(British Columbia with an area computed at 270,000 square miles, or nearly 3 times the size of Great Britain)

It perhaps does not now much matter, how or by whom this part of the world was first-discovered, as with the steady advance of commerce 17th & 18th Centuries, & the pride taken by the various European nations in the ceremonial acquisition of new lands, adventurers penetrated gradually into every part of the world accessible to ships, & the mere discovery of any particular region was apt to fall more by luck than calculation, to this or that Commander. There is always however a certain interest connected with the first view obtained by the civilized moiety of the world, of some new region, peopled by a stranger race; but some difficulty is very often found in deciding to whom the honour should by right be accorded.

Many have been the disputes as to the discoverers of the eastern part of America & there are not without

their parallels on the West Coast

~~Earlier to Fox the Norsemen, & you are to believe Sorely~~

~~Authors Nordic & his Welshmen, the Lost Legionaires & many more.~~

There is no doubt however that the Pacific Coast was first seen by the Spaniards, who acting under a ~~title from the Pope to~~ treaty with the Portuguese giving to them the right-hand discoveries West of a certain arbitrary line, made very considerable explorations on the West Coast of America in the Earlier part of the 16th Century. In 1592 the Viceroy of Mexico sent a certain Greek Sailor, Apostolos Valerianos - more commonly known as Juan de Fuca - on a voyage of discovery to the Northward, He followed the Coasts of California & Oregon "until he came to the latitude of 47 degrees, & there finding that the ~~Sea~~ Land trended North & North-East, with a broad inlet of Sea between 47 & 48 of latitude. He entered there into, Sailing therein more than twenty days, & found that Land trending still Sometime North-West & North-East, & North, & also East & South-eastward, & very much broader Sea than was at the said entrance, & he passed by divers islands in

that Sailing. & at the entrance of the said Straits there is on the North-west Coast thereof a great headland or island, with an exceeding high pinnacle, or Spired Rock, like a pillar thereupon. Also he said that he went on land in divers places, & that he saw some people on land clad in beasts skins: & that the land is very fruitful & rich of gold, silver, pearls, & other things like ~~xxxx~~ New Spain." — This is the country which I am to speak, & these the words of Locke an English Merchant, who met Fuca in Venice, in his old age, ~~xx~~ poor, & embittered against the Spaniards who had disproved his reported discovery. Locke's Memorandum was published Purchas' Pilgrims under the scarcely very dependable title of "A note made by me Michael Locke the elder, touching the Straits of the Sea, Commonly Called Fretum Anian, in the South Sea, through the North West passage of Meta incognita."

Chance alone turned the Useful Navigator Drake from the discovery of this Coast, for when, 14 years before Fuca's voyage he had taken his vessel with spoils of the Spanish Ships & settlements, whistling to

avoid the Passage of the Straits of Magellan, he turned
back-northward, in the hope that he might reach England
in some way, across what was then a blank on the maps of the world
~~was~~, but was deterred from pursuing that direction by
adverse winds & weather.

In quest of a passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the
British Government offered a standing reward of £20,000,
to whoever might discover ~~a~~ such passage ~~&~~ & sail from one
ocean to the other. In 1776 Captain Cook was sent on his
famous voyage, part of his instructions being to examine the
whole coast north of lat 65° for any opening, with special
reference to that reported to exist by Juan de Fuca. Cook was
unfortunate however, carefully examining the southern part of
the coast, he came at last on the 22nd of March 1778 to
within sight of Cape Flattery, which he named, & which stands
at the southern entrance of the
Straits he ~~was~~ was in search of, though it would not
have carried him as he desired to the Atlantic. It was near
night, & Cook stood off to wait daylight to make a closer
examination, but a storm came on, blew him far to the

in sight of the Coast

northward, & Coming in again he made Nootka Inlet, & there stayed some time, refitting & watering his ships. Cook was unfortunate in missing Fucas straits, but Nash in writing as he did "It is in this very latitude where we now were, that Geographers have placed the pretended Straits of Juan de Fuca but we saw nothing like it; nor is there the least probability that ever any such thing existed"! He tried the passage by Behrings Straits but was repulsed by ice.

Between 1787-9 Several English & New England Captains confirmed the existence of Fucas straits by entering them & visiting different parts of their shores, during trading voyages. Of these Meares, an English Sea-faring officer deserves notice, as ~~he sailed with Kendrick~~ ~~seeing the Straits~~, he took care to make known his discoveries, though still under the impression that Fucas Straits was the portals only of an avenue from ocean to ocean. In him the Statements of poor old discredited Fuca found a defender, he saw even what he supposed the Fucas pinnacled rock, which he named Tatoosh; & remarks on the similarity of the natives to those described by Fuca, mentioning Specially the

after having been the country, & traded with the natives

practise of flattening the head. For a fine specimen of theoretical geography, however, one should turn to Meare's "Observations on the Probable existence of a North-West Passage" He had Hearne's track westward across the interior of America to the Shores of the Arctic Ocean, which were thus placed within 7° of latitude 70°, but was much disinclined to believe in its accuracy, & even spoke with approval of a gentleman who writes that Hearne's track was conclusive with regard to the non-existence of a North West Passage in low latitudes if all the Rivers & Lakes he crossed were of fresh water

In April 1792 Captain Vancouver, sent by the British Government to clear up these questions with regard to a North West Passage, & also to settle some points in dispute with the Spaniards who were laying claim to the whole of the Coast, arrived in the entrance of Fuca's Straits, & began that extended exploration of the North-west coast which was to render his name famous. An exploration of which he could have formed no idea of the difficulty at this time, but in which he was afterwards led along many hundred miles of one of the roughest & most broken sea margins

in the world, up long winding inlets, in constant danger
of attack from Savages, with baffling winds & strong currents,
among unknown rocks & innumerable islands, where
water was too deep for his Ships to anchor; & so at last to convince
geographers ~~of~~ that neither Fucas nor any other passage on the west
coast, would conduct them to the Atlantic. We owe much to
Vancouver's careful examination of this Coast, & the Charts
executed published & the Admiralty are in some places those made
by him at this time. It is fitting therefore that the Island
which has sometimes been called the Great Britain of the Pacific,
should bear his name.

Having glanced thus at a Chapter in the Romance of Geography
written when the world was younger than it is now (much younger I should say than the same different
aspects would show) let us
see what part of country it was that had been discovered.
Starting from the East coast of America we might travel
westward by the St Lawrence Valley, gaining slightly in
elevation & ~~crossing~~ Crossing the watershed west of Lake Superior
without attaining any great height, & then dip down into

the great longitudinal trough which divides the continent, & in which the Mississippi flowing in one direction, & the Red River in the other, gain respectively the Gulf of Mexico & the Arctic ocean. From here our course would be a continued & gradual ascent till the bases of the Rocky Mountains were reached, & Climbing to the summit - ~~may~~ there we ~~may~~ look back on a huge stretch of flat country, differing only in colour from the Sea, which must at several periods have covered it. Turning Westward however, the prospect is far different, what might well be called a "Sea of Mountains" meets the view, Peak beyond peak, & ridge after ridge till the horizon is closed in by their number. All the rock formations which lie in the great plains almost in the positions in which the Sea left them, are here Reared up into mountains, beds originally horizontal, are standing on edge, & tilted at steep angles, & the appearance is as though a wide-stretching low country had been "telescoped" by a blow from the Pacific. Such ~~a view~~ is indeed the

probable ~~xxxxxxx~~ cause of the wide disturbed belt of the Pacific Coast, but the movement was no doubt ~~xxxxxxx~~ a slow & gradual one instead of a sudden shock, & the result ~~xxxx~~ somewhat ~~xxx~~ resembles that of an ice shove on the St Lawrence, but that instead of breaking, as the ice caves do, the earth's Crust generally bent. Out of the ruins of the great folds thus produced the mountain systems as we now know them have been carved in the course of ages.

Though at first apparently only a sea of mountains, these admit of classification into Ranges. In British Columbia these are three in number. Bounding it on the East, the Rocky Mountains, separated eastward by a long, narrow, & remarkably straight valley in which the ~~Columbia~~, Kootany Columbia, Fraser, Parsnip & Finlay Rivers all run for a portion of their course ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~, from a second Range scarcely inferior to them in elevation, which is known in various parts of its length under different names, but may be named as a whole the Selkirk or Gold Range, with this the great-

auriferous wealth of the country is connected, & the various
gold fields which ~~[illegible]~~ have at one time or other attracted their swarms of
miners auxious to be rich, are scattered like beads along
it. Taking them in order from South to North, there are many
men here, who must have heard of Kootany, Great Bend,
Cariboo, Omineca, & Cassiar. —
West of the Gold Range lies the great plains, or rather perhaps
the great plateau of the Interior of British Columbia.
This plateau runs from the Southern boundary, North-
westward to beyond the Clusters of great lakes in the Northern
part of the Province. Its average width may be stated
as about 100 miles. Standing on some little Summit
a few hundred feet above its general level, about its
Central portion, one may trace its snow covered bounding ranges, the Gold
Range to the East, & the Cascade or Coast Range to the West, while
between, the country has the appearance of a vast nearly level

plain, clothed with an unbroken mantle of green, & having only here & there some lower hills rising above its surface. Such a view as this, however, though apparently showing everything, in reality shows very little of the actual structure of this plateau. Out of sight, in valleys ~~scarcely deep~~ carved deep below its surface, the river systems of the country lie, & in following these they are found to widen as they flow, & to be margined by ~~which~~ wide stretching lawns of verdure, & ~~sometimes~~ slopes clothed with, in mountainous bunch-grass. We are supposed to have taken our first view of this interior plateau from about ~~its~~ the centre of its length. Northward, while sinking somewhat in elevation, it gradually becomes more densely timbered, till even the valleys are clothed with a rank growth of pines & spruces. Southward, while ~~rising in the whole~~ its surface rises in average elevation the valleys become much more important, & the unbroken areas of plateau smaller, while at the same time, over great areas, the forest almost disappears.

The Fraser River is the great draining stream of the interior

of the province. Rivers at its most northern points nearly at the general level of the country, it runs directly southward in an ever deepening & narrowing Channel till it enters through a chasm in the Coast Range, & reaches the sea. So satisfied for the present, with this cursory view of the interior plateau, let us cross the Sierra & journey westward toward the Cascade or Coast Range. Following for instance the Chelcolen Valley, we would expect to find its sources streaming from the Snow Clad peaks which rise before us. This is only the case with some of them, however, following one which happens not to do so, we come at length to long reedy pools, inhabited by ducks & bitterns, & then, scarcely perceiving it, cross a low gravelly watershed, & find little streams running toward the Range to the west. Following these, we are conducted into the centre of this huge mass of mountains, which we find opening in deep valleys, gorges, & Cañons in before us, & Shallow Lakes below the level of the plain of the interior, which we have left behind, we may be surprised to observe our stream

took the utmost confidence

now grown to the dimensions of a river, rushing downward
in a succession of boiling rapids & falls ^ ~~that we realize~~
that the plain which we have left in the interior stands at an
elevation of ~~some~~ near 4000 feet above the sea, & surpasses in
its general height - most of our mountains in the bolder part
of the continent.

& before reaching the coast we realize.

Having now reached the Pacific, let us take a rapid glance at
the physical Characteristics of the coast. With the exception
of the ~~deep~~ narrow valleys such as that which we have followed, in
the deepest of which the Fraser River runs — the Coast or Cascade
Range forms an unbroken barrier to the west, & gives
to the shore such a high bare & rugged front, that it is little wonder
that ~~the~~ an old Scotch woman asked as she is reported to have
on seeing it done ^ why they were bringing her to the back of the world.
This coast-like that of the Vancouver & Queen Charlotte
Islands, is dissected by the most wonderful system of
Fiords, variously called Channels, Canals or Inlets,
in the world. These are old river valleys, the seaward

Continuation of the in which the rivers of the coast Range still run, but excavated when the country stood at a higher level relatively to the sea than it now does. We can prove this by the Sounding lead. Beyond at the head of the estuarine Inlets, at the mouth of the river discharging into it is a swampy flat, continued under water by a shallow bank of sand or mud the accumulation of the river while at its present level. Seaward, this mud-bank suddenly slopes down, & perhaps within half a mile of the edge we find 100 or 200 fathoms of water. Following down the Inlet we find similar great depths, till near its mouth it begins to shoal again, & when the open sea is reached we may have banks at only 30, 40, or 50, fathoms, which again slope gradually downward into the deeper waters of the Pacific. These banks have been formed by current & tide piling up the sediments of the bottom since the depression of the coast, but unable to sweep into the sheltered waters of the Inlets themselves.

For magnificent scenery the Straits of Georgia between the mainland & Vancouver Island, & the Channels penetrating the coast-range, can scarcely be excelled. One may sail with a favorable wind & calm sea amid a maze of deep water-ways, between which bold islands, clad with greenery, & diversified by bare cliffs of rock, rise in numberless profusion, & among which long vistas open showing the snowy summits of the coast range.

In penetrating the coast range by one of the Inlets a wide appearance is had. A strip of water, a mile or two in width, but looking narrow & ribbon like, leads on in a winding course for perhaps 50 or 100 miles, walled at the sides by cold looking cliffs of granite, which rise into mountains 6000 to 8000 feet above the sea at their base, & clothed on their summits with perpetual snow, & in some places with long trailing glaciers descending in their valleys.

Speaking of the Inlets our friend Vancouver writes — "This rendezvous was about 37 miles from the Station

of the Vessels, in as desolate, inhospitable a country, as the the most melancholy Creature could be desirous of inhabiting. The Eagle, Crow, & Raven that occasionally had been our Company in our lonely researches, visited not these dreary Shores. The common shell-fish such as Muscles, Clams, & Cockles, & the Nettle, Samphire, & other coarse Vegetables that had been so highly essential to our health & maintenance in all our former excursions, were scarcely found anywhere here to exist; & the ruins of the miserable hut, near where we had lodged the preceding night was the only indication we saw that human beings ever resorted to the country before us, which appeared to be devoted entirely to the Amphibious race; Seals & sea-otters, particularly the latter, were seen in great numbers."

The Coast or Cascade Range, like all the main features of the country, has a North-westerly & South Easterly Course, & in many places the minor Ranges composing this great

belt-ge mountains, have a parallel direction. In some parts ge its length, however, there appears to be no regularity in the form ge the mountain masses, which are thrown tumbled together in the wildest confusion, & in many places probably exceed 9000 or 10,000 feet in height. Between the peaks & ridges long streams ge blue glacier ice descend, & from them rush torrents ge milky water, charged with the flour ge rock ground in these great mills ge nature; while the lower valleys are filled with dense woods ge Spruce & Pine.
One ge the most striking peaks I have seen is situated immediately South ge the Bella Coola Valley. I travelled in sight ge it for two days last Summer over the surface ge a broken plateau 5000 feet in height, on which great quantities ge snow were lying in July. This mountain — Called Chil-a-thlum-din-Ky by the Indians — rose far above the level on which we stood, but its true magnitude was not appreciated till reaching the edge ge the Bella

Coola Valley, we could see the river 4000 feet below us in that remarkable gorge, winding around its base. The Coast Range is the most important Climatic division of the country, & in its Vicinity, or among the mountains of the outlying islands, is precipitated ~~xxxxx~~ the greater part of the moisture of the Southerly & Westerly winds of the Pacific, which, were nature more uniform in her action, would go to fertalise the dry plains of the great interior of the continent. The Rainfall at Victoria during the year 1875 amounted to nearly 36 inches, while at Spences Bridge, at no great distance, but within the Coast Range, it was only 12 inches. The immediate vicinity of Victoria is however specially favoured in its climate, & 36 inches of rain is a very reasonable quantity if only spread uniformly through the year. It is during the winter, however, that nearly all this moisture is precipitated, while for several months in the Summer, rain is almost unknown.

Vancouver & the Queen Charlotte Islands catch
a large proportion of the clouds on their western coasts,
& wring from them their superabundent moisture. It
is only when we look at the condition of the more exposed
parts of the Coast Range, that we fully realize its action
as a condensor. At Sitka, for instance, in the
Southern part of Alaska the average rainfall for the year
is 82 1/2 inches or nearly 7 feet, while at the
Mouth of the Columbia River, to the South, it is almost
as great. With this great rainfall, we have a
correspondingly mild Climate, for the Southern part
of Vancouver Island, in the average of years, very much
resembling that of England, but more variable
from year to year. The thermometer has seldom been known
to go below Zero, while usually a few light snow falls
occur in the winter, but scarcely cover the ground for more
than a day or two, & ice thick enough for skating is not
always formed. The Summer, tempered by the cool

web-foot-goose

,,,

breezes ~~from~~ from the ocean, is rich immoderately
warm, & during three Rainless months, with a Calm
sea reflecting the picturesque Olympian Mountains, &
Mount Baker 13,000 feet in height, & though sixty miles
distant standing boldly above the horizon with its
Snow-Clad dome, — the Climate of Victoria is probably
as delightful as that of any part of the Globe.

In the Plateau country, East of the Coast Range, however, all
this is changed, & we find instead of a climate of means
a Climate of extremes. In the Southern part of the interior
plateau, & more especially in its deep river valleys
into which ~~where~~ wandering breezes can scarcely find their way, the heat
of Summer is intense, the Rattle-Snake, the Sage-
Cock, & the Jackass-Rabbit find as congenial a home
as they do on the warmer & dryer portion of the Great-Plains
East of the Rocky Mountains & the Interior basin of Colorado & Nevada
In winter, however, while the coast is deluged with its
warm or Chilly rains, we here in the interior a
clear, cold, frosty climate like that of the Province of Quebec,

but with much less snow & more liable from time to time, to sudden thaws. ~~Comparing~~ (examining the record for Spence's Bridge on the Thompson, which is the only meteorological station yet established in the interior — we find that during the year 1874 the highest temperature registered was in July reading 93° in the Shade, the lowest in January, when the thermometer fell to 20° below Zero. In 1875 the highest reading was 98°, the lowest 29° below Zero. Comparing the mean annual temperature of Spences Bridge with that of Victoria we find a difference scarcely more than 2°. That is to say, that, in the year round, Victoria is only about 2° warmer than Spences Bridge; but the heat is very differently distributed in the two places. The Climate of Spence's Bridge, however, only represents that of the Southern part of the interior plateau.

In the absence of regular observations, the plants of any country form a good indication of its Climate. I think those of British Columbia may be naturally

grouped into 4 Classes, which might be named the Arctic, the Canadian, the West Coast, & the Western Interior. On the Summits of the higher mountain ranges, the Coast Range, the Selkirk, & the Rocky Mountains, & on the higher plateaus where the Snows lie late in the Summer, the flora is distinctively Arctic, & plants are found lurking, which only deploy on the open low grounds on the Shores of Hudson Bay, the Icy Sea, & Behring's Straits. In the Northern part of the Central plateau, but not West of the Coast Range, ~~mingled with a few stragglers from other quarters~~, we find just such an assemblage as might be found in many parts of the Province of Quebec — the pigeon-berry, Northern Linnea, blue-berry, wild Columbine; & a host of others ~~which~~ described originally by Pursh, Michaux & other old~~er~~ botanists, from this this part of the Continent, & having Canadensis as their Specific Names. This Northern Canadian flora I believe runs completely across the Continent north of the

Arctic & mingled with a few stragglers from other quarters.

great plains, & characterizes a region with cold winters, Summers not excessively warm, & a moderately abundant Rainfall. The Climate of the West Coast, & western Slopes of the Coast mountains, has already been characterized. The vegetation while showing in one or two places a few representatives of the Spinose & balsamic plants of the dry Coast of California, is in the main distinguished by Darkness & Luxuriance, with many peculiar forms named after the early explorers of the West Coast. The traveller from the East is at once surprised to observe the great size of the trees clothing even the most rocky hill-sides, & finds himself underrating the height of the mountains by unconsciously supposing the foliage is stunted like that he has before seen in similar localities. In the Sheltered bays & inlets the Douglas fir, the most useful timber tree of the West Coast — attains a surprising size. A tree felled last winter in Burrard Inlet, for the purpose of obtaining a section of the trunk, to send

to the late Exhibition at Philadelphia; measured when on the ground 305 feet in length, while the diameter ~~was~~ 20 feet above the butt, was 8 feet 4 inches, & the annual rings of growth indicated an age of about 600 years! The seed of this tree must have fallen to the ground some time about the reign of the First Edward, & the Bruce, — yet it was not chosen as the very largest that could be found, but as being thoroughly Symmetrical & sound. We have not time to wander among these forests where the giant Cedar from which the native Canoes are hollowed, attains a girth even greater than the Douglas fir, but does not tower so high. The trees are "bearded with moss" too, & I know few things more gratifying than a long scramble in their dark shade among the half-decayed remnants of a former generations of forest-giants.

To return now to our last division, the Western Interior flora — This is characteristic of the Southern part-

of the plateau,- where one may ride for days over bare slopes on a carpet of bunch-grass; & climbing higher on the hills, enter open woods dotted with grassy swamps & meadows.- This flora also extends northward in the sheltered river valleys, & especially on their sunny western slopes, to the 53rd degree of latitude. Besides the bunch-grass, & its companion the sage, or artemisia,- which afford summer & winter pasture for the great herds of cattle which already roam over this country,- we find the Lycopsis, & the Cactus or prickly-pear, with many other less-known forms, precisely resembling those of the Nevada & Utah plains in the great interior basin, to the south, & the high & dry plains east of the Rocky Mountains.

We need not stop to enquire as to the means of communication along the coast, with its unparalled systems of sheltered water-ways, where the depth & not the shalness of the water

is dreaded by the mariner, but may pause to observe that on the West-Coast one may find some of the worst & oldest-steamers in the known world.

~~took the barriers which it presents~~

It is little wonder, however, that the Interior, with the barriers it presents, should have remained for a long time, & many parts yet to the present day, almost unknown. Had the Fraser River been at all like the rivers of the East, its position would have made it the Great-avenue to the interior, & opened up to the outside world the remotest Corners of the land. In the Fraser, however, & almost-every other river of British Columbia, nature seems only to have half finished her work, on the arrival of man. The Fraser is navigable for a distance of about 90 miles from its Mouth, though in the upper part of this reach only by stern-wheel or wheel-barrow steamboats of great power. Further up a stretch of about-

55 miles between Soda Creek & Quesnel, is navigable in the same way; the ascent occupying 12 or 13 hours under favourable conditions, the descent about 4. The remainder of this great stream, though never forming a true waterfall, is a succession of rapids, boils, eddies, & whirlpools, often surging below cliffs of rock which scarcely afforded a footing to the adventurous miners, who in early days, at certain stages of the water, laboriously dragged their boats & canoes upward with supplies for the gold mines. Many were the lives lost in this dangerous occupation, till it became almost proverbial that a man falling into the Fraser by any chance, never came out again alive. ? In 1863 the Government of the Colony began the construction of a Waggon Road, which was carried successfully to completion, & now constitutes the great artery of communication from Yale, at the head of navigation to Cariboo, in the far north. Taken as a

(say under favourable circumstances as my experience not always favourable)

whole this road is a great work of engineering, sometimes
dipping nearly down to the water of the river, & again
climbing gradually up till it seems to overhang the white
torrent below at a height of 600 or 800 feet; & carried
for miles of its length like a shelf out of rock, & stony side hills.
It is a hard road for stage-horses, but I think
a drive through Granite Mountain Scenery could
nowhere be enjoyed.

& in hot weather by no means an easy one for passengers -

Leaving the Waggon Road, & well beaten trails of the
Southern part of the province, we find in the North a great
wilderness country in which the trails are of a very
inferior description, & to there, & the dug-out-Canoe,
in some of the least tumultuous parts of the rivers; the
means of communication are limited. One trail
only, deserving the name, exists in this "upper country"
& this was originally made by the Collins Overland
Telegraph Company, & is since supposed to be annually

very much on the model of a large pig-trough

Chopped out by men employed by the Government.
This trail, & the miles & miles of galvanized-iron
telegraph wire which lie ~~strung~~ tangled along it, & lead to
by no means temperate remarks on the part of the
mule drivers, when their animals become caught in it, —
are now the only records of this remarkable Commercial
Venture, by which it was proposed to connect Europe &
America by land lines, but which was at once
When the Tel. Trail runs. abandoned on the news of the successful laying of the Atlantic
Cable. Off the Telegraph trail the explorer must force
his laborious way by the Indian trails still remaining,
or shape his course by the Compass, blindly through tangled
forests, windfall, brulé, & swamps, slowly chopping
away the natural barriers, "brushing" swamps to render
them passable by pack animals, or building a raft to
ferry his camp equipage & provisions across some river;
as circumstances may direct. These trails, I think

must be very like those by which Champlain made his early adventurous journeys through this part of Canada, & still much in the same condition as when Sir Alexander Mackenzie 83 years ago, traversed them on foot under the guidence of the natives, on his way to the Pacific, ~~after he had crossed this~~ ~~Range on the top of the Rocky~~ Mountains,

Mackenzie was the first white man to set eyes on the Interior of British Columbia, & arrived on the coast shortly after the voyage of Vancouver. His adventurous voyage up the Peace River, & down the Upper Fraser — which he believed to be the Columbia River — His still more adventurous abandonment of his Canoe, & resolution in trusting his life in a country then thickly peopled by Savages of unknown temper; & his sufferings from heat, cold, musquitoes & bad roads, which but for a little guaintness which time has added to his writings, might read as the experiences of a traveller of today —

would themselves occupy an evening in the telling, & would well repay the time thus spent.

Much of the country which Mackenzie passed through is as I have said, still in very nearly the same condition as when he saw it, but only the trails forming main lines of travel are kept open by the Indians, while most of those by which the woods were threaded in every direction at one time, are now either nearly impassable, or quite obliterated, owing to the diminished number of the natives, who were more than decimated by the Small-pox shortly after the entrance of miners into the country, & who like all the aborigines of this continent have only mournful stories of decadence to tell, since the advent of the whites. If any of these old Indian trails can be found, however, making for a point which the traveller is desirous to reach, it will repay him to spend time & all his exertions in endeavouring to stick by it, for the natives have invariably found in the course

of ages, the "lines of least resistance" through the Country, & when the dim track takes a sudden turn to right or left, one may be sure it does so to avoid some obstacle which a more direct path would have carried one into. The pioneer must train his powers of observation to notice quickly the faintest trace of an old "blaze" on the trees, or twigs which have been cut by the axe, or bent over by the hand of the passing Indian to serve as a Sign Post by the way.

Country densely wooded with Swell timber. Reminding one of the position of a ~~Cricket~~ ~~of fish~~ in a field of Grass

Through Country, much of this nature, the Surveys for our Pacific Railway have been Carried, & unless by personal experience, one can scarcely appreciate the difficulties which are met with in discovering the best Route, on which to "locate" the line. The surveys of the Canadian Pacific Railway have added during the last few years a Solid, reliable mass of information to the Geography of North America, of which it is difficult to overestimate the importance & the Amount of enterprise & exertion which have gone to

Preliminary explorations have entailed are worthy of more extended relation than is accorded to them in the matter of such Official Reports by which they are alone known, & the discoveries of practical interest in which they have from time to time resulted are often quite as worthy to be heralded about the world by the telegraph, as is the finding of some new bay in a lake of the interior of Africa.

The resources of British Columbia may be briefly summed up in the order of their present importance— Mines, Forests, Fisheries & the products of the Chase, Stock Raising & Agriculture. It will be quite impossible to do more than mention all these, but we may perhaps glance for a moment at the Mines, by which attention & colonization was first attracted to the country, & by which it has since in great measure been sustained. Gold & Coal, comprise the minerals now extensively worked. It cannot be too often pointed

out that Canada possesses the only available coal deposits, on the shores of the Pacific, as well as on the Atlantic. From the mines of Vancouver Island large quantities of coal are already shipped to San Francisco, forcing their way into this market against the protective tariff, on account of their superior excellence.

It was not, however, to obtain a fortune indirectly, by the sale of coal, but at once, by the acquisition of gold, that the tide of miners turned so strongly towards British Columbia in 1859, & rose till its most remote mountains were invaded in subsequent years.

Common report has it, that the Hudson Bay Company had been in the habit of obtaining gold in trade from the Indians, for some years, but it was not till May 1858, that this became generally known, & the Gold-fever fairly broke out. Gold had been known in California for 9 years at this time, but San Francisco still showed little sign of settling down to quiet & order.

Negroes in considerable numbers had come there, & against them, the prejudices of the lower & more turbulent characters were excited, much as is the case now with the Chinese. There was even a talk of passing a law excluding blacks from the State, & so in search of a quieter home, a number of these people sailed from San Francisco to Victoria with the intention of founding a colony there. The very vessel which brought them to Victoria, was, however, I believe, the means of carrying the first authentic news of gold back to San Francisco, & of turning at once the eyes of the world on Victoria; which up to this time had been probably one of the least known parts of the globe, & boasted of a population of one or two hundred only, & a Hudson Bay Fort. The excitement reached its climax in July. On the 27th of June, the ~~Impossible~~ "Republic" with 300 passengers arrived, on the 1st of July the "Sierra Nevada" with 1900 more, & on the 8th, two other vessels together bringing 2800. About this time it was estimated that close on

10,000 men were camped, or sheltered in such rude
Cabins as could be hurridly built, on the Site of
Victoria. Property which had been unsalable at £1
before, was snapped up greedily at £100; & some
of the early settlers formed themselves into paper-
selves off not only than they ever were before, but than they have ever
Some waiting men got to C.P.R.S. been since. Gold however was so far out of reach
as ever at Victoria, & to reach the "bars" of the Fraser River,
the Gulf of Georgia had to be crossed. Ships, Canoes, &
boats of all descriptions were in the greatest demand. Many
a perilous voyage, in these insufficient Crafts, was made,
& probably many a life lost - of which no account has
ever been given. Soon the banks of the Fraser, before so
silent - echoed to the blows of the axe, & the tongues of
half Christendom were heard along its shores.
So difficult was it, however, to find means of passage
from Victoria at this time, that many, becomming discour-

returned to San Francisco without even having set-
eyes on the new El dorado.
Year by year, since 1858 & 59 the Searcher for Gold has
pushed his discoveries further & yet further, against
what obstacles, & at what expense of suffering, & life
can never be fully known. Like the old Coureurs de Bois
of Canada, the miner accomplishes greater feats than
many a far famed traveller, but does not perpetuate
the memory of his achievements, & only now & then hands
his name down to posterity in connection with some stream
or mountain where he has lived & worked.
Carrying blankets, provisions, & gold-pan on his back
these men have travelled through the densest forests, often
quite alone, returning only to the sight of their friends, when
supplies ran short. The Indians, too, in these days though
seldom or never openly hostile, often found it convenient
to quietly murder one of these Caucasians, & even of

little importance, for the few poor things they carried with them. Miners were seldom known to their comrades by their proper names, & between the knife of the Indian, exposure & Starvation, many men often last heard of, had gone to British Columbia, but were never heard from again.

Skeleton found by Survey Party. Cassiar, the latest discovery of importance in British Columbia, a gold field of only 3 years standing, is actually near the Northern boundary of that very extensive province, on the 59th parallel of North latitude. In a high mountainous Country, with a climate almost arctic, scarcely anything but gold would tempt exploration or residence. Cassiar is however reached annually by Crowds of miners, who, embarking at Victoria land at the mouth of the Stikeene River, provided with the necessaries of life, & light-hand sledges on which to transport them, laboriously nearly 200 miles into the interior, on the yet frozen

ice of the River; to be able thus to utilize every day of the short running season. Those who do not care to incur such hardships, however, may wait till the river opens, & then by steamer, ascend part of the way up one of the most-peculiarly navigable rivers in the world, walking the rest of the distance on foot with their packs on their backs. Arrived at Dawson we find stunted forest, moss, & swamp everywhere, with permanently frozen ground at a short distance below the surface on the sheltered sides of the Creeks. Notwithstanding its disadvantages, however, the gold yield of this region is already very great, & indefatigable prospectors have even found the precious metal in paying quantity near 300 miles still further north eastward. The question still is — where next? — & it has even been suggested jokingly that by the time one or other of the ponderously equipped Arctic expeditions succeeds in reaching the pole, they

will find a camp of miners there, quite unaware of
their interesting proximity to the Earth's axis!
Cassiar though now reached from the west coast, was not
originally discovered from that direction, but as luck had it,
lay in the way of the unguided wanderings of a party of
miners from the East. This is the story of its finding—

Describe present
method of Gold
Mining in Cariboo.

As yet I have said little or nothing as to the habits & former owners of this country, & perhaps little of interest can be said. The General habits, & modes of thought of the Red man are much the same wherever we meet him, & however Carefully it may be attempted to Guard his Rights, or such of them as it may be found convenient to accord to him; he seems to fail & droop in the presence of a Stronger Race. The Indians of the Interior of British Columbia are not unlike those of this part of Canada, hunting & roaming through the woods, fishing in the lakes, & collecting at certain seasons as their ancestors have done time out of mind, to certain localities favourable for the Capture of the Salmon. Those of the Northern province belong to the great Tinne Race which Stretches from Hudson Bay to the Pacific in various modifications; those of the Southern portion to the [illegible] The Coast tribes differ considerably in appearance &

Describe migration to Salmon Home.

Called generally Atenah by the Tinne people are of more varied origen.

wonderful life, from those of the interior, & instead of finding a few great root languages spoken by all, we here discover a multiplicity of tongues, differing much from each other. The Coast Indians seldom hunt, but live chiefly by fishing, though not too proud to turn all species of shell-fish & animals of the deep into articles of food. They are constantly on the water in their graceful & well made Canoes, in which they even perform long Coasting voyages; the Queen Charlotte Islanders for instance Reaching Victoria in these vessels of their own manufacture. These Coast Indians are perhaps more amenable to the beneficial influences of civilization, than any others in America, & have besides great aptitude in acquiring certain manual arts, & make good Sailors on Coasting Craft. Small pox, & other diseases consequent on association with the whites, however have thinned their Ranks, & even where they were active causes

often properly instructed

with bad whiskey

how bad little effect, they appear to be diminishing.
Mr Sproat in his "Scenes & Studies from Savage Life" makes some interesting observations on this point. He had good opportunities for becoming acquainted with the Indians, while managing a Saw-mill on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, in which Indian labour was to a considerable extent employed. The place was conducted on temperance principles, while the natives were well treated, & probably better fed, clothed & taught than they had ever been before. "It was only" says Mr Sproat, "after a considerable time, that symptoms of a change, among the Indians living nearest the white Settlement, could be noticed. Not having observed the gradual process, my mind being occupied with other matters, I seemed all at once to perceive that a few sharp-witted young natives had become what I can only call offensively European, & that the mass of the Indians no longer disliked the

Settlement in their former free independent way, but lived listlessly in the villages, brooding seemingly over heavy thoughts!" Their curiosity had been satisfied, they had been surprised & bewildered by the presence of machinery, steam-vessels, & the active labours of civilized men, & they seemed to have acquired a distrust, nay almost a disgust for themselves. They began to abandon their old habits, tribal practices, & ceremonies. By & bye it was noticed that more than the usual amount of sickness existed among the Indians, & a high death-rate continued during the five years I was there. Nobody molested them, they had ample sustenance & shelter for the support of life, yet the people decayed. The steady brightness of civilized life, seemed to dim & extinguish the flickering light of Savageism, as the rays of the sun put out a common fire."

The Indian finds, in fact, that all those things which he has been

accustomed to consider great, ~~noble~~ heroic, or important are far excelled by the journeyings & actions of the whites, who are of a higher level, to which he cannot rise in time to save himself. He loses his self respect & independence, such as they were, & falls only too readily a victim to the vices of Civilization. These ideas, I think, contain much of the solution of the extinction & the disappearance of the Indian.

Compare E. S. Meers

Here is a picture of the Indian as the white man found him, ~~on the west Coast of Vancouver Island~~, with his condition today we are many of us too familiar.

a while he still considered himself a creature of importance

Capt. Meares writes "A number of war Canoes entered the Cove, with Maquilla & Callicum; they moved with great parade round the Ship, singing at the same time a song of a pleasing though sonorous Melody:- there were twelve of these Canoes, each of which contained about 18 men, the greater part of whom were clothed in dresses of the most beautiful Skins of the Sea-otter, which covered them from their necks to their ancles. Their hair was powdered with the white down of birds, & their faces bedaubed with red & black ochre, in the form of a sharks jaw, & a kind of spiral line, which rendered their appearance extremely Savage. In most of these boats there were eight rowers on a side, & a single man sat in the bow. The Chief occupied a place in the middle, & was also distinguished by an ~~[illegible]~~ high Cap, pointed at the Crown, & ornamented at top by a small tuft of feathers.

(W. Coast; of V. I.)

In conclusion, though I have not been endeavouring specially to illustrate the material resources of British Columbia, it may have become apparent that She is not altogether without there. In the first flush of acquisition, & with imperfect knowledge, we may have formed unduly flattering pictures of British Columbia, & others portions of the north-west, which I fear may have led in the minds of many to a natural revulsion, carrying us much further from the truth in the opposite direction.

Not being the possessor of any Corner or other allotments in British Columbia, nor more interested in seeing that part, than any other of the Dominion advance & prosper; I may be able without suspicion of partiality to say a word in its favour.

I believe the mining industries of that province to be as yet in their mere infancy. In timber it is unsurpassed by that of any part of the world, & only approached in

excellence of that of its neighbour Washington Territory. Already masts & spars are supplied to all countries from the West Coast, & there will still be abundance of good lumber obtainable there, when the white pine forests of Ontario & Quebec are memories of the past. Salmon, from the Fraser River, have already become a large item of export, but the sea fisheries are as yet quite undeveloped, & in fact remain almost entirely unknown.

In Stock raising British Columbia may do great things, & the area suitable for this purpose will increase year by year as the forests of the interior are destroyed. From the Southern boundary to Fraser Lake, Cattle & Horses can live out the year round without the provision of Stellers or food. Even in agriculture, though the high & broken character of the country renders the quantity of arable land comparatively small, where cultivable tracts exist their fertility is vastly greater than

in these Eastern Provinces. As far north as Fraser & Stuart Lakes, west of the Rocky Mountains, wheat will ripen, while to the East, ~~it includes within its limits~~ a portion of the Peace River country, of which much has already been said & written. — is included within the limits of the province

I do not think the impatience ~~of~~ of the fact that good crops of wheat are grown at Fort Chipewyan on Athabasca Lake, between the 58th & 59th Parallels of latitude, & that even Indian Corn will ripen there, is fully appreciated. Yet we have now had for many years, Sir John Richardsons Statement that wheat ripens most seasons at Fort Liard ~~between the 61st & 62nd Parallels~~ on the 60th parallel. McCoun & Selwyn.

In reading the Statements made from time to time in connection with the Northern Pacific Railway, which is eventually intended to traverse the Northern part of the United States from the West End of Lake Superior to Washington Territory, we cannot but be

struck with the fact, that in the absence of any particularly attractive features on this line, its promoters depend largely for its success on this rich north-western country of ours. Two short extracts, which though not written for the Northern Pacific Report are both coupled with allusions to it, may illustrate this.—

Prof Foster writes:— "The general sterility of the Valley of the Upper Missouri has been dwelt upon, but to the north of this there lies a region drained by the Red, Mouse, Assineboin & Saskatchewan Rivers, which are navigable for long distances,— a region which owing to the rapid trend of the isothermal lines to the northward, after passing longitude 98°, has a climate far more genial, & a climate far less sterile than that of New England. So far as known it is better adapted to the growth of wheat, rye, & oats, than the

prairies of Illanois & Wisconsin. Herds of buffalo range over plains of rich pasturage, & winter even on the sources of the Athabasca." This region, as large as the ~~thirteen~~ original Thirteen States in area, would be directly dependent on this route" — the Northern Pacific — "for its commercial intercourse."

a. With regard to British Columbia proper Dr Rothrock says:— "I am probably not far from the truth in asserting that in British Columbia, there are 50,000 Square miles of territory Capable of supporting a large agricultural community. Over a large portion of this region, wheat, rye, oats, barley, with potatoes, turnips, onions & Cabbages, may be grown with Reasonable Certainty that they will mature. We can all remember when it was said that the State of California could never be self-supporting. Yet today it is of all others the one garden spot of our nation. Its incomparable Climate does much for it; but much of the soil in British Columbia is just as fertile, & in some portions of its Surface, where the drought has hitherto been dreaded, the Chimere have shown how much may be done by irrigation. The luxuriant crops of grass show what the soil is Capable of. I need

not again allude to its timber. In the longer portions of the country grazing may be profitably followed. The presence of coal of good quality, & in sufficient quantity, & the great water power of the region, can hardly fail to be made subservient to large manufacturing interests. The future must of necessity make much of its marine & fresh water fisheries. The Salmon of the Columbia have a reputation which has already reached this Coast: & I should probably be stating the truth more if I to assert that those from the Fraser, Nasse, Skeena, & Stikene Rivers are as much superior to those from the Columbia, as those of the latter are to our eastern Salmon." ——

All this country now lies open to us, we are merely asked to enter & take possession; but it must be done in time. For many years there

C will be no call for two great trunk railway lines across the Northern part of the Continent. If our Canadian Railway can reach the waters of the Pacific before its rival it will be worth to it half the cost of its building. — This it remains with us to bring about, if we are to reap the benefit of our own territory, & open broader avenues for our trade. —

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"Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else,
Like Kindred drops, been mingled into one"

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we are called upon to open a North-west passage by land, where the earnest explorations of the Maritime powers have failed succeeded in showing the impossibility of one by sea.