#### BRITISH COLUMBIA.

NOTES OF A TRIP TO CARIBOO. BY BORTHWEST.

From the great centre of the gold-mining regions of British North America I send greeting. I arrived here last evening at sunset, just twenty-four hours ago. To-day I spent in exploring, not for new mines, but rather among the old ones. And now I propose to pass an hour in writing of what I have seen and learned.

CARIBOO.

Cariboo is a district of country far up among the mountains in British Columbia, so named from a hideous wild animal that inhabits this inhospitable territory. To put the whole subject in a nutshell, the colony is one vast waste, made up of a series of upheavals of stone, or irregular mountain chasms of granite, interspersed with narrow, barren crevices, ironically called valleys, and when a few unfortunate adventurers have stopped because they could go no farther, and pretend to play farmer. These valleys, with two or three microscopic exceptions, are as bleak and sterile as the sandy beach along the northern shores of the Atlantic, washed by old ocean's restless waves, coeval with the autumn's chilly winds. For agricultural purposes the province is absolutely valueless. The mines are its only source of wealth.

The popular mind was first directed to the country by the discovery of gold along the banks of the Fraser river. The toesin sounded, the cry rang wildly throughout the habitable globe-Away to the gold mines of the North! Who has not heard of Fraser river? of its buried treasure? of the fabulous fortunes there for all who would come, see, and gather ? All have heard; yes, and more, all have heard of the disappointments, of the blighted hopes and expectations, of the utter ruin, that cry wrought. The misfortune was, the gold was always in the distance, while the disappointment and sorrow was brought home to the anguish of thousands of generous, true, and loving hearts. The moral: contentment should come with the just reward of honest industry, to the total disregard of all ories of fabulous fortunes to be raperty made in distant lands.

WILLIAMS CREEK

The valley of Williams' creek is about two miles long and from a quarter to a half mile wide above and below the canon. It contains about two thousand men, chiefly miners. They are divided off in what may be called their camps. The first, or one farthest up the stream, is dignified by the name of Richfield; the second is Baskerville; the third Cameronton. Along the base of the mountain, on each side of the water in the different camps, are situated rows of stately buildings, ranging all the way from seven by nine to eight by ten feet in size, and from eight to ten feet high-in many of which are domiciled half-adozen hardy, honest miners, of brawny arms, brave hearts, and indomitable wills. They deserve rich rewards for the toil and deprivations they suffer, but alas! alas! how few of the great mass succeed in accomplishing the object of their ambition-a great fortune. Williams' creek was discovered by a man of

that name, in the spring of the year 1861. that time, mining in British Previous to Columbia had been confined to Fraser river. The first claims were located in Richfield, the best of which paid well at the outset and caused an immense rush of population. Fraser river, Honey and Antler creeks, lost all their charms, their diggings were left in disgust for the great centre of attraction, where gold of the finest quality could be scooped up by the shovelfull. After all the claims had been taken up in the vailey (which is not more than half-a-mile long) above the Corrian, prospecting to a considerable extent was carried on there; but no gold was found. At length an idea presented itself to the mind of an old California miner, that by some strange convulsion of nation the bed of the greek had been changed, and that by tunnelling into the earth a distance of two or three hundred feet the old bed would be reached, and that large deposits of gold would be found. A number of resolute men formed themselves into an association under the name of the Black Jack Company, and ran a tunnel into the mountain, in a sort of incline direction, for a distance of two hundred feet, where they struck a bed that proved the theory of the old Californian to be correct. The claim was the richest ever found in the valley. While this work of tunnelling was going on

a great rush was made down the creek for the valley below the canons and claims were taken up on both sides for a distance of a mile and a half. The first pay that was struck in this camp (called Baskerville) was by the Basker Company, which, after sinking a shaft about fifty feet, came upon a vein that has thus far paid every man connected with it for his labor, as well as the money expended in reaching it. Immediately adjoining this are several others that are generally regarded as good claims.

Below this camp is the celebrated Cameron claim, located in the winter of 1862, and which for a short time paid at the rate of \$1000 per foot; near by is the Raby mine, which, I am told, has yielded over a quarter of a million of dollars. In close proximity is the Prince of Wales, which paid well for a couple of years, but is now worthless, having been completely worked out. It is this uncertainty about gold mining that makes the business so hazardous; they are liable to cease yielding at any moment. Not so with silver mining; they never run out. There is no authentic instance on record, where a well-defined lode of silverbearing quartz has ceased to yield; the rule is, the deeper the descent the richer the ore. It is this fact that has caused so many old experienced miners to abandon the gold fields, and turn their attention to developing the silver mines of Nevada.

But there are other branches of industry than mining carried on here. Men from almost every profession and walk in life are to be met pursuing with energy their various avocations-the lawyer, the preacher, the doctor and distiller, the carpenter, the shoemaker, the blacksmith and the tinker. Some are quite morally inclined, others are decidedly anti-Christian. Passing through camp on Sabbath morning, the pedestrian will hear the woice of the pious missionary; in a little cabin, just at the left of the path, proclaiming the glad tidings of great joy to a sin-loving people. while immediately on the other side is a party of gold-worshipping miners, busily plying the shovel and the pickaxe, and, peradventure,

the sluice-box. The miners can hear the voice of the preacher, and the preacher hears the rattling of the miners' tools, the former pays no attention to the latter, nor the latter to the former; each appears to dismiss from his mind the idea that the other is near, and steadily works away at that which his hands findeth to do. Hard by can be heard a gentleman of African descent, exhorting his brethren to turn from the error of their ways, and follow the path of Christ, which leadeth to life eternal. The sledge of the blacksmith, the hammer of the cobbler and tinker, add their mite to the general confusion and commingling of discordant sounds. Anon can be seen a long train of animals descending into the valley from the mountain top, led on by a stately old bell mule. Chiming in with the rattling of this bell are the stentorian voices of the drivers-some in English, some in Spanish, and others in the Indian tongue. From another direction is approaching a drove of fat bullocks or a flock of thrifty sheep. The animals and men appear equally careless of all around. Every man here carries about with him a certain air of independence that I have never witnessed in any other community, by any other class of

ALL IS NOT GOLD THAT CLITTERS.

I have spoken of some claims that have rendered reasonable rewards to all engaged in them, and others which have given no compensation. I must now refer to one or two others of the latter class. There is an abaudoned claim known as the Welsh Mine, located by a company of Weishmen in 1862, adjoining some of the richest claims on the creek, and it was one in which the oldest, most experienced miners, as well as novices, had confidence. Shares changed hands at most extravgantly high prices. quick sales at \$18,000 and \$20,000, but no lead was found. Many a man, who by hard toil and good luck has acquired a bandsome fortune, here lost it, and was compelled to return to daily labor for support. In the spring of 1863 another unfortunate Welsh company was formed, under the captaincy of an old Australian miner. They located on Lightning creek, and after working for nearly two years in prospecting, cutting ditches, sinking shafts, erecting waterwheels and flumes, and expending over \$100,000, finally found that all their labor and expenditure of money had been in vain. Weary and disheartened, the company wound up its affairs, and the individual members sought employment in neighboring claims.

This is not the only Company whose hopes have been blighted on the Lightning. Much work has been done here. Numerous flumes, water-wheels, etc., are to be seen in every section now startling idle, rotting away, soon to tumble down and be carried along by the current of the stream, until they lodge with the remains of other flumes and waterwheels that have wound up the fortunes and bright hopes of many an unfortunate gold miner. I could go on almost ad infinitum reciting such instances, where men have squandered fortunes and destroyed their constitutions in prospecting, and finally left the country bankrupt in purse and health.

Mining, however, is not the only business n which men meet with good and bad fortune. They meet it in all the diversified undertakings of life. But it is felt the sooner here, as they come with the confident expectation of making large fortunes in short periods; that gold is scattered about in profuse abundance, and all that is left them to do, is to fill their long leathern bags, adjust them over a mule's back. and wend their way homeward to admiring, loving friends, and spend the balance of their days in the enjoyment of all the luxuries that money can buy. But, alas i on their arrival, and finding that the valued treasure, so far rom lying loose about the surface, is buried far down in the bowels of the earth, and that not only much labor, but powerful modern machinery is necessary to exhume it, and that sort of dark mystery, terrible uncertainty. envelopes the whole scheme, they are forcibly reminded that "All is not gold that glitters.

Rose and Johnson were among the earliest and most valuable of the mountain pioneers They made many discoveries through which others gathered fortunes; but they realized nothing. Fate had treasured up the gold for those who followed, and marked them as victims for the cruel assassin's hand. Now they sleep far down the rugged banks of the Bear river, by whose distant graves neither friend nor stranger has passed, save once, since they fell asleep to awake no more, until the morning they shall be called up to confront their murderers before the great Judge of all men.

In the spring of 1862 they started on an exploring expedition down the Antler, in the direction of the Bear, which they reached, and it has since been ascertained from some friendly natives that, while sleeping, a band of straggling hostile Indians stole upon them, butchered and robbed them, burned their bodies, and buried their bones under the camp-fire. How sad to reflect that such noble pioneers, so valuable to their country and their fellowmen, should thus fall a prey to such cowardly flends! Yet thus it was, and to it the most unwilling must bow. Neither can humanarm restore nor human eye pierce the veil which hangs about the mystery of birth, nor the appointed time and circumstances of death. "The heart of man deviseth his way, but God alone directeth his footsteps." The murdered and their murderers are in the hands of their Maker, and He will do with them precisely

what is right. On my way up I fell in with a Scotchman of iron constitution. "Three years ago," said he, "I found my way to Williams' creek with \$1500 in my pocket. I have worked hard ever since, and my luck has been to lose my old stoke; three years of incessant oil and scores of grey hairs in my head. But I came here to make a fortune in the mines, and I'll either succeed or leave my bones in these lonely mountains." I mention this circumstance to show the infatuation of even strong-minded men. They cling with lifelike tenacity to a sort of uncertain hope of distant success. A novice, by mance, strikes what is called "a streak of luck," the balance all say each one to himself, "It may be my turn next," and thus weeks, months, it may be years pass away, and at last the lamp of life burns down, glimmers faintly in the socket, and gradually goes out, ere that "streak of luck arrives," reader must always bear in mind that this uncertainty is incident to gold-mining, while silver-mining has been reduced to a legitimate business, quite as much so as banking or merchandising; the best gold mines run out, silver

mines never cease yielding. Donald Monroe, a Scotch Canadian, must also be numbered among the unfortunates. He started from Richfield, with the intention of crossing the mountains to Antler, but did not reach his destination, nor was he heard of until three months after, when an exploring party found his bones resting at the roots of an old tree, his flesh having been eaten by wild beasts. By his side lay a tin cup, on which he had written his name; that he had missed his way, and many days were lost; that he had

and fatigue, he had lain himself down to die. ] The name and post office address of his relatives were also on the cap, with the request that should it fall into the hands of a more fortunate explorer, he would communicate to them the sad intelligence of his death, and the circumstances surrounding it. His bones were buried by the hands of a stranger, and his dying injunctions left on the cup religiously obeyed. Terrible intelligence ! but it s only such as many a relative has received of the one nearest and dearest to the heart. Yet, in the face of all this, friends, bound together by the most sacred ties of relationship, will ever continue to bring all and lay it at the foot of the altar of fickle fortune. They dream of gold and the luxuries with which it surrounds them. They even see it in the distauce; almost feel its magic touch to the fingers. But they dwell not upon the toil, the suffering of the miner's life, neither upon the coffinless grave on the rocky hill-side or the dismal vale below.

William Cunningham was another of the oldest and most enthusiastic pioneers of Carlboo. He came here in 1861, located the Cunningham claim, and took \$75,000 from it in the short space of twelve months. Not content with this sum, he went into various speculations, and upon reckoning up accounts at the end of the year, found that his fortune had slipped away from him with the same case and rapidity it had been acquired. stranger, standing on the banks of the Fraser, just above Soda creek, can look away to the right, on the top of the neighboring mountain range, and his eye will fall upon a solitary grave, around which is a rude railing with a rough granite slab at the head, erected to the memory of William Cunningham, an old pioneer of Cariboo.

In the former part of this article I attempted to give a picture of the bright side of the miner's life, next some sketches of the dark side; both, however, in kindness. If I have erred in any way, it is an error of the head and not of the heart. My object in speaking of the dark side, is to give the reader a just dea of the subject. It does not by any means follow that a fortune is to be had simply by going for it to the mines. Many writers find pleasure in dwelling at length and with eloquence upon the success that has crowned the efforts of the few whom fortune has favored, while they pass altogether "unnoticed the great mass whose only rewards amount to disappointment, chagrin, and remorse.

THE ROUTE TO CARIBOO.

Victoria, the starting point for Cariboo, stands upon as handsome a site as any town on the Pacific coast, and its sanguine friends are anxiously looking forward to the time when it will eclipse all its rivals. There is another class of persons anxiously looking for the millennium. Whether the day on which these two important events will transpire are equally distant or not, is a question I will not attempt to decide.

From Victoria to New Westminsteris up the Fraser river by miniature steamers. Formerly Vancouver Island and British Columbia were segarate colonies; they are now united under

one local government. A smaller class of steamers run from New Westminster, sixty miles further up the river, to Fort Yale. This is a pretty little town situated on a flat of about fifteen acres, surrounded by a wall of mountains perpetually covered with snow. It has fitteen or twenty stores, greceries, etc., etc., and a remarkably neat and comfortable hotel, kept by a charming young widow, Mrs. Bowden, in fact, the only handsome woman I have seen since leaving California. Fort Yale is called the head of navigation on the Fraser. From there to Soda orosk passengers are conveyed by stage, the road chiefly following the banks of the river, here passing over the top of a high mountain, now down through a low valley close to the water's edge. The first mountain of any considerable height is called Jackass. Some of my tellow-passengers declared it was so named om the circumstance of the immortal Frement having eaten the rump of an animal of that species there; others that a careless jack, in wending his way about the summit, missed his footsteps and tumbled to the base, dashine himself to pieces in the fall; which of the two versions is correct I know not, nor do I care: it is enough that the name is fitting for the locality.

At Soda creek, which place we were three days and nights in reaching, was a pretty little steamer, waiting to convey passengers, freight, etc. to the mouth of the Quesnelle, a distance of sixty miles. The change from a crowded stage coach to a comfortable steamboat is so agreeable that no time was lost in completing the transfer of ourself, etc., on board the Enterprise. I enjoyed an excellent supper and a good night's sleep, but was aroused early in the morning by runners rapping on the doors and calling out, "Stage leaves for Cottonwood at half-past 5; be on board or you'll lose your

passage.12 The city of Cottonwood consists of one log house, situated on the banks of a river of that name, twenty miles from the Quesnelle, and is the end of all public conveyance—indeed, is the end of the road. The mall and express matter is carried semi-weekly to Williams creek on horseback. Among the passengers thus far by stage was a woman with two children, one a little boy about five years old, the other an infant of about as many weeks, the mother and children being ticketed through by express. A horse was provided, which she callantly mounted, taking her little treasure in her arms, and the larger boy on the horse behind, and started off with apparently as much cheerfulness as a youthful bride going ont to meet her young lord. The writer, with the remainder of the passengers, started out on foot, and managed to paddle through mud and water seventeen miles the first day. The second day's march was still worse than the first, less mud but more snow -and it had sufficiently given way to the rays of the sun to become in substance like jelly, through which we walked for miles up to the knees. It is all very well, in romance, to talk about fording rivers and wading through drifts of snow, scrambling over old logs, wriggling your way through thick brushwood, climbing up steep mountains and sliding down on the other side; but I submit, in all sincerity, that when reduced to the cold, stern, practical realities of everyday life, it is about as far removed from real fun as anything of which I can now conceive.

At length the party reached Van Winkle, a little huddle of buildings on Lightning creek. Just above this rural city I met an old patriarch with a pack on his back, bound down ountry. Feeling some curiosity to know the cause of his migrating, I accosted him. "Which way are you bound, my friend?" He answered, "I am going to God's own country." "Yes," I replied; "and where is that?" "Yamhill county, Wallomet valley," was his quick response. "Well, I have been in the Wallomet valley, and saw nothing there by which I could distinguish it from any other, as God's own country." "Stranger," said he, by the time you have been a week at Cariboo, you will learn to appreciate the beauties of Wallomet vall-y !"

I met many others on the road who had learned to appreciate some other country, or wandered about until, overcome with hunger I at least had become disgusted with Cariboo.

Among this number was one whose opinion I sought and received in the following expressive language:- "If I was in a Christian coun try," said he, "and had the absolute alterna tive before me of going to — or Cariboo, I would go to —, and take my chances." At sunset I reached the great focus of the goldmining operations in this section of her Britannic Majesty's dominions, and although it has certainly cost me much hard work and a considerable amount of the 18-karat fine, I am bound to confess that I have been richly paid

The question of annexation to the United States is being canvassed by one party here, while the other party favors a union with the Dominion of Canada. In the event of annexation, it would give the republic an unbroken sea-coast to the newly acquired possessions in Russian America, of which I may have a word or two to say in my next letter.

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