wharf or jetty as he liked, so as to encumber and disfigure the whole.

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All the above inconveniences (except the latter one,) may be easily obviated; but as they still exist and are a cause of apprehension to captains and seafaring men, some people think that Esquimalt will finally supplant Victoria. And here again I will refer to Mr. Douglas' report of 12th July, 1842. "Is-woy-malth (Esquimalt) is one of the best harbours on the coast, being perfectly safe and of easy access, but in other respects it possesses no attraction. Its appearance is strikingly unprepossessing, the outline of the country exhibiting a confused assemblage of rock and wood. More distant appear isolated ridges, thinly covered with scattered trees and masses of bare rock; and the view is closed by a range of low mountains, which traverse the Island at a distance of about 12 miles. The shores of the harbour are rugged and precipitous, and I did not see one level spot, clear of trees, of sufficient extent to build a large fort upon. There is in fact no clear land within a quarter of a mile of the harbour, and that lies in small patches here and there, on the declivities and bottoms of the rising ground. At a greater distance are two elevated plains on different sides of the harbour, containing several bottoms of rich land, the largest of which does not exceed 50 acres of clear space, much broken by masses of limestone and granite. Another serious objection to the place is the scarcity of fresh water."

In other words, Esquimalt may be a fine harbour for a naval station, or for large ocean steamers, but no fit place for a city. To this I will add what has so often been said before: that when once a city is established and has taken a start, that wharves are built, streets have been laid out, large sums of money expended on it, and capital invested, nothing but a long succession of causes, or some unforeseen event, can displace it. Nor is it desirable that a naval station should be in the centre of a large commercial city. After all Esquimalt is barely three miles from Victoria, (much the same distance as from the Plaza in San Francisco to the Mission,) and if necessary, it would be very easy to build a railroad from Selleck's wharf, at Esquimalt, along the inside of the harbour, the little valley at the foot of Skinner's farm, and afterwards the McKenzie road, so as nearly to obtain a level from Esquimalt to Victoria. There has been some talk also of a water com-

munication between the two harbours, by completing and deepening the present canal. To this I would propose the addition of locks at both ends, so as always to have a high water level; and by placing the lock at this end, where the present bridge crosses the harbour, a magnificent floating dock could be formed, with thirty feet water, capable of holding any vessel. Whatever may be done hereafter with respect to these two schemes, neither of which would be very expensive, merchants for the present can go down in an omnibus and come up in an hour; and it is pretty clear, that in a commercial point of view, and at least for some time to come, Esquimalt will be nothing more than a seafaring town. Whether in future times the surrounding country may become gradually settled, and the place rise to importance, will depend, in my opinion, on the prosperity of Victoria.

Another objection which has been raised against Victoria is the possibility that Fort Langley, on Fraser river, or some other port in Howe's Sound, or on the main land north of the Fraser, may gain the preference. Now, if some people are afraid that the port of Victoria be hardly suitable for large vessels, how much less so would Fort Langley, or any such place on Fraser river, be. The entrance to Fraser river is obstructed for miles by shoals, visible at low water, through which a narrow tortuous channel, two to three fathoms deep, winds its way. Such a channel, with the uncertain tides that prevail, can never be considered safe for vessels of more than 8 or 900 tons. Besides which, and with respect to Fort Langley, or any port on the main land, no sea captain, who is at all acquainted with the changeable winds, tides, and currents to be encountered among the islands that lay between Victoria and the main land, would prefer thus risking his vessel to a good secure harbour at the entrance of the Sound.

Let the port of Victoria be improved as soon as possible, and with her lovely situation and temperate climate; her rich back country, extending for more than one hundred miles, and offering every temptation to the agriculturist; her land titles free from litigation; her produce of the gold fields and accompanying immigration; her free port and no taxation; a military station, and a naval one at Esquimalt, together with government improvements, and Victoria will not only

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remain the key of the Sound and command the whole coast, but must soon become the commercial centre of the country. I will say more. The distance from Europe to Victoria is little more than that to San Francisco, with three dollars per ton less charges; besides a sure return trip of lumber, the finest in the world, or coal. With such advantages, and provided she remains a free port, Victoria is destined to become the emporium of British goods on the whole American coast of the Pacific.

Having thus disposed of this question, I will return to the thread of my story.

On landing in Victoria we found a quiet village of about 800 inhabitants. No noise, no bustle, no gamblers, no speculators or interested parties to preach up this or underrate that. A few quiet gentlemanly behaved inhabitants, chiefly Scotchmen, secluded as it were from the whole world, and reminding one forcibly of the line of Virgil :

*"Et pene toto divisos ex orbe Britannos."*

Though not perhaps quite so shrewd as Californians, they evidently understood the advantages of the situation, were quietly awaiting the results, and more or less acquainted with the country, seemed rather surprised that a people so sharp as the Californians were supposed to be, should be running after such an impossible air bubble as the Bellingham Bay trail. As to business there was none, the streets were grown over with grass, and there was not even a cart. Goods there were none, nor in the midst of this "Comedy of Errors" had a single California merchant thought of sending a single bag of flour to Victoria! The consequence was that shortly after our arrival the bakers were twice short of bread, and we were obliged to replace it, first by pilot bread and afterwards with soda crackers. At the same moment flour was worth eight dollars in Watcom.

People were now beginning to leave Port Townsend and Watcom to come over to this side of the Sound. In the beginning miners had been allowed to go up the river without hindrance; but as their numbers increased, a proclamation, dated 12th of May or thereabouts, prohibited any one from going up without first paying a sufferance of six dollars for a canoe or open boat, and twelve dollars for a decked

vessel. So far however the clearance could be taken out at Victoria or Fort Langley, which latter place perfectly suited the miners at Watcom ; but towards the beginning of July it was decided that they must all be taken out in Victoria, and the guardship Recovery was stationed on the river below Fort Langley to enforce the measure. This of course drew many to Victoria, though reluctantly, since it was out of the way ; besides which numbers were ready to leave who had got tired of waiting for the interminable Bellingham Bay trail.

As trade fell off in Watcom and Port Townsend so did it improve in Victoria ; and as those places were overstocked with goods, handsome profits were made by buying and shipping them over to sell in Victoria a few days afterwards, and at double the price.

At length the first steamer succeeded in getting up the river and reaching Fort Hope, thus proving the river to be navigable. This was a thunderbolt for the new cities, and from this moment the influx of population to Victoria became overwhelming. Miners now came flocking over, together with all that heterogeneous class of adventurers commonly called the "pioneers of civilization." Adopted citizens and others who had consulted their American patriotism rather than their interests, by stopping at Watcom, loudly lamented the necessity of stepping on British soil, whereas others, Britishers by birth and Americans by adoption, were now rewhite-washed and became Englishmen again. This immigration was so sudden, that people had to spend their nights in the streets or bushes, according to choice, for there were no hotels sufficient to receive them. Victoria had at last been discovered, everybody was bound for Victoria. nobody could stop anywhere else, for there, and there alone, were fortunes, and large fortunes, to be made. And as the news of such a flourishing state of things soon found its way to California, it was not long before the steamers brought up fresh crowds.

Never perhaps was there so large an immigration in so short a space of time into so small a place. Unlike California, where the distance from the Eastern States and Europe precluded the possibility of an immediate rush ; the proximity of Victoria to San Francisco, on the contrary, afforded every facility, and converted the whole matter into a fifteen

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dollar trip. Steamers and sailing vessels were put in requisition, and old ships and tubs of every description actively employed in bringing up passengers, something like to a fair.

As to goods, the most exorbitant prices were asked and realized, for though the Company had a large assortment, their store in the Fort was literally besieged from morning to night; and when all were in such a hurry, it was not every one that cared to wait three or four hours, and sometimes half a day, for his turn to get in. The consequence was, that the five or six stores that were first established did as they pleased.

Ground too had risen to an exorbitant price.

So far none but miners, mechanics, retail traders, or men of small means, had made their appearance; but merchants and people of standing, men who had so far hesitated, now began to arrive. Some of them without exactly understanding the situation, or caring to understand it, for the sake of a trip and solely out of curiosity. But others might be seen coming on shore with certain heavy bags full of gold coin, which they were obliged to have carried. They had expected to get ground lots for nothing, and buy the whole city cheap, and were sadly disappointed to find they had come a little too late. Many of them had the trouble of taking their bags of gold back again, without even opening them, and all of them cursed the place.

These "big bugs" were closely followed by another class, and Victoria was assailed by an indescribable array of Polish jews, Italian fishermen, French cooks, jobbers, speculators of every kind, land agents, auctioneers, hangers on at auctions, bummers, bankrupts, and brokers of every description. Many of these seemed to think very little about the gold diggings, the Company's rights, or their consequences. Nor did they trouble themselves much about the state of the interior, the hostile feelings of the Indians, or anything else of the kind. They took it for granted that gold would soon be coming down, and whether it did or not was not their object. They came to sell and to speculate, to sell goods, to sell lands, to sell cities, to buy them and sell them again to greenhorns, to make money and begone.

To the above lists may be added a fair seasoning of gamblers, swindlers, thieves, drunkards, and jail birds, let loose by the Governors of California for the benefit of mankind, (1) besides the halt, lame, blind and mad. In short, the outscourings of a population containing, like that of California, the outscourings of the world. Let it be said here to the honor of Victoria, that some of the worst of these last characters kept away. Mixed up among all these, however, was a large body of respectable emigrants; patient hard working miners, and others; honest men who had come here to live by their industry, hoping to assist their families and better their position; quiet law-abiding citizens, if ever there were. Many of these have been sadly disappointed, whilst others, more successful, have remained here and form a considerable portion of our present population, as exemplary a one as is to be met with.

When the older inhabitants beheld these varied specimens of humanity streaming down in motley crowds from the steamers and sailing vessels, and covering the wharves, as if they had come to take possession of the soil, they looked on in silent amazement, as if contemplating a second irruption of the barbarians. There were others, and sensible men, who, reflecting on the natural difficulties to be overcome, on those imposed by the Company, or incident to a new and unexplored country, where the gold had first to be hunted out, and the consequent uncertainty of any immediate returns, were filled with apprehension and almost with alarm.

Shops, stores, and wooden shanties of every description, and in every direction, were now seen going up, and nothing was to be heard but the stroke of the chisel or hammer. In six weeks 225 buildings, of which nearly 200 were stores, and of these 59 belonging to jobbers or importers, had been added to a village of 800 inhabitants; and people seemed to think the number insufficient, for others were on foot. Besides which the whole country around the town was covered with tents, resembling the encampments of an army.

The price of land rose in proportion. The plan followed by the

(1) Among these was the infamous Paddy Martin: the French population however, forced him to leave for shame.

Company for the sale of their lots was as follows : The purchaser on depositing his money, was inscribed on a list by order of priority, nobody being allowed to buy more than six lots ; after which, and when a sufficient number had been taken up, the holders were notified to come in the order of their tickets, and choose their lot or lots on the official map. In consequence, however, of the increased demand the Company had been obliged to suspend the sales, in order to give the engineer time to survey a sufficient quantity of ground before hand ; and the price of the lots which had been already raised from fifty dollars to seventy-five dollars, was fixed at one hundred dollars. The opening of the land office was announced several days before hand, as also the hour for 9 o'clock ; but before four in the morning the door was already besieged, and at nine the crowd was such that it was useless for those who had come rather late to think of getting a place or a lot.

The lots thus paid for in advance bore the name of blind lots, and their market price depended on the number of the ticket. Town lots 60 feet by 120 feet, that had been sold by the Company for fifty and seventy-five dollars, were resold a month afterwards at prices varying from fifteen hundred to three thousand dollars, and more. Amongst others, one half of a fifty dollar corner lot, the whole of which had been offered successively for 250, 500, 750, and 1000 dollars, and finally sold for 1100 dollars, was resold a fortnight afterwards, that is to say the half of it, for 5000 dollars. Old town lots, well situated, brought any price, and frontages of 20 and 50 feet, by 60 deep, rented from 250 to 400 dollars per month.

With respect to business, it was equally flourishing. Victoria was already a free port, besides which one of the first acts of the Governor after the gold discovery, had been, upon his own responsibility, to allow American steamers to run upon Fraser river. Though a necessary measure, since there was scarcely a British steamer on the Sound, this was also a liberal concession, when we reflect that a private English pleasure boat cannot ply on the bay of San Francisco, but must either be torn to pieces or taken away. On the other hand, miners going up the river were obliged to take out a monthly license, which

cost five dollars, and gave them the right to take up what provisions they wanted. In the beginning the steamers allowed them 200 pounds of freight gratis, and afterwards 400 pounds, on the passage up to Fort Hope, which cost twenty dollars; but most miners preferred clubbing together and buying canoes or building boats.

No other permission had as yet been granted for trading with the interior.

About this time the amount of idle foreign population in Victoria was so preponderant, that one evening some of the rowdies, having rescued a prisoner (California fashion) from the hands of the police, the crowd, in the excitement, proposed to hoist the American flag on the Fort, and take Victoria! Some little alarm was created at the time, and a gun steamer sent for from Esquimalt in the night, which entered the harbour next morning; but all was quiet. This ridiculous exhibition, the hooting of the Governor by the rowdies at Fort Yale, and the late insulting address of the U. S. Consular agent, (1) have been the only items of this kind during four months; though frequently men might be seen crying through the streets, that they were "true Americans," or singing and shouting about the "Stars and Stripes," American flags, too, were plentiful. Nobody paid any attention to these things, as a natural consequence of freedom in a free country, indeed the behaviour of the Americans here has been generally most orderly and law abiding. But who would ever dream of going down Montgomery street, shouting out "God save the Queen," unless he wished to be knocked down! or when did anybody ever see British flags floating over San Francisco. To be sure the English are not very demonstrative on these subjects,

The greater part of the miners from Port Townsend and Bellingham Bay, as well as those who had been employed in building their boats

(1) For the benefit of the old residents and English population unacquainted with Mr. Nugent, and who have felt much aggrieved at this address, I will explain that he was editor of the San Francisco Herald; that he is a British born subject, and has been running down his country for years on every occasion; apologised for Russian despotism in every form; and when three wretches cast dice as to who should shoot down King of William, an independent and deservedly popular editor, he held such a course, that the merchants and citizens of all classes in San Francisco, collecting together his newspaper, made a bonfire of it in Front street. His name since then has been a reprobation to most Californians, and the government in Washington could hardly have made a more unsuitable choice for all parties

in Victoria, had now started for the mines, their boats loaded with provisions, and were mostly congregated at Fort Hope, or on the neighbouring bars; where numbers of others from Bellingham Bay and the Sound had found their way before them. They were all glad to rest from the fatigues of paddling and dragging their loaded boats during one hundred miles in succession up the most dangerous and violent rapids; and were now occupied in looking at the river and eating their provisions, waiting till it would fall. It do'n't appear that any of these experienced miners had any thoughts at that time of prospecting the level banks between the river and the foot of the mountains. I even recollect their smiling when I mentioned the idea, and pointed at the trees on them, saying, they would all be leveled before three or four years.

In the mean while the river did not fall, or only fell a trifle; just enough to keep up expectations. Many therefore went up to Fort Yale, above which the rapids are far more numerous and dangerous than below. Fort Yale may be considered in many respects as the head of navigation. Immediately above, the river rushes for four miles violently down between perpendicular cliffs, 4000 feet high; and this defile, which is called the little or lower canon, presented at that time of the year an insurmountable barrier to canoes, or to any regular intercourse with the upper country.

Some miners, however, had gone higher up by the foot trail, along hair breadth ledges and over gaping precipices, and managed even to take up provisions on their backs. By this means the bars above the little canon, and up to the forks had become gradually crowded; and that in spite of all the difficulties in getting up fresh provisions, which obliged the miners to be continually going and coming, to bring back flour loaded on their backs, something like pack mules. Still the desire to get gold is such, that the bars up to the forks of the Thompson river, and even above, were crowded; till at last difficulties occurred with the Indians, and a petty war broke out which drove every body down again to Fort Yale.

All this up river news did not improve things in Victoria, where people, however, still kept up their spirits. During the first arrivals

and departures of so large an immigration, business had been very brisk ; but as miners began to leave, their wants were no longer supplied by the jobbers, for the Hudson's Bay Company allowed no trading whatever with the interior. The only exception to this stringent rule, had been the permissions to miners, and another paltry one just published, authorizing the trade and sale of fresh meat and vegetables. The number of up river passengers had also much increased with the facilities afforded by the steamers ; all which together contributed greatly to lessen the population in Victoria. Still the arrivals were numerous, and things went on well, till later news from up river began to create some doubts. Rumour said that the river did not fall, some even said that it never would fall ; and as nobody had ever thought of mining any where else except on the river, the state of the river became the barometer of public hopes and the pivot on which every body's expectations turned. This untoward news soon spread abroad and was caught up with avidity by the California newspapers. It was the first check on immigration, and with the existing restrictions on the commerce of the interior, was, I believe, for the good of all parties.

Just at this time a few American and Canadian miners, who had started early in the spring and spent some time on the upper Fraser. returned to Victoria by a new route, and informed their friends of the possibility of opening a trail by the Lillooet river and across the mountains ; thus avoiding the interminable difficulties and dangers of the river. The information was not entirely new, but as this Indian trail was not generally known, it was new to the public, and the news spread like wildfire. Two days after, the little steamer Umatilla started up on a pioneer trip to the head of Harrison's lake. loaded with adventurers determined to get through at any rate.

A friend of mine was of the number, and has since related to me the fatigues and miseries he had to endure, when creeping through underwood and thickets for miles and miles, sometimes on his hands and knees, with a bag of flour on his back, under fallen trees or over them, scrambling up precipices, then sliding down again over sharp stony ground, or through bogs and swamps. As the adventurers trod

their weary way onward every day more exhausted and way worn, each little caravan became smaller and smaller, according as one or the other lagged behind to rest, or turned back in despair. Tired and almost ready to drop, they would come to a likely piece of ground to prospect, but nobody had the inclination to do it; besides if one had stopped he would have been left behind, so the prospecting was put off till another time, or till their return; and as the same causes existed then as before, the prospecting was never done at all. And thus it is that through sheer misery and fatigue, and owing to the want of access, the country has hardly been prospected up to this day.

The only thought, the only preoccupation seemed to be to get on, to push forward whilst they still had any provisions, and to reach the river. The party were now reduced to three, one of whom, they having fallen in with an Indian camp and bartered a salmon or two, made up his mind to return. So casting a farewell look from the mountain side on the valley beneath him, the valley which was to have been the goal of all his hopes, and to reach which he had endured so much hardship, he wished his companions good bye, and, calmly observing "he had had enough of it," turned back again. Nor did the two others fare much better. My friend during a fortnight's stay among the Indians lived on salmon, when he could get it, and oftener on wild fruit. Once he got a meal of horseflesh, but never tasted a spoonful of flour, nor even salt. On his journey back, he had to live for three days solely on blackberries, and returned with his clothing tattered and torn, like a scarecrow. As to the gold, (I had well nigh forgot it) there was plenty of it, but unequally distributed. He was convinced of that from his own personal observation, and still more so from the reports of all those he met; in short, to use his own words, "it was folly to deny it."

I have related this particular case, because I can vouch for the truth of it; and also because it has been a very common one. And we are surprised after that that miners should not have succeeded! and that they should have come back with empty pockets! and that it should be trumpeted abroad, that the gold mines are a humbug! If the commerce of the interior had been thrown open, and private enter-

prise allowed to compete with the natural difficulties of the country, these would have been overcome by this time. Forests would have been opened, provisory bridges thrown over precipices, hollows leveled, and the rush of population following behind, the country would have been rapidly settled, and the trader brought his provisions to the miner's door.

It may be accounted one of the greatest misfortunes of the season, that this Lillooet trail was not discovered or made known sooner. The whole mining immigration was kept in suspense for two months, idling and trying to get up Fraser river, whilst there existed a much easier and more practicable pass elsewhere; thus confining all their prospects to the lower Fraser, and consuming their time, their hopes, and their provisions, in waiting for the opening of a navigation which, after all, was next to impracticable. The new trail, however, is not without objections. It passes over a tract of country which is not generally supposed to be rich in gold, and the number of portages, requires goods to be loaded and unloaded ten different times before reaching the upper Fraser, thus making the expense and delays considerable.

Very latterly there seems to be some chance of obviating a part of these difficulties, by opening a new communication to the valley of the Lillooet by Howe's Sound and the Skowhomish river, which is navigable for small steamers to its junction with the Siakamish, six miles above. If the remainder of the road be really as practicable as it is said, but which I rather doubt, this third trail would shorten the distance, and perhaps the difficulties, materially, thus rendering the Northern mining region still more accessible.

The Governor took active measures to have the Lillooet trail opened immediately, and a curious arrangement was entered into to that effect. Five hundred miners and others, who had been losing their time in Victoria, agreed to deposit twenty-five dollars each. They were to be transported gratis to the head of Harrison lake, and engaged to work at the trail for their food until it was finished; when their deposits were to be returned them, either in provisions delivered them there and at Victoria prices, or the equivalent in money. They calculated

that in this way they would get up to the mines for nothing, be fed, and when there find their provisions all delivered, instead of waiting in Victoria, and there having to buy canoes or pay for their food and passage to get up Fraser river.

They were taken up by the Company in two trips, and set heartily to work. But as the trail advanced, the Company not having provided mules enough, half the men had to be employed in carrying up provisions for the other half and for themselves, so that the trail got on slowly. Some got dispirited, left and sold out their tickets cheap, though latterly not a few would have been glad to remain all winter, provided they were furnished with pork and beans, so as to be ready in the early spring to work at the mines. Finally a question arose, whether those who had completed their contract were to have their provisions delivered them at the lower or the upper end of the trail. This difficulty was settled by a compromise, and the provisions or the equivalent were delivered them, I believe, half way; very much to the disgust of the poor miners, who had to walk back 70 miles to get them. The whole thing was unskillfully managed, and many of the miners who would have remained in the country returned home disheartened and discouraged.

The trail thus finished and opened, and with plenty of mules to pack, it now turns out that there are no provisions, nor is there any steamer to take them up. This is another of those blunders which have been so frequent since the gold discovery, either owing to the former stringent measures of the Company, or to distrust and uncertainty on the part of the merchants. The whole thing can only be explained by the conflicting struggles between free trade and monopoly; but both the miner and the country suffer the consequences. Thus, beans which are worth 4 1-2 cents in Victoria, and would cost at most 5 cents at Port Douglas, sell for one dollar per pound at the end of the trail. Bacon is worth two dollars a pound, or to be more exact there is none, flour seventy-five cents a pound, boots twenty to twenty-five dollars per pair, and blankets the same. Nobody can be astonished at miners leaving when they have to pay such prices, and are so uncertain of their existence into the bargain.

All that can be said of this trail for the present is, that remaining open all winter it will enable a certain number of miners, who are now on the upper Fraser, to spend the winter there, to prospect the neighbouring country and prepare the way for future adventurers. This is one of the spots where many California miners, and the wise ones too, have told us there were no diggings to signify; and yet a party of Italians have felt sufficiently encouraged to open a very considerable water ditch for sluicing, and all around the Fountain, six miles above the Big Falls, miners are doing remarkably well. If it were otherwise, and with the privations they are subjected to, and the exorbitant price of provisions, they would come down immediately.

It is time now to return to Victoria. There every thing had been till latterly hope and expectation, summer and sunshine, a clear morning sky with scarcely a speck in the horizon. But the miners who were still waiting to go up the river, the retail traders, and more particularly the jobbers, began now to put on rather long faces. Merchants who had gone to the risk of leaving their homes in California, and embarked their capital here, began to wonder why they did not sell more, and enquired for the first time seriously if business could really be carried on under the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company.

People knew it is true from the onset that Fraser river was next to unnavigable, and that the river was the only means of communication with the interior, (the Lillooet trail was not yet known,); that further up, the country was unexplored, that there were no roads, no communications and consequently no provisions to be had; that the Indians were not friendly; that the country was rugged and mountainous in the extreme; that the river had to fall before any gold could be got out, and that the winters were severe. All these difficulties were known from the first, but people did not seem to have thought much about them, or to have taken them into account. Besides American enterprise (which, by the bye, in this instance was no American enterprise at all, but that of energetic men representing almost every nation in the world,) would overcome them.

And I verily believe they would have overcome them had they been

allowed to act and only left to themselves. I recollect talking with a young California miner—a young man but an old miner—who was preparing his canoe, and reminding him of all these difficulties. He knew them all, he had seen them all, he had encountered the like, and feared nothing. He could do every thing, could overcome every thing; in fact it seemed to me as if he could do more than was possible. With such men the country would have been opened in three months, had not all spirit of enterprise been crushed and overcome by a still greater obstacle. And that was the Hudson's Bay Company, which standing in the way closed every access. Like a giant with whom it was in vain to struggle, or a rock against the "vis inertiae" of which all their energies were to be spent in vain.

No foreigner could go up the river without a permit, no British subject could take a canoe up the river without a permit, nobody could trade up the river without a permit, and no permits were granted for that purpose; nobody could cut down a tree, nobody could even pick up floating wood on the beach without a permit, or paying for it. The poor wood cutter had to pay 10 per cent. on every cord of wood he sold, and before putting up his tent must pay seven dollars and fifty cents for the permission; finally no permanent settlement was allowed, nor could anybody hold the smallest piece of ground on the whole continent. In presence of such obstacles, commerce and enterprise were out of the question.

I am not one of those who find fault with every thing that the Hudson's Bay Company, or their servants, have done. They have been the pioneers of civilization in the back settlements of North America and Oregon; they have constantly shown the greatest kindness and humanity towards the Indian tribes, when others who also style themselves the "pioneers of civilization," have shot them down like dogs, and often, with shame be it said, for their mere amusement. They had been created lords of the soil, and acted generously as such. But now that a more enlightened population has taken possession of the country, the object of the Company for the purposes of civilization is at an end, and its intervention for commercial purposes a nuisance. Not but that the Company in many late instances has shown both

liberality and foresight. For instance, we are indebted to it during the late rush for having hindered flour from reaching famine prices, and for having victualled to a certain extent the Forts in the interior. But as free trade is the soul of commerce, so is a monopoly its bane ; and it cannot be denied that since the gold discoveries the Company, to say the least, has been a constant obstacle to the development of the country.

Besides, there are other concessions which have been attributed to the generosity of the Company, and which, if calculated for the good of the community, were in singular accordance with its own interests. Thus, the miners were permitted to take up 400 pounds of provisions, which, it is said, the Company was not obliged to allow ; and again, that the tardy permission which has been granted latterly for taking goods up the river was doubly a concession ; since the 10 per cent. duty was for the government, whereas the competition was for the Company. But it is exceedingly doubtful whether the Company had a right to hinder goods from going up for the use of the white population ; and at all events these goods are heavily taxed, whilst their own are not, or if so, nobody knows to the contrary.

Complaints without end have been made against these taxes on other scores, and perhaps rightly, though the increased expenses of government had to be paid somehow or other. It is with these funds that all the trails, roads and ferries have been opened to vivify the interior, render it habitable, and prevent the recurrence of past disasters. If burdensome, they have been nobly employed, and these taxes will bear a favorable comparison as to amount, and still more so as to their application, with the high duties of the American tariff on the other side of the Sound, varying from 15 to 55 per cent., and the manner in which we were shaven and shorn into the bargain in California, to support the most corrupt and inefficient of governments. (1)

I will here give a short abstract of the different acts by which the Hudson's Bay Company is supposed to hold its authority ; together

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(1) The foreign miner's tax for Mariposa county amounted this year to 22,000 dollars ; the property tax in San Francisco to 3.00 1-2 per cent.

with what other information I have been able to collect on the subject, in presence of the utter secrecy observed by its servants, and the impossibility of procuring documents here. I have been at some trouble to divest them of all useless phraseology, so as to render the whole both palatable and intelligible to the general reader.

The ORIGINAL TITLE of the Hudson's Bay Company derives from letters patent granted May 2d, in the twenty-second year of Charles II. These letters gave the company thereby incorporated all the seas, bays, lakes, rivers, etc., within Hudson's Straits, together with all the lands and territories on the same not already possessed by or granted to any of his Majesty's subjects, or any Christian prince or State, together with the right of fishing, the royalty of the seas and all mines royal, as well then discovered as not then discovered, of gold, silver, gems and precious stones; said land and territories to be called Rupert's Land. The whole in free and common soceage. Constituting the Company true and absolute lords and proprietors of the same, with power to possess and enjoy all lands, rents, privileges, jurisdictions and hereditaments, etc.; to give, grant, demise, alien, assign and dispose of the same, and to do and execute all things appertaining thereto.

Doubts have been entertained as to the validity of this grant, on the ground that the above named territories belonged to the Crown of France at the time the grant was made. Such doubts, however, can hardly be considered of much weight after a quiet occupancy of two hundred years, confirmed by the silent acquiescence of both the crown and the nation.

In the course of time the Company had extended its trade far beyond the limits of the above charter, (which limits have since been better defined,) and over a vast extent of Indian territory not then explored.

By act of 45d, George III, the criminal jurisdiction of the Provinces of Lower and Upper Canada was extended to these territories.

Towards the close of the last century two Canadian companies, the

first called the North-west Company of Montreal, "and the X. Y. Company," had been formed for the purpose of trading in the above Indian territories in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company. This led to great animosity, and finally to a regular war between the servants of the North-west and those of the Hudson's Bay Companies. The two Companies at last came to terms, and entered into an agreement dated March 26th, 1821, after which, and probably as a consequence of it, the following act was passed:

An Act of 1st & 2nd, George IV, authorizing the Crown to make grants to any company, or persons, for not more than 21 years, and under various restrictions, relative to civil and criminal jurisdiction, selling liquor to the Indians, etc., for the exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians in any part or parts of North America not before granted to the Hudson's Bay Company, (by their original charter,) or belonging to the two provinces of Canada, or to the United States. Such right of trade not to be exclusive with respect to American citizens in the whole of the territory to the west of the Rocky Mountains. This territory had been declared by treaty with the United States, free and open to the citizens and subjects of both powers for 40 years.

By the same act, the provisions of the act of George III, concerning criminal jurisdiction were expressly extended to the territory originally granted to the Hudson's Bay Company.

In accordance with this act, letters patent were granted December 6th, 1821, to the Hudson's Bay Company, and the former heads of the Montreal Company, William and Simon McGillivray and Edward Ellice, conjointly, for 21 years.

The Hudson's Bay Company having acquired the rights of W. and S. McGillivray and E. Ellice, surrendered the above grant, which was not yet expired, and obtained, 50th May, 1858, the present grant for 21 years, for the exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians in the same territories and on the same terms as above. The Crown reserving the right of establishing or annexing any colonies or provinces within said territories, with such form of civil government as it might deem fit; and of revoking the present grant in so far as necessary to that effect.

The boundary line to the west of the Rocky Mountains, was still unsettled; but by treaty of 50th June, 1858, with the United States, this line was "continued along the 49 deg. parallel westward to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver Island, and thence through the middle of said channel and up Fuca Straits to the Pacific. The whole of said channel and Straits to be free and open to both parties."

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#### GRANT OF VANCOUVER ISLAND.

The grant of Vancouver Island originated in a request from the Hudson's Bay Company, after the above treaty for the division of Oregon Territory had been concluded. The first letter containing this request is addressed to Lord Grey, 7th September, 1846, and states, that the company have founded and are annually enlarging an establishment (Victoria) on the south point of the Island.<sup>91</sup>

This letter was followed up by a long correspondence, and the negotiations were pending for nearly two years, during which period they were interrupted for nearly a year, (from March, 1847, to February, 1848.) Instead of its first request to be confirmed in the possession of Vancouver Island, the Company had gradually extended its desires and its demands; and was now "willing to undertake the government and colonization of all the territories belonging to the Crown in North America, and receive a grant accordingly." (Letter from Sir J. H. Pelly, chairman of the H. B. Co., to Earl Grey, 5th March, 1847.)

Such a formidable proposal rather startled his Lordship, and the negotiations were broken off, as said before. They were, however, renewed in February, 1848, and things explained. "The proposal by placing the whole territory north of 49 deg. under one governing power, would have simplified arrangements; but the Company was willing to accept that part of the territory west of the Rocky Mountains, or even Vancouver Island alone; in fact to give every assistance

' in its power to promote colonization." And further on : " In every  
' negotiation that may take place on this subject, (Vancouver Island,)  
' I have only to observe that the Company expect no pecuniary ad-  
' vantage from colonizing the territory in question. All monies  
' received for land or minerals would be applied to purposes connect-  
' ed with the improvement of the country." (Letter from the same,  
4th March, 1848.)

This truly disinterested letter was accompanied by a private one  
of a very different nature, proposing nevertheless that " the privileges  
' possessed under the grant of Rupert's land, in which the Company  
' could establish colonies, governments, courts of justice, etc., be ex-  
' tended to the whole of the territories of North America, bounded by  
' the 49 deg. parallel to the south, the Pacific ocean and the Russian  
' possessions to the west, and the Arctic ocean."

Earl Grey immediately decided to confine the grant to Vancouver  
Island, and a draft was drawn up accordingly, some time after. (31st  
July, 1848.)

This grant, after referring to the various acts, and to the treaty of  
June, 1858, alluded to and explained above, proceeds to relate, that  
the Hudson's Bay Company have traded as well within as beyond the  
limits of the lands and territories granted them, and been in the  
habit of erecting forts and other isolated establishments without said  
limits, some of which are now existing in that part of the territory  
including Vancouver Island. " And whereas it would conduce greatly  
' to the maintenance of peace, justice and good order, and the ad-  
' vancement of colonization, and the promotion of trade and commerce,  
' and also to the protection and welfare of the native Indians of Van-  
' couver Island, if such Island were colonized by settlers from the  
' British dominions, and if such Island were vested for the purpose of  
' such colonization in the Hudson's Bay Company, etc."

The grant then proceeds to make and constitute the Company abso-  
lute lords and proprietors of Vancouver Island, much in the same  
terms and to the same extent as in the charter of Charles II. " Pro-  
' vided always, and we declare this present grant is made to the intent  
' that the Company shall establish upon the said Island a settlement or

' settlements of resident colonists, emigrants from our United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or from other our dominions, and shall dispose of the land there-as may be necessary for the purpose of promoting settlements, and for the actual purposes of colonization, and shall at least once in two years certify the number of colonists and what land shall have been disposed of."

From the above acts it would appear, that the Company are real lords and proprietors of the territory called Rupert's land; that they are also proprietors of Vancouver Island, under certain restrictions concerning its colonization, and a stipulation for the reimbursement of all their outlays at the end of their grant; and that they only possess the exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians in the other British territories, together with certain rights of jurisdiction.

It is with some diffidence that I give the above abridgement of the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, with which nobody appears to be thoroughly acquainted, not even the ministers of the Crown.

In conjunction with the grant of Vancouver Island, a settlement of the Island was drawn up conferring on the emigrants certain powers of local self-government, and also a commission to be issued to the Governor appointed by the Crown on the presentation of the Company; with directions to summons an Assembly elected by the general votes of the inhabitants, to exercise, in conjunction with himself and a council nominated in the usual manner, the powers of legislation.

But when it came to the point, it was found impossible to go on with such a constitution, or have free legislation under the anomalous institutions of monopoly, the antagonistic powers of which could never agree; for, as there were as yet but few settlers, the Company would have been obliged to call a legislature of its own dependants, and such an Assembly would not even have been nominally free.

At the end of two years things had not much improved, and the number of settlers was still very small. This might be attributed to the absurd colonial restrictions and other obstacles thrown in their

way. A settler paid five dollars for an acre of ground, when he could get it on the American side for one dollar and twenty-five cents; and a subscriber to the Puget Sound Agricultural Company was obliged to buy 400 acres of ground, and bring or send out five men, British subjects, to work them. Such were some of the obstacles. But there were others of a more negative kind. The truth is the Company did not wish for colonists. Not that it refused to sell ground; on the contrary, any settler might go and choose it, when it was measured out to him and he paid for it. But as there was nobody but the Company to sell to or trade with, and as the Company only bartered, or seldom bought for cash, few wished when their farm began to produce to be obliged to exchange their goods or cattle for blankets, pots and pans, powder or old muskets. (1) In presence of all these objections, many declined settling on the Island, and those who did without positively buying ground were treated as adventurers. Even to this day we are looked upon as interlopers, whilst foreigners are told that "they have not been invited."

Such being the state of things when Governor Blanchard left, he contented himself with naming a council of three to assist the Governor in the government of the Island, and no further attempt was made at that time towards popular representation.

Things went on so for several years, when, if I am not mistaken, and in order to enable the colonists to levy a license on liquors, and make some local improvements, the constitution was at last put in execution, and the electors possessing 20 acres of land, or 500 pounds in money, were convoked to name a House of Assembly representing the districts. This took place in July, two years ago, and nobody can tell me, nor do I believe is it known, when the Assembly is to be renewed, unless it be at the will of the Governor.

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(1) There are some queer stories afloat respecting these times. Such as emigrants brought out, and imprisoned on their arrival for not choosing to work; of others peremptorily forbidden to locate on certain lands or the Company would not protect them. Of respectable emigrants coming over to obtain the necessary information and settle and leaving in disgust; of workmen flogged for trifles; of a miner having his skull cracked with a blacksmith's hammer by a foreman of the Company at Namaino, and receiving a compensation in land or money to make him hold his tongue; of agreements subscribed on the Island promising never to speak ill of the Company, etc. Some of these stories have been probably exaggerated.

In the meanwhile the government of the island is composed as follows :

**THE GOVERNOR.**—Mr. James Douglas.

**A COUNCIL OF THREE**, or sort of House of Lords, except that its deliberations are secret. This council is composed of

**MR. JOHN WORK**, second Chief Factor under Chief Factor Douglas, (the Governor.)

**MR. R. FINLAYSON**, Chief Trader of the Company.

**MR. TODD**, an old servant and pensioner of the Company.

**A HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY** composed of seven members, representing the seven districts of the Island, as follows :

**DR. HELMEKEN**, Speaker, Staff Doctor of the Company, and son in law of the Governor.

**MR. PEMBERTON**, acting Colonial Surveyor.

**MR. MCKAY**, Clerk of the Company.

**MR. MUIR**, a former servant of the Company, and father of the Sheriff.

**MR. SKINNER**, agent of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company.

**DR. KENNEDY**, a retired officer of the Company, appointed by the Governor and Council to represent the district of Namaino.

**MR. J. YATES**, Merchant.

**JUDICIARY DEPARTMENT.**—D. Cameron, Esq., Chief Justice ; brother in law of the Governor.

**COLLECTOR OF THE CUSTOMS.**—Mr. A. C. Anderson, retired Chief Trader of the Company.

Every thing depends then on the Governor. Born in the West Indies, and having left England when, I believe, only fourteen years of age, he has been habituated almost from childhood to the mean, petty, despotic dealings of the Hudson's Bay Company. On that account alone I signed a petition against his renomination. Indeed unlike many democrats and others, who have been constantly bobbing, bowing to, bothering and visiting His Excellency, for what purposes

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it would not be easy to say, I have never been near him, nor even spoken to him. So far, his acts though tardy have been judicious and liberal, considering circumstances and the many difficulties he has had to contend with. He knows the country thoroughly, was the founder and originator of Victoria, and his best interests and affections belong here. But attached as he has been and still is to the Hudson's Bay Company, he has a hard game to play as Colonial Governor; whose province it now is, to assist the country in emerging from the swaddling clothes of that same monopoly, and finally freeing itself from Colonial restrictions obtain self-government with popular institutions. If his efforts tend that way, and he succeeds, it will redound to his honor.

We will now return from this long digression to Victoria, where traders and new-comers of every class were more and more gloomy; for all the miners from above, instead of bringing down gold dust, brought down the most discouraging tales concerning the river and every thing else. The greater part of these men belonged it is true to that roving, restless, floating population from California before mentioned: the "rereme novarum avidi" of Cæsar; men looking out for something new in a new country, fancy miners in short, unfitted to the purpose, and no great loss when gone. As to these men bringing down gold dust, it was preposterous to expect it, for they had never worked, at least any thing to signify; and the bulk of real miners had not been gone much more than a month, of which nearly a fortnight had been spent in getting up the river. Every body, however, was so impatient, that these facts were overlooked, and people wondered more and more why no gold dust was to be seen. Another reason which hindered the little dust that had been taken out from coming down was the low price at which it was valued, and the consequent drainage of coin for commercial purposes. Large sums of money had been sent back to San Francisco in the first instance, and whole cargoes of goods, which had been ordered during the excitement and were no longer wanted, were now coming in. Large remittances therefore had to be made by every steamer, and the upper country was drained of specie.

At last the river did fall, so that those that had staked out claims could work them. The Indians too, had been driven back, and thirty-three belonging to a friendly tribe surprised and massacred, and their huts and winter provisions destroyed. They were Indians, and that was enough ; so the thing was done just to teach them better manners, and inspire more confidence among the hostile tribes. The bed of the river, however, did not appear to get richer, and many who had reckoned on finding valuable claims, and had lost their time waiting for them, were sadly disappointed. Besides there were twice too many miners for the ground occupied, since all the claims lay on the river. Moreover many of these claims, which were only 20 feet square, could be worked out in a week, and there was no elbow room to take up others. So those who had none were obliged to remove higher up towards the Forks, where the mule trail was about being opened, and run the chance of getting a good claim there while it was still time, and before the end of the season, or of returning to Victoria,

This latter course was most congenial to the tastes of the greater number, whom nothing could satisfy, and who, if they were to work, must make 12 or 16 dollars per day. There was an exception however, to this general rule. Watcom had now entirely caved in, and a number of rowdies and gamblers who had remained there to the last, had just come up, having made up their minds to turn over a new leaf and begin mining. They were naturally joined by a number of birds of the same feather, and as none of them much liked the idea of mining they adjourned to Fort Yale, where gambling houses prospered for some time in spite of the law. Indeed the police could not have closed them without bloodshed ; for these men, though ever obedient to law and order when it suited their tastes or their interest, would in this instance have set all authority at defiance, and the thing was well known. They had got up a curious theory for the case of resistance, invented probably by some lawyer and publicly broached on several occasions, namely : that the Boundary Commission not having yet laid down the 49th parallel, there might exist a reasonable doubt as to Fort Yale being really British ! The distance north is well known to be full 20 miles, yet many miners believed or pretended to believe this

nonsense. These were the same men who hooted the Governor on his passage, as before said.

Canoes and steamboats were now put in requisition for Victoria, and hundreds came down much quicker than they went up, and filled the place with consternation. The storekeepers of Victoria felt as if annihilated. That comet too, which had lately appeared shedding its radiant light every evening over the placid waters of the harbour, had shaken its ominous tail over their stores, and it could no longer be doubted that every thing would go on worse and worse. "Not an ounce of gold had as yet come down from the mines, and the miners were all leaving." Such was the general cry; and the exodus of miners from above, was followed by that of traders, restaurant and hotel keepers, and all those who could conveniently leave, or had never intended to remain from below. (1) The same facilities which had existed when coming to Victoria, were now at hand for those who wished to leave: very different in that respect from California in 1849, where the poor adventurer when once landed was caught as in a mouse trap, and obliged to work whether he pleased or not.

Business was at an end, since none could be transacted with the interior, and jobbers had nothing more to do but to "croak," sweep down cobwebs, smoke segars at their store doors, and project idle spittle into the street. This state of things became so intolerable, that the Governor at last took the tardy decision by which goods were admitted up river, on paying an ad valorem duty of 40 per cent. indiscriminately. The effects of this measure, however, were at first only partially felt; for each miner had taken up such a large stock of provisions with him, that when those who left sold out, they encumbered the mines with goods below cost, thus leaving those who remained more provided for than ever. Besides, all the old miners who stopped behind were steady, industrious men, who had become thrifty and spent little on superfluities.

The bright sunshine of past days was now over, and the sky dark

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(1) So little did some of these temporary residents care about the place, that they would not even subscribe for a fire reservoir! Are we much to blame for not regretting the loss of such selfish citizens?

with clouds and coming tempests. Every disappointed new-comer began to find fault or to croak, and those who had had nothing to hope or to lose in California, the foremost. Men who had tried every country, their own, England, Canada, then New York and the Eastern States, afterwards New Zealand and Australia, and finally California, and had never been able to do anything anywhere, or succeed in any one of them, now began to run down the country, its climate, its government, and especially every thing English. Others would with more justice accuse the Company. Others again, and among them were some of the prominent ones, would sneer at the very idea of there being any gold. Germans would expatiate on "American enterprise," fondly attributing every disappointment to the absence of it, and forgetting that two thirds of the improvements in Victoria were owing to English or foreign capital; whilst here and there some rough looking Californian, who had done nothing himself, would talk contemptuously of English fogginess, using with a taunting emphasis the words, "British subject." There are men who can find it in their minds to deny their country, and glory in what to others would be shame; there are others, and much more numerous, who in presence of such ignorant conceit, and through timidity, dare not give utterance to their feelings; but since I have it on my lips, I will say loudly that I feel prouder of being a free British subject on Vancouver Island, than subject to the rule of a rotten democracy in California. The native Americans seemed annoyed at these displays of bad taste, and were in general much more reserved and moderate in their language. The French too, who had made up their minds to leave, did it in sorrow, for they liked both the country and the liberty and security they enjoyed in it.

At last the gold dust did begin to come down, and a new era appeared to be opening; but nobody felt inclined to wait any longer. People had made up their minds to leave and nothing could stop them; traders sold out their goods at ruinous prices, and whole stocks were disposed of at auction, where they would scarcely fetch half price. Sailing vessels left every day loaded with "repentant Frasersites,"

and some of the old inhabitants might think they were once more going to be left alone.

There was however, a tolerably numerous class of adventurers, composed of men of persevering habits, sturdy miners, men who were not over ambitious, and those who had got good claims, who finding they were not doing amiss decided to remain. Some of them on the contrary, and they were not to blame, who saw that the winter season was approaching, thought of leaving also. It has been said, that one half of the amateur miners who came in the spring only did it for the fun of the thing; and that one half of the real miners who have left latterly, have done it because they were afraid of the cold. When I see Bostonians, who have been living in California, shaking here with a white frost, I am inclined to believe it. There can be no doubt that the approach of winter has brought down many. The prospect of paying a couple of dollars a day for food, and not being sure of getting it at that, of having to build a log house or perish of cold if not of hunger, or be murdered by the Indians, and after all not be able, as many thought, to work more than half the time on account of the frost, was not very enticing. I am speaking here of the country above the Forks, for below Fort Yale there has never been any serious want of provisions.

The greater part of those who have left on account of the winter, have done well here, and have quietly taken home their earnings, with the intention of returning in the spring. It is well known that this class of miners, who never talk about their gold dust, unless to particular friends, and never trust it out of their own pockets, or the lining of their clothes, have taken away large quantities with them; much more so than the sums officially set down.

Thus, and laying aside the views of outsiders, the miners themselves have been divided into two different camps of adverse opinions; and whilst those who are gone away, taking their prejudices or perhaps their wishes for the reality, assert loudly that there is little or no gold; those who have remained and have given the country a fair trial, who are working still and making money are convinced of the contrary. I appeal to the reader as to which of the two parties he thinks most

worthy of belief. And this brings me naturally to the MAIN POINT in question, the existence of the Gold, and in what quantities.

In the first place the geological features of the country speak for themselves: but as few might understand them, I will pass them over and merely observe, that all the gold dust below Fort Yale is so fine, that though the miners invariably use blankets with their rockers they very probably lose one half. Latterly the introduction of copper plates with quicksilver has been a great improvement, but still the loss is very great. Now, when gold is so exceedingly fine, it is a sure sign that it comes from a distance; and when there is so much of it, (infinitely more than any depot of the kind in California,) we may conclude that so much fine gold must come from an extensively rich country. This is an inference which it is difficult to deny, though some people would deny anything. And here let it be remarked; that not one of the discontented miners who have come down, denies that there is gold. Its existence is uncontested. He even allows that there is SOME gold, and if asked how much, will answer: perhaps enough to gain a couple of dollars a day.

Such a concession from such a source tells more than it intended. Indeed every thing we see and hear corroborates the fact that there is gold in plenty; and the steady increase in the amount of dust, which has been coming down by every steamer, begins to convince even the most incredulous. Here I will lay before the reader a few calculations on the subject; and though it would be difficult to obtain any very accurate result, still by comparing notes we may arrive at a tolerable approximation.

I have been assured by respectable parties, I know not with what truth, that the whole official exports from California to the Eastern States in 1849; comprehending a lapse of more than six months from the first discovery of the gold, amounted only to 60,000 dollars. It is possible that as much more was sent to Chili and the Sandwich Islands, and we will suppose the same amount to have been taken away by private hands, though the opportunities at that time were few and far between. To the above may be added 60,000 dollars more for what remained in circulation in the country, and we shall reach a total

of 240,000 dollars, for the production of California during the first six months. If such were really the case, we have beaten California out and out. To make another comparison: all the gold brought to Melbourne in 1851, amounted to 104,454 ounces, or, at 46 dollars per oz., 4,806,464 dollars, whilst New South Wales, which is now so productive, gave for the first six months of 1846 only 43,190 ounces, or 723,000 dollars.

Now for Fraser river. The first gold brought down by the miners before the spring, found its way to San Francisco by the Sound and Washington Territory. I consider it no over evaluation to put it down at

• 10,000.

From that time to the middle of July, the quantities brought down were small. They were divided between Watcom and the ports of the Sound, and Victoria, where the Hudson's Bay Company at that time bought the greater part of the dust. I put down the amount for the first at the low figure of

5,000,

and for the Company, at the same,

5,000.

Total to the middle of July,

• 20,000

From this date we have the sums shipped by Wells, Fargo and Co., and so reluctantly disclosed (1), to which are to be added those sent down or taken away by merchants, miners and private individuals. Their amount relatively to the remittances of Wells, Fargo and Co. have been very variable, especially in the beginning. For instance, Wells, Fargo and Co. only shipped 600 dollars by the Santa Cruz, Aug. 27th, whereas the sum total sent down was probably 42,000 dollars. And again, their shipment by the Northerner, Sept. 21st, was 44,964, when the total amount which was discussed in the papers at the time, probably reached 80,000 dollars. This difference is easily explained by the small distance between Victoria and San Francisco, and the facilities for sending down treasure, which are such that all

(1) When a public establishment or its employees have shown so little sympathy for the country that it has become notorious, it is as well to publish it, if it be only to oblige them, by giving a greater circulation to their opinions.

those who have been able have avoided the expense of Express and insurance.

There are no positive means of ascertaining the exact amount of gold dust thus sent away; but the total by each steamer, or sailing vessel, has been pretty generally known at the time, and I give it as follows:

1858.	Wells, Fargo and Co.	Total amounts.	Monthly shipments.
June 22d.	\$ 1,278	\$ 3,000	\$ 6000
“ 30.	4,814	3,000	
July 5.	5,359	5,000	45,000
“ 21.	170	5,000	
“ 28.	22,356	50,000	
“ 29.	5,012	5,000	
Aug. 4.	8,560	15,000	45,000
“ 14.	5,510	10,000	
“ 20.	5,556	10,000	
“ 27.	600	12,000	
Sept. 2.	28,560	15,000	161,000
“ 5.	5,697	10,000	
“ 21.	14,964	80,000	
“ 22.	1,594	4,000	
“ 25.	4,995	10,000	
Sailing vessels,		45,000	
Oct. 8.	19,957	70,000	235,000
“ 12.	10,721	25,000	
“ 19.	56,211	60,000	
“ 29.		70,000	
Sailing vessels,		10,000	
Watcom and Schome,	9,760	20,000	50,000
Portland,	28,457	50,000	
			\$ 545,000

Besides the above, the Hudson's Bay Company has bought and bartered gold dust to a considerable amount, both in the interior and here in Victoria; 20,000 dollars worth was brought down on one single occasion towards the middle of September, and I think I am under the mark when I put down the total for these four months and a half at 80,000 dollars.

We have also to take into account the gold dust accumulated by the miners, who have been unwilling to dispose of it at the ridiculously

low price of fourteen dollars and fifty cents, and prefer keeping it (except to buy goods) to supporting such a loss, besides having to pay two per cent. freight and insurance for the risks of the river to Victoria alone. There can be no doubt that this last sum is very considerable, for there is hardly a miner, but who has his fifty or one hundred dollars in dust about him, and some few up to a thousand. Supposing 5000 miners at fifty dollars each, this item would make 250,000 dollars. As this sum, however, is still in first hands, and not yet as it were issued we merely note it without carrying it out. As to the dust in circulation we will value it at the same sum as that which we supposed in California.

We shall now arrive at the following general results :

Gold dust exported up to June 15,	• 20,000
do. do. do. 30,	6,000
do. do. from Victoria in July,	45,000
do. do. do. in August,	45,000
do. do. do. in September,	164,000
do. do. do. in October.	255,000
do. from Watcom and Sehome,	20,000
do. by Portland,	50,000
do. taken in by the Hudson Bay Company,	80,000
do. in circulation in the mines,	60,000

Total up to October 31, • 705,000

Against 240,000 dollars in California, and 725,000 dollars in New South Wales.

I consider the above calculations as most moderate, and certainly under the mark.

These results, however small in comparison with the capital expended to procure them, are truly encouraging, and those who have had the perseverance to remain here are beginning to find it out. A reaction has already taken place, none are now leaving the mines except those unprepared for the weather, and the number of those going up or coming down the river is more nearly balanced. In other words the exodus is about at an end.

With respect to the observation, that more money and labor has been spent to get out the gold than it is worth, it is at best but a sophism. A man who builds a manufactory might as well complain at the end of a year, that the returns have not paid him for his outlay. The capital, let it be labor or money, which has been laid out here, either to work the mines, to build up Victoria, or improve the country, is an investment which may not have suited California, but which suited its merchants, many of whom are foreigners; and like other investments when abandoned in a hurry, it may have turned out a bad one.

Undoubtedly a large amount of capital in money, goods and labor has been transported (some would say buried,) here from California; but the propensity to exaggerate is so great, that I have thought it worth while trying to reduce the thing to something like figures.

As to the coin that has come here, the greater part has been sent back again, and the quantity is so reduced that I doubt if it amounts to \$ 50,000

I value the stock of goods on hand on the first of November at 250,000

Gold dust in circulation and in the hands of the miners, as explained before, 510,000

Real estate in Victoria. One thousand town lots at 400 dollars each, cost price, 400,000

Two hundred more valuable ones, together with all the property sold here or at Esquimalt, present value, 200,000 500,000

Wharves, new buildings and other improvements in Victoria, at their present value, 400,000

Buildings in the interior, all other improvements having been made at Government expense, 50,000

Ships, steamers, etc., capable of being removed, " "

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\$ 1,560,000

The 705,000 dollars extracted, or rather the 565,000 dollars, of gold dust exported to California have either served to

pay the goods sold, or a part of the labor of those who have returned. The remaining 1,360,000 dollars above will therefore represent more or less the amount of capital, labor or industry that has been permanently invested in the country. Without attaching more importance to these figures than they are worth, and admitting that this investment has been disastrous to many, I leave to others to examine whether as a whole it has been profitable or unprofitable and whether it will not eventually prove much more advantageous for California to have a wealthy and civilized community in its neighbourhood than a few scattered tribes of wild Indians.

Every candid reader will now be convinced, (and I am speaking to those abroad, for those here know it well), that the disappointments attending this unfortunate gold crusade have had nothing to do with the existence of the gold itself; and that in presence of the numerous obstacles which have had to be contended with, the quantity so far extracted may compare most favorably with the beginnings of any other gold field, and is of itself a sufficient proof of its abundance. Indeed the state of the country has alone hindered a much greater quantity from being taken out; and the steady increase in the amount coming down, and which will probably amount to near 500,000 dollars for November; though with a relatively small number of miners, and all the impediments of the winter season to compete with, adds a new proof to the fact. If the above calculations could have been carried down to the present date (Nov. 15) this would have been still more apparent; but it is becoming every day more difficult to obtain the real amount exported, for every other store deals now in gold dust, besides which many get their friends to take it down at a small premium, to avoid the expense of the Express.

Moreover, and with respect to the future yield, hardly a spot beyond the bed of the river had been prospected in the whole country, and now within a fortnight bank diggings have been discovered extending on both sides of the Fraser to the foot of the mountains, including thousands of acres. These are in fact a species of dry diggings, but it is beyond doubt that the other kind of dry diggings exist plentifully in the north; and indeed they have been found wherever

the miner has been able to search for them with any persistency. Again, leads of gold quartz are well known to exist on Pitt river, and quite latterly coarse gold has been discovered 60 miles up the Squamish river, on Howe's Sound; leaving little doubt that gold will be worked before long on this side of the coast range north of Fraser river.

So much for the gold mines. And now taking a farewell look at Victoria, and though comparisons are said to be invidious, let us recapitulate and confront what has been done there.

We will say nothing of its climate, its unrivalled position and other natural advantages. But where, in spite of the stifling influences of monopoly, shall we find so much progress in four short months as in Victoria? Where now are her rivals, Port Townsend, Watcom, Sehome, and the two Semlahmoos, for which so much has been done or attempted? Where in so short a time have there been so many streets laid out, built up and some of them graded, macadamized, planked, and even lighted up, as in Victoria? Eight substantial wharves carried out into the harbour, two brick hotels and other brick buildings, numerous frame houses and stores, besides those going up, twenty or thirty restaurants and coffee houses, steamboats built and launched, in short all the beginnings of a large city. Where a more orderly population, or more law-abiding? Where in the United States a city without taxes, lawyers, or public debt? Where in the United States the town or city, where there is more money to be made, even now, by the industrious trader or craftsman who is at all decently started in his business, than in Victoria? And as a proof, rents are higher at this moment than in San Francisco, and in spite of the sudden revolution in business and the departure of so many jobbers and traders, there are scarcely six business stores empty. A proof, by the bye, that the prosperity of the country could do without them. Could San Francisco boast of as much at the end of four months? And yet she had at her disposal a whole territory possessing the greatest possible facilities for internal communications and commerce, without restrictions or monopoly to cope with, or a neighbouring hostile press to calumniate her and drive every body away from her shores.

It is to the newspapers of San Francisco that, with one or two exceptions, we owe our bad name abroad, and the consequent check on foreign emigration. If I recollect right there exists in San Francisco an association, which has not been over successful, for the promotion of immigration. The newspapers have done better than the association, for they have succeeded not only in stopping all our immigration, but in keeping it to themselves. Much could be said on their way of treating every thing in this country, but their strictures have been so evidently tinged with jealousy that it would be hardly worth while; and as to their correspondents, some of their letters have been so ridiculous, not to say worse, that I rather suspect they must have been tinged with rum.

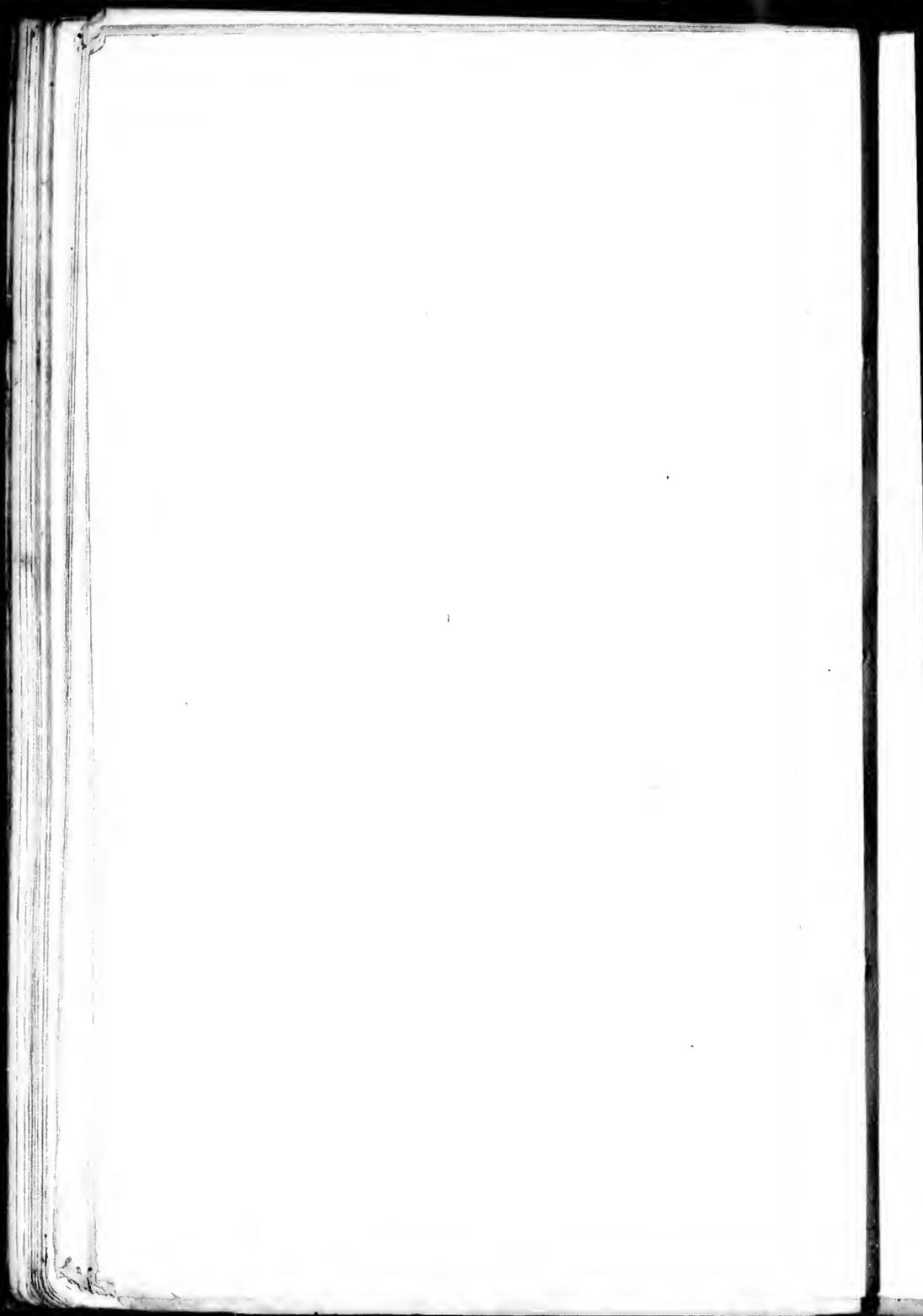
Assuredly there has been enough to find fault with; without having recourse to all these exaggerations. Most of them have been totally unfounded, and I may truly say that, under a different regime, the almost superhuman difficulties we have had to contend with would have been overcome, and our short history instead of being chequered with reverses would have presented a brighter page.

Providence, for wise reasons, had ordained that it should be otherwise, and that our exaggerated dreams of prosperity, our castles in the air should be roughly interrupted and destroyed. We have been brought to our senses, and some of us have been taught the lessons of adversity. Over speculation is at an end, and land agents in despair. A flock of men, the scouts of civilization, and who would have converted this country into a second California, have left our shores. Many immigrants too, of a much better class, but who were not suited to the country, have left us. Men who wanted impossibilities—Miners who have their wives and children, their homes, their claims with which to gain an independence, and all the comforts of a congenial climate, in California, were not the men to stop here. Besides they had been spoiled, and no ordinary gains could satisfy them. Nor did we want so many jobbers and importers. Where goods can be thrown into the market from San Francisco in a fortnight, speculation is out of the question, and instead of 59 jobbing houses (about as many as in San Francisco,) all that is wanted for the present trade

with the mines and back country is a small number of wholesale merchants.

We have then reason to be thankful, and if our short sighted disappointments have been a severe trial to all, we have still a good after-growth of hope before us. The truth is already spreading abroad: all the assertions of those who have left us will not diminish one ounce of the gold in our mountains, and those who are gone will soon be replaced by another population as active, more hardy and less ambitious. Let that population once reach our shores, and measures be taken to encourage them, foreigners or not. Let miners be allowed to make their own bye-laws and regulations for each bar or district, subject to the approbation of a council of mines; instead of starving them out, let the country be entirely thrown open, so that provisions may be as cheap as possible in the interior, and let the tax on goods be modified, so as to be levied on the superfluities and not on the necessaries of life. Let every one be allowed to buy land at American prices and not at five dollars an acre; and instead of throwing obstacles in the way of the colonist, give the poor bonâ fide settler a right of pre-emption, and a premium of land, taken from the wild waste, to the deserving father of a numerous family. Above all, let us have no tardy measures to drive emigrants away once more and make us lose the advantages of another year. Let all this and more, if possible, be done, and the progress of this favored country will be as sure as it will be rapid."

Reader, my task is over. You may have found me prolix, but faithful to my motto, I have wished to relate rather than to prove; convinced that a simple narrative would tell more than volumes of argument, assertions, or dry facts.



## APPENDIX.

**GOLD DUST EXTRACTED.**—I see that the amount of dust received by the Hudson's Bay Company since April, has been 450,000 dollars, instead of 80,000 dollars, thus increasing the amount up to the end of October to 755,000 dollars, or with the gold dust in the miners' hands and in circulation to 1,065,000 dollars.

**WELLS, FARGO AND CO.**—I have learned with much pleasure, that the gentleman now at the head of this establishment professes the best feelings towards the country. I consider it a duty I owe to Mr. Latham and myself to make this observation before closing my publication.

**NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENTS.**—My criticisms on this subject of course extend no further than deserved. Some of the last communications sent to San Francisco have been ably written.

### ERRATA.—

Page 45, real estate in Victoria \$ 400,000. This sum should have been carried on the inner column.

