BRITISH COLUMBIA

AND

ITS RESOURCES.

Compiled by and Printed for

MESSRS. SHANNON & McLACHLAN.

VANCOUVER, B. C.

LONDON:

GEO. BARBER, 16 & 17, CURSITOR STREET,
CHANCERY LANE, E.C.

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PREFACE.

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We have endeavoured as far as possible to give the public a brief and general idea of the Province of British Columbia. Nearly the whole of the information has been the result of extensive travel, also a practical and varied experience of over 26 years, and written so as to portray a truthful and reliable account of the general features and resources of this Province.

Wm. Shannon.
C. McLachlan.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

THE Province of British Columbia may fitly be described as the California of Canada; and on account of its great natural resources and position it will, before long, become one of the most important places in the world. It is bound to command the great bulk of the Oriental and Oceanic trade in the near future, and this, coupled with the development of the country, will insure for it an era of prosperity which will compel public attention to be drawn towards it. For the last twenty years the progress of this province has been comparatively slow, on account of its almost complete isolation from the outside world, the inhabitants depending entirely upon American railways and steamships for their means of travel and commerce. Now everything is different. Since the Canadian Pacific Railway has been completed, the connecting link has been forged and strongly bound, making the chain complete, which has now stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coasts of Canada. Thus a new channel has been made which will in time divert to itself a great portion of the trade which used to flow through that of the States, and at the same time fresh feeders will be provided for the main line as the country becomes developed. Formerly, the outside world had an idea that this country was hardly fit for habitation; most persons believing that it was cold and bleak, surrounded and enveloped by mountains, but now, owing to increased knowledge, this mistaken idea has been dispelled, and it is fast becoming one of the most favoured spots on the Pacific Slope.

CLIMATE.

British Columbia is the most favoured of all the Canadian Provinces with regard to climate. Along the coast it resembles very much that of the South of England, and on this account a great many persons from the Eastern Provinces are settling in the country, glad to escape the extreme cold and spend their days in a warmer clime, and at the same time live under the old flag. This fact alone is causing a large flow of immigration, and the day is not far distant when land which was once thought valueless will prove a rich mine to the possessor. The climate of the interior varies from a moderate temperature to extreme cold.

VANCOUVER.

This city, which now commands such public attention, was only a few years back entirely a large forest. About two and a-half years ago it was burnt to the ground, but it arose from its ashes with renewed strength, and the fire, instead of being a misfortune, proved a great blessing to the city's prosperity. Situated on the borders of the Pacific Ocean, it is fast becoming one of the finest cities in the west, and is now designated as the San Francisco of Canada. It will be the natural outlet, not only for the undeveloped resources of the country, but will capture nearly the whole Eastern trade, not mentioning the grain products of the North-West and the manufactures of the Eastern Provinces. When one stands on the wharves and views the amount of shipping alongside, it does not require a very keen imagination to picture its future growth. It is bound to become a very important centre, and when the arrangements for the fast Atlantic and Oceanic steamers are completed, it will be the favourite route for travel, not only for comfort, but also for the great saving of time effected, which will ensure for it one of the largest floating populations in the world. There is bound to be one large city on the West Coast of Canada, and Vancouver, being the terminus of the greatest trans-

continental railway system in America to-day, namely, the Canadian Pacific Railway, will without doubt command that position. The loading and unloading of the China steamers, even at the present time, afford occupation for a large surplus population, but when this service is increased it will employ a much larger number. There are numerous branch lines projected as feeders for the main line, and this, coupled with the Canadian and American traffic, will be of immense benefit to its future growth. Its prosperity in the near future is a matter of certainty, and it is sure to increase until it attains the proportions of a magnificent city.

VICTORIA.

Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, is situated on the southern extremity of Vancouver Island, and is, without doubt, the prettiest town in the whole of the province. It has a population of about 12,000, which is made up of Europeans, Indians, and Chinese. The chief wholesale business houses in the province are established here, as it was the centre of trade and the basis from which supplies were forwarded, not only for the coast, but also the entire trade of the interior, previous to the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. This has caused it to become one of the wealthiest towns for its size on the Pacific coast. Nearly all the old pioneers of British Columbia, when they retire, make it their home, having no further desire than to spend their few remaining days in this lovely spot. It resembles greatly a town in the South of England on account of the well laid-out gardens and the great similarity of climate. Here rose-trees attain great perfection, the soil being particularly adapted to their culture. It is the headquarters for the salmon and fur trade, and is also the terminus of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway. Another line is projected, called the Victoria and Saanich Railway, which is to be connected with the mainland by a steam ferry. Not far from this town is Esquimalt, which is the Pacific Naval Station, where the dry dock is situated. With all

these advantages it is bound to increase in size. There is at present a keen rivalry between Vancouver and this city, which has proved a stimulus to both.

NEW WESTMINSTER.

This town is situated on the Fraser River, and contains a population of about 5,000. Its chief wealth is derived from its lumber and salmon industries. The farmers of the Fraser Valley (which is by far the best settled district in British Columbia) here dispose of the bulk of their produce, and purchase implements and household requisites for their ranches. There is a branch line of the Canadian Pacific Railway running between here and Vancouver, and another line is projected, called the Southern and New Westminster Road, which will connect it with Bellingham Bay and the American system. The latter is expected soon to be in operation, and will no doubt serve as an extra stimulus to the town's prosperity. There is sufficient depth of water to allow large vessels to load direct at the saw mills, and no doubt with the erection of several new mills, which are now being commenced, it will fast become a thriving and populous city.

AGRICULTURE OF THE COAST.

The amount of good farming land along the coast is comparatively small, but where found the soil is exceedingly rich and productive, so much so that the yield per acre could hardly be credited. There are valleys lying between the different ranges of mountains, which, though not large, are sure to yield a rich harvest to the owner. The richest, without doubt, is that of the Delta of the Fraser River, and the price per acre in this locality varies from 50 dols. to 100 dols., and will in time double and treble. Most of the land is, comparatively heavily timbered, and on this account, where cleared, or of light brush, prices vary in proportion, according to the improvements

made, or the expense required in getting it in a fit state for cultivation. Farms of this description can be purchased at from 10 dols. to 50 dols. per acre. Of course there is a large amount of land still to be taken up under the Homestead Act, but unless a person has some capital it is not advisable to pre-empt, as he might probably be disheartened with the uphill work at the beginning. The best way, by far, is to be become acquainted with a person who has a thorough knowledge of the country by his long residence, and to take his advice.

TIMBER LANDS.

The immense forests of this province are a mine of wealth to the country, and formed into timber make it one of the staple products, giving employment to a large number of hands. The number of saw mills is fast increasing, as the attention of capitalists from the great lumbering centres, such as Michigan and Wisconsin, is being steadily concentrated in this direction, on account of the supply in their own country steadily decreasing. The size of some of the trees is simply enormous, as much as 22 M feet being sawn out of one log. The chief kinds are fir, cedar, spruce and maple. The two former find a ready market abroad, especially in Australia and China. The strength of the Douglas pine is equal to English oak, and on this account it is a very suitable material for house and ship building. Cedar, being softer, is greatly used for inside work, such as doors, articles of furniture, &c. At present, only the outside fringe of this large belt of timber country has been cut, owing to the great saving effected by felling the trees close to the water's edge, where they are gathered into booms and towed to the various saw mills. This industry will grow larger every year and will not only give employment to a great number, but will at the same time open up the country. This fact can easily be understood, because every mill has two or three men attached to its staff, called timber cruisers, whose sole duty is to explore the

country for first class timber lands; when so employed they very often come across a large tract of open country before unknown.

CATTLE RANCHES.

In a few years this province will become one of the largest stock-raising countries in the world. Already the cattle ranges in the United States are giving out. When this happens, the attention of stock men will be turned towards this field. In the interior, towards the north of British Columbia, there are large tracts of open land at present not utilised, which will one day yield the investor a handsome profit. The life has a great many charms, being free, independent, and healthy. In a few years this country will be taken up, and the fortunate ones who have taken time by the forelock, and been far-seeing, will be able to survey their large bands of cattle roaming on the distant plains, and think with pride of the splendid investment they have made. The North-West and Manitoba are not able to compete in this trade, the climate being too severe, while here, in some portions of the province, cattle can remain out all winter, and even in the coldest years need only be sheltered for two or three months. The necessary fodder can easily be cut and made into hay, as the grass very often grows to a height of three or four feet. All that the stock want is a little care and attention, and without this nothing can succeed.

MINING.

This province abounds in minerals, the chief being coal, iron, copper, gold, and silver. The first of these is extensively worked at Nanaimo, a small town on the east coast of Vancouver's Island, which is one of the prettiest mining villages in the world, on account of its natural position and picturesque surroundings. Here is an energetic, thriving population, and the coal finds a ready market in San Francisco, being greatly superior to that of

the United States. This is only one, however, of the immense coal fields of British Columbia, as almost the entire province is underlaid with this precious commodity. Dr. Dawson, the Dominion geologist, makes the following statement with regard to the quality of coal:—"It is truly bituminous coal of very excellent quality. It was tested by the War Department of the United States some years ago to find out which fuels gave the best results for steam-raising purposes on the western coast; and it was found that, to produce a given quantity of steam, it took 1,800 lbs. of Nanaimo coal to 2,400 lbs. of Seattle coal, 2,600 lbs. of Coos Bay coal, Oregon, and 2,600 lbs. of Monte Diablo coal, California, showing that, as far as the Pacific coast is concerned, the coal of Nanaimo has a marked superiority over all others.

Iron ore has been discovered in large quantities, but owing to the dearness of labour has not yet been manufactured, but is being shipped to the American side in its natural state. This mineral only wants capital, combined with pluck and the necessary knowledge, to make it a source of profit to the investor, there being a large market near by, and would at the same time mark a new era in the country's prosperity.

Copper is a comparatively virgin field which is practically untouched, except so far that it has been discovered.

Gold and silver, especially the former, were the means of bringing this country to the notice of the public, the first discovery taking place about 1858, when a great rush flowed into the country from all parts of the world bound for the far-famed gold fields of Cariboo. At that time it was a very arduous and expensive journey, as everything had to be transported by steamer up the Fraser, and afterwards carried by mules to the interior. Even with these disadvantages a considerable number of men made their fortunes, while others, who drew the blanks after expending every dollar, were forced to take up land, not having enough to pay their passage out from the country, and these became the pioneer farmers of British Columbia. Ever since then prospecting has had its charms for a great number, and this industry has fluctuated with the rise and

fall of discoveries. One day, not far distant, there will be considerable excitement in quartz mining; this branch hitherto has not been properly worked, owing to the great expense of transporting the necessary material and the high price of food, making labour very dear. This is now changed since the Canadian Pacific Railway has been completed, besides which, a railway is projected to be built to Cariboo, so that supplies can be almost brought direct to the mines, thus materially reducing the working expenses. This rich section of the country is in the same range of mountains which proved such a source of wealth to California, and there is no reason why British Columbia should not reap the same success. What this industry wants is capital, men full of pluck and enterprise, and also possessing prudence combined with common sense, and when this takes place, quartz mining will prove an immense benefit, not only to the province, but to the world at large. A rich lead has lately been discovered at Texada Island, about 50 miles from Vancouver, and already a number of prospectors have started to thoroughly survey the land. A number of claims have been taken up, and this may serve as an impetus to a great number of others to search other parts of the province in the hope of finding this valuable metal. The citizens of Vancouver have been alive to the development of this industry, and granted a large bonus to an English company to erect smelting works in their city. These are now completed, and before long will be working full time, as the supply of ore is practically unlimited.

FISHERIES, ETC.

This is already one of the largest sources of wealth in the province, though the field has been comparatively little worked. Canned salmon, which is now so universally used, is put up here in large quantities, being shipped to London and other parts of the world, where it finds a ready market. The rivers of British Columbia teem with this rich fish. Early in the spring they commence to run,

and are then caught by the Indians, who bring them to the respective canneries, and they are there sold at a fixed price. Afterwards they are cut up, boiled, put up in tins, and labelled. These fish are also salted in barrels, and shipped to Australia and South America, where they are highly prized. Sturgeon, halibut, herrings, black cod, smelts, flounders, &c., in fact, almost every class of the finny tribe, are found in large numbers. It is only recently that persons have turned their attention to this new enterprise. Before, there was no opportunity of sending fresh fish to the eastern cities, on account of the want of necessary communication. This is changed, as they are now being forwarded by refrigerator cars over the Canadian Pacific Railway to the various markets, where they are considered a great delicacy and fetch high prices accordingly. This industry will very soon assume large proportions, and prove a great addition to this country's wealth.

Sealing has for many years been a lucrative employment in British Columbia. Very few people know that a great number of the articles formed from this valuable fur have originally come from this province. There is a fleet of from twenty to thirty schooners annually employed in this trade. They sail principally from the pretty and picturesque port of Victoria in Vancouver Island and come back laden with their precious freight. The season commences early in the spring, and the vessels proceed to one of the many harbours on the west coast of Vancouver Island, where they engage a certain number of Indians to serve as hunters. Immediately on the approach of fine weather the canoes are hauled up on deck and the schooners sail for the sealing grounds. On arriving there the canoes are let down, each being provided with two Indians, namely a hunter and a steerer. It is rather exciting to see them return at sunset, some with happy faces, others downcast, according to the luck they have had. The fleet returns about May with their spring catch, which is either sold to the skin dealers or sent to London. After this they refit and proceed to the Behring Sea, which ground has proved a constant source of dispute between Americans and Canadians. The former declare

it is an act of piracy, while the latter contend it is an open sea, and as such, free to everybody, provided they keep without the three-mile belt. This year the fleet has been considerably increased on account of its very lucrative returns. There are many other industries which will be started in the near future, and prove profitable, such as potteries and other factories. This country in the next five years will make rapid strides to advancement, and will one day be the richest province in Canada. Its undeveloped resources are immense, and before long will be largely utilised and turned into untold wealth, benefiting not only Canada, but the world at large.

THE CHILCOTIN DISTRICT.

This district extends from the Fraser River on the south-east to the coast range of mountains on the west, and embraces an area of about 100 square miles. Its general appearance is undulating, consisting of hills and valleys. The beautiful scenery of this district charms the eye with its lovely and picturesque views. It is almost entirely covered with grass, being here and there, on the hills, intermixed with trees, but in no place are these sufficiently thick to prevent travelling on horseback. There is comparatively very little forest, but sufficient for all necessary purposes, such as fencing, building, and so forth. Numerous lakes and creeks occur, causing the country to be well watered; some of the former are 40 and 50 miles long, and will one day be utilised for navigation. The climate is somewhat variable, in the interior the winter being rather severe, though short, commencing about January and ending about the beginning of April. The snow fall is comparatively light. The coldness of this season of the year can be better understood when we consider that the general elevation is 3,000 feet above the level of the sea. The climate of the valleys near the coast is considerably milder, being tempered by the warm Japanese Stream, and the warm winds accompanying it, and also being protected from the interior by a lofty

range of mountains. The climate of the whole of British Columbia is greatly modified by the warm Chinook winds which blow from the sea, reaching far into the interior, finding their way from the coast through the mountain passes, reaching the open plateaus above and extending as far as the Alberta Territory in the North-west.

The Indians inhabiting this country are peaceable, and in many parts devote their whole attention to tilling the soil and cultivating cereals of all kinds for their own use.

This district is a great game country, the principal kinds being deer, elk, moose, bear, prairie chickens, geese, ducks, &c., while the lakes and creeks abound in fish.

The Southern portion, along the Fraser River, is partly settled by stock raising men. One of the largest cattle ranches in British Columbia is located here, and has an area of about 37,000 acres, with about 2,000 head of stock. Towards the East is another of considerable size belonging to the Messrs. Drummond, also several more on a smaller scale. There have been several ranches taken up recently in the interior, but the larger portion of the land is still open for settlements. On the Chilcotin River there is a small grist mill which turns out the finest flour in British Columbia, ground from the grain grown in this country. The land, however, is most suitable for pastoral purposes, and is not particularly adapted for farming, being subject to summer frosts sometimes, which are liable to destroy the crops. The rich bunch grass which grows in abundance, and is equally as good in winter as in summer, makes it a very rich grazing country, so much so, that it will one day be one of the greatest stock-raising countries of the West. Cattle ranching on a large scale requires considerable capital, and owing to the want of it this industry is practically undeveloped.

The stock requires to be fed in some winters, but only at such times as the bunch grass is completely covered with snow, which does not as a rule occur every year. However, provision can be easily made for this, on account of the large quantities of grass growing on the prairies, which should be cut, turned into hay, and stored for use. Cattle ranching is one of the healthiest occupations in the

world, being particularly so in this district, which is not subject to high winds or blizzards, but enjoys a clear, dry atmosphere, making the settler feel light-hearted and buoyant. The stock could be driven either to the head of the Bentick Arm on the coast and from there shipped to the various markets, or inland to Ashcroft Station on the Canadian Pacific Railway. The latter is the general route taken, as there is no difficulty in the cattle finding feed along the road.

There is a line projected from Ashcroft Station running North, which would tap this portion of British Columbia, and when this takes place it will have easy access to the outside world.

THE HORSE-FLY COUNTRY.

This country extends a few miles from the Cariboo Road, on the North-west, to the Horse-Fly Lake, on the South-east, and embraces an area of about 60 square miles. The land consists of plateaus and valleys, which are intersected by numerous lakes and streams. The valleys as a rule are open prairie, though the hills are lightly timbered.

The general altitude is from 1,500 to 2,000 feet above sea level, and the country is, therefore, less subject to summer frosts than the Chilcotin District. The principal stream is the Horse-Fly, which is of considerable size. A large quantity of gold has been taken from this river, and very rich deposits of this precious metal are still found in this locality. There is a placer gold mine close by, owned by Mr. Harper, which is expected to return good results when further developed. The Horse-Fly Lake is the largest body of water in this district, and there is a range of mountains on the north-east of it which will one day be the centre of a gold excitement. The same range extends north past Quesnelle Lake into the Cariboo country, which was famed many years ago for the rich deposits taken out of it. This country is the best watered in the whole of British Columbia; the streams and small lakes, which abound with fish, form an almost continuous

chain, draining eventually into the main channel of the Fraser River. The summers are simply delightful, and though warm at times, there are fresh, cool winds, which make the season very enjoyable. The extreme heat rarely exceeds 100 degrees, and is but seldom reached. The atmosphere is so pure that it has hardly a rival in this respect in the world. There is a small rainfall, though sufficient, rendering irrigation unnecessary, and the soil, where not subject to summer frosts, is suitable for agricultural purposes. The autumn is clear and dry, with light frosts at night, but warm during the day. Winter commences about the end of November and ends about the middle of March, though there is seldom much snow till January. The cold at this season of the year is sometimes extreme, but high winds and blizzards are unknown. The arrival of the warm Chinook winds are the first signs of the opening of spring, and when these appear the snow rapidly melts, and vegetation grows profusely about April. Then the flowers form a perfect garden, with their varied colour and beauty, though unfortunately they are devoid of smell.

The soil of the valleys is extremely rich, being similar and quite equal to that of Manitoba; that of the hills is more of a lighter, loamy character. The chief value of this country is the great variety of grasses grown in it, all of which are very nutritious and of luxuriant growth. One of these deserves particular attention. It is found in large quantities in the valleys about the lakes, and resembles the sugar cane both in form and sweetness, therefore it is known under this name. It makes the choicest hay, and is extremely rich in fattening qualities, so much so, that it exceeds in this respect the finest cultivated grass. The crop of this averages about three tons to the acre. This variety grows in abundance, and the country being level, there is no difficulty in putting up fodder ready for use in the winter, should occasion require. In other parts of this country there are a variety of other grasses, comprising wild clover, wild timothy, foxtail, timber grass, pea vine, etc. The hills are covered with bunch grass similar to that grown in the Chilcotin district. Much of the

land, more especially that in the valleys, will be used for agriculture. This country is the finest pastoral district in British Columbia, and at present is entirely unsettled, though, as soon as communication is opened up, in the shape of a railway, it will be taken up by stockmen. Though the winter is rather severe and long, with a considerable snowfall, it is more than counterbalanced by the easy provision that can be made to feed cattle in this season by putting up hay in the summer. It is also unequalled as a dairy country in America, having the best water, and this, coupled with the natural milk-producing qualities of the fodder, will cause it one day to take the first rank. It is well adapted for sheep raising, the climate being very suitable.

This country is much superior to the stock-raising districts of the Southern portion of British Columbia, there being a never-failing supply of natural fodder and water, while in the latter the growth dies out for want of moisture. Across the plains of this country one can observe several large bands of horses feeding, and their condition in summer is such that, owing to the fattening qualities of the pasture, they are unable to go at their ordinary speed. In the winter they feed on the meadow lands.

BLACK RIVER AND SKEENA RIVER DISTRICT.

The Black River is distant about 60 miles from that of the Quesnelle, and from there to the Skeena River District is a distance of about 300 miles. This country was first explored for the construction of a telegraph line to cross the Behring Straits and thence to connect with the European system. This was in 1865, and was the proposed route of the Western Union Telegraph Company, but was abandoned owing to the successful laying of the Atlantic cable. Since that time the country has not attracted much attention, and has only been used to drive cattle to the Omenica and Cassiar Mines when they were being worked. A large quantity of good pastoral and farming

land exists in the Black River and its vicinity, and the prairies are to be found extending northwards to Stewart's Lake, where a Hudson's Bay Trading Post, known as Fort St. James, has been established for many years. In connection with this fort, as is usual with this Company, they have turned their attention to stock-raising and agriculture, besides other business. A large tract of land is cultivated by them, on which is successfully grown wheat, barley, and all kinds of vegetables.

The country as a rule is open, but lightly timbered in places, though everywhere grass may be seen, extending even to the woods. The soil of the valleys is extremely rich, and, as the climate is favourable, though somewhat severe in the winter, it will no doubt be brought into cultivation. The district, extending from the Black River and crossing the Noolthkl, Fraser and Francois Lakes, together with that of the river as far as Decker Lake, is similar in appearance and character to that already described. Around the Francois and Decker Lakes there is grass which would average about two tons to the acre. The telegraph lines are still standing, and they cross the centre of all these valleys, extending as far the Skeena River, and the watershed formed by the lakes drain into the Fraser on the South-east and into the Skeena on the North-west. From Decker Lake the elevation of the country towards the Skeena River becomes lower and the valleys more defined, extending for a distance of nearly 200 miles north-west to the Skeena River, forming what is considered the richest belt of agricultural land in British Columbia. This at present is wholly unsettled. The Wastonquah River runs through the centre of this valley. This stream, with very little outlay, could be made navigable for light draught steamers and boats. There are also numerous lakes, the largest being the McLean or McClure Lake, causing it to be a well-watered country, with no alkali. This rich valley in many places is over 40 miles wide, and there are numerous smaller ones adjoining it equally as good, the whole occupying an area of about 300 square miles. The general climate is excellent and particularly suitable for agriculture, more so in this

particular than any of the northern or eastern plateaus of British Columbia. It is almost entirely free from summer frosts, and in no part is irrigation necessary, the rainfall being sufficient, while in the southern portions of this province, such as the Nicola, Okonogan, &c., crops cannot be grown without artificial watering. The winters are somewhat long, extending from about the end of November to the middle of March ; the cold, however, is not extreme ; it is of a comparatively even temperature, without any high winds or blizzards. The average snowfall is about 15 inches, making sleighing very enjoyable, without the disagreeableness of a heavy thaw. The atmosphere is particularly clear and bracing at all times ; this alone will cause it to settle up very fast as soon as connection is established with the outside world. The soil is generally of a rich black loam, with a clay subsoil reaching a depth of three feet in many places, and cannot be surpassed for agricultural purposes, being greatly superior to that in Manitoba, as the country possesses a much more enjoyable climate and the crops are not endangered by summer frosts. There is no valley of the same size on the Pacific Coast which produces such a natural luxuriant growth ; and various kinds of grasses cover the whole surface. The most common are wild timothy, red top and the blue grasses, though bunch grass is not found in this part of the province. Wild fruits grow in abundance, which is a sufficient proof that the soil is well adapted for orchards. Timber is rather scarce in some parts, but where this occurs it can easily be procured by drawing it a few miles, as the distances from where it is to be found are never very great. This valley could be farmed on an extensive scale, as it is an immense prairie on which the most improved machinery could be used, the chief thing which is necessary for the cultivation of the ground would be the breaking of the soil, and as there are no obstructions, this work would be very easy, especially in comparison to the immense labour to clear other districts of this province which are thickly timbered.

At the mouth of the Wastonquah, where it flows into the Skeena, there is a large Indian Tribe who take their

name from this locality, besides which there are a Hudson's Bay Trading Fort and a mission established. Both the whites and the Indians living in this vicinity have raised large crops of grain and vegetables, though only sufficient for their own use.

From here towards the North-west for a distance of about 50 miles the country is similar to that previously described, but after this the land becomes mountainous and swampy until you travel toward the head of the Naas River, where you come into a good grazing country. Then travelling north in the direction of the Stickeen River, near the Cassiar mines, you come across numerous valleys, which have been cultivated in places by the miners, who have raised good crops, and they would most likely have been wiser and wealthier men if they had turned their attention entirely to agricultural pursuits instead of following the uncertain fortune of a gold digger's lot.

The country abounds in game of all kinds, the chief being moose, elk, red deer, bear, prairie chickens, grouse, geese, wild ducks, &c. Wild flowers grow in great profusion, among which might be mentioned the daisy, which is here very common.

The great drawback to the settling of this fertile valley at the present time is the want of communication with the outside world. There is a lofty range of mountains between it and the coast, which is quite impassable except for a pedestrian, and even then it is a very arduous and dangerous task. The Skeena is the only river which taps it, but is not navigable, except for canoes, and then only at certain seasons of the year, being attended at the same time with much risk to the adventurer. The Canadian Pacific Railway is about 600 miles distant, and, therefore, of no use as far as this country is concerned. A good wagon road, which was built to the Cariboo Mines, extends about half this distance, and although the remainder is through an open country suitable for pack trains, it is impassable for wagons, though, even if it were, the distance would be too great to render the journey at all profitable. There is a line now projected by the Provincial Government which, if built, will be the means of throwing this rich, undeveloped

country open for settlement, and then it will prove a source of revenue to the province.

NECHACO AND PEACE RIVER COUNTRY.

The Nechaco River is about 150 miles long and rises not far from Stewart Lake, and continues its course till it flows into the Fraser opposite Fort George. The country surrounding it is by far the best bunch grass district in the northern part of British Columbia, and having a large area of meadow land, is particularly well adapted for stock raising. There is a very small amount of good agricultural land, therefore it may be classed as a purely pastoral country. The climate is similar to that of the Chilcotin District. Leaving the Nechaco River, and following in a north-easterly direction towards the Peace River, you come upon Canoe Creek and McLeod Lake, where there is also some good grazing country. Here we are on the borders of the Peace River Country, which was called by a well-known traveller, "The Great Lone Land of North America." This name was not given to it for its want of fertility, but for the great extent of the country it embraces, part of which is in the Province of British Columbia. Fort Laird is situated here. Near this trading post a large quantity of the vegetables consumed by the miners in the Omenica country were grown, and were pronounced first rate in quality; also grain has been raised with very fair success. This portion of the Peace River Country is very suitable for stock ranges, and there is at present a large band of horses owned by a gentleman in this locality that thrive remarkably well, and require no attention at any season of the year. It is here that the Dominion Government received a grant of 250,000 acres from the Provincial to compensate them on account of the broken mountainous country which was intended for the 40-mile belt, and agreed upon by the terms of the Union between the two for the construction of the Pacific Railroad, and was a bone of contention for several years until it was amicably settled in this way.

Following the Peace River eastwards the country quickly descends to a lower level. The waters of this river have cut their way through the clayey nature of the soil to a depth very often of from three to four hundred feet below the general surface of the country, forming a valley of considerable size, with bluffs on each side similar to that of the Colorado River. This in some places is 15 miles wide ; the soil of it is exceedingly rich, and where cultivated has proved remarkable for its fertility, owing chiefly to the protection received from the perpendicular banks. This country might be called an immense rolling plateau, made up of hills, valleys, prairies and woodlands, intersected by numerous lakes and streams, embracing hundreds of thousands of acres of fertile land, which if it were not for the frequency of summer frosts would become one of the largest agricultural districts in Canada. Owing to this it is unfit for farming in a great many places, although in every other respect there is not anything wanting. However, there are parts of it very suitable for grain, &c. This country has been spoken of very favourably by a recent writer, but miners and others who have resided in it cannot coincide with him in his opinion, though all acknowledge it is a country of very great natural resources.

The Peace River is navigable for almost its entire length for steamers of light draught. The waters of this country find their way through the McKenzie into the Arctic Ocean, and this river, with its tributaries, forms one of the greatest systems of inland waters in the known world. There are already rumours afloat that this country will be the route of the next transcontinental railway, *viâ* Fort Edmonton in the North-West Territory, Lake St. Anne, Athabasca River, following the lake of the same name, and then passing through this country to the Skeena River, and north to Fort Simpson on the Pacific Coast, which is a great natural harbour, and at one time it was thought that it would be the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

This route would have immense advantages over every other road that has yet been built. There would be no lofty ranges to cross, as that of the Rocky Mountains ter-

minates a little to the north of the Fraser, and this natural barrier, which has proved an obstacle to other lines, would practically disappear, and this new line would comparatively speaking cross almost a level country. Snowsheds would not be required, and no blockades need be feared, as the country is entirely free from the blizzards and storms which occur further south. It can therefore be easily imagined that the cost of construction would be very small in comparison to the other great through lines, and also that a great saving in working expenses would be effected, besides opening up one of the richest sections in America, which would be quickly peopled on account of its great fertility.

NICOLA AND OKANAGAN.

These districts are situated in the southern part of British Columbia, and are both more or less settled. The resources of their valleys are pretty well known, as they have been frequently described in other publications; therefore it will be unnecessary to go over the ground very fully. They are chiefly noted for their cattle, and also for their mining and agricultural pursuits. The Spallmucheen is the best farming land in this district, as irrigation is not needed, but the same cannot be said for any other portion. Generally speaking, the remainder may be described as a pastoral country, as the scarcity of water for irrigation purposes prevents its becoming a great agricultural settlement. Part of the Okanagan is a splendid fruit country, peaches, apricots, and grapes being raised which are equal to those grown in California. The meat market of British Columbia is supplied from the stock farms in this part.

The climate is considered very beneficial for consumption, and many people suffering from this disease are recommended by their medical advisers to live on the banks of the Nicola, where the atmosphere is exceedingly dry and pure. Many cures have been effected, especially in those cases where the complaint has not made much headway.

KOOTENAY.

This country extends from the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia River. The appearance of the country from here up the Kootenay River, for a distance of about 40 miles, is very rough and mountainous. But from there to the Kootenay and Columbia Lakes, a distance of about two hundred miles, it is principally prairie, and well adapted for stock-raising and agriculture, but the choicest land is that around the Upper Lake. There is steamboat communication on these waters which extends as far as Golden City, a small town on the Canadian Pacific Railway. The whole of this country is partly settled, and since the construction of the railway it has become a favourite location which will soon cause it to be a very thriving district. Gold and silver ledges have been found in its vicinity, companies have been formed to work the same, and they have every faith in their future development. Should these be successful it will prove one of the richest districts in this province, not only on account of its mining industries, but also for the extra stimulus given to agriculture, as the farmers and stock raisers will be able to dispose of their produce and cattle in their own market. This country embraces a large area of land suitable for cattle ranches, some of which has already been utilised for this purpose, though there are still large tracts waiting for settlement. One of the great advantages is its position, lying as it does between the Canadian and Northern Pacific Railways, it can be easily reached from either side, and is therefore bound to attract the attention of incoming strangers. The climate is dry, and particularly healthy, with an entire absence of summer frosts and sufficient rainfall for all purposes. The winters are mild and the summers moderately warm, making it a favourite resort for invalids.

THE MAIN COLUMBIA RIVER VALLEY.

This valley has a length of between three and four hundred miles, and follows the Columbia River to the

base of the Rockies. This river flows through the First Arrow Lake, which is situated about thirty miles to the north of the International Boundary Line. The two lakes, namely the Upper and Lower, form a beautiful sheet of water about 160 miles long. Between these and connecting them is a river, on the banks of which and at the head of the Upper Lake there is a large area of good farming land which is lightly timbered; from here, following the Columbia as far as Revelstoke, the country is heavily timbered, most of which will prove very valuable for lumbering; the soil is however not first-class, though well adapted for fruit raising. From Revelstoke to St. Martin's Rapids the valleys spread out to a width in some places of 30 miles; the soil of these is similar to the previously described, but the timber is not so good in quality. From St. Martin's Rapids to the Rockies the land improves considerably, being lightly timbered in places, though generally an open country possessing a rich soil. Here the Canoe River enters the Columbia, which is navigable from the International Boundary to the Rockies, with the exception of two rapids, namely the Death and St. Martin's, and these could be improved with very little expense. The climate differs somewhat from those mentioned before, as the snow and rainfalls are considerably more, with a moist and humid atmosphere and comparatively mild winters. This may be accounted for by the presence of the mountain ranges surrounding it.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE GROUP.

These islands are situated to the north of Vancouver's Island, and are distant about 60 miles from the mainland of British Columbia. The chief island of this group is Graham Island, and it is by far the wealthiest in natural resources. The eastern part is mostly level, and contains a considerable area of good agricultural land, extending as far as sixty miles along the coast. The western part is covered with low mountains and hills, intersected by numerous lakes and valleys. The general character of

the country is prairie, intermixed with small brush and a light growth of timber. The soil is well suited for agriculture and fruit raising, but especially adapted for a grazing country. The Indians have cultivated patches, and the large crops grown by them prove the richness of the land. The hills in many places are covered with a short grass, which would make it a capital sheep grazing country. In some of the mountain valleys spruce and fir are found in large quantities, which will eventually be turned to good account for lumbering purposes. There is situated on the north-west extremity of this island a Hudson's Bay fort, near which there is a large band of cattle; and on account of the mildness of the climate and the rich pasture surrounding them, they do not require any attention during the winter. Coal, both bituminous and anthracite, has been discovered on this island in large quantities, the quality of which has been pronounced by experts to be greatly superior to any found on the Pacific Coast, even more so than that worked in Nanaimo, on Vancouver's Island. This fact has drawn the attention of the shrewdest business men in the province, who have invested largely in these lands, and have shown their belief in their wealth by opening out four different mines. It is the general opinion of scientists that this island will prove an immense coal field. If the operations which have been commenced turn out profitable, they will be increased to a much larger scale, and be able to support a large mining population. Should this take place, the land in the vicinity will be taken up by farmers, as they will have a market close at hand to dispose of their produce. The islands to the south are more mountainous and rugged in appearance, though covered with a short grass, which would be adapted to sheep grazing. However, there are several valleys of good land, among which may be named those of Shingle Bay and Gold Harbour. The latter place took its name from the gold discovered by the Hudson's Bay Company many years ago, which was shipped in the shape of quartz to England, where it was reduced. The climate of these islands is the most equable in British Columbia; although they are so far north, the soft, humid atmosphere of the ocean,

together with the warm Japanese gulf stream, prevent a marked difference at any season of the year, and renders them extremely mild. The rainfall is considerably less than on the coast of the mainland, which is owing, no doubt, to there being no lofty mountain ranges. Snow seldom falls, but, when it does, soon disappears, on account of the general mildness of the air. These islands are well situated commercially, as there is no difficulty in sailing into the many harbours along the coast. Towing is therefore unnecessary, and thus, coupled with their other advantages, such as coal mining, &c., they will no doubt become a very important naval station. Communication at the present time with other parts of the province is somewhat irregular, though a project is on foot to provide regular service. Another industry which has not yet been mentioned, namely, fishing, though now only in its infancy, will shortly become one of the most important in the province. Fishing stations are being erected along the coast, the waters of which are teeming with fish. Among the various kinds is the black cod, which is considered a very great delicacy, and is caught here in large quantities, and shipped to the eastern market, where it finds a ready sale. Wild fowl abound everywhere, but no wild animal has yet been found existing on these islands.

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

This is by far the largest island in British Columbia, and is about 250 miles long, with a breadth of about 50 and 60 miles. The southern part is by far the oldest settled district in the province. The general appearance of the coast is broken and rugged, and to the eye of the stranger would appear rock-bound, though on a nearer approach numerous openings are discovered, disclosing bays and inlets, most of which afford the best of anchorage. The harbours on the west coast are used by the different schooners in the sealing fleet as the base of their operations, from which they sail out with their Indian hunters, who return to their homes at the end of the season. One

of the sources of wealth in the province, namely, coal mining, is pursued on the east coast. The chief centre of this important industry is Nanaimo, which, for its beautiful scenery and surroundings, is one of the prettiest towns in the mining world. The principal collieries are owned by Messrs. N. Dunsmuir and Sons and the Vancouver Coal Company, who export a large quantity of coal to San Francisco, where it realises a much higher price than the home article, on account of its superior quality.

There are some new mines now being opened at Comox, which is situated about 50 miles to the north-east of Nanaimo. These will no doubt in time have an output equal to that of their older rival. This island contains a large area of farming land, some of which is pretty thickly settled, more especially the valleys on the east coast. The north part is supposed to be very rich in coal, and a large quantity of land has lately been applied for by Victoria capitalists in the vicinity. The other principal resources are fishing, lumbering, and mining. The general climate is mild, and resembles greatly that of England.

GENERAL REMARKS.

There are numerous other localities which might be mentioned, but space will not permit the ground to be thoroughly worked in a small pamphlet, but, at the same time, for the information of the general public, it might perhaps be better to name a few without entering into general details, such as the Pemberton Meadows, Lilloet, Buonaparte, Bella Coola, Salmon River, Squamish, North Thompson, Bridge Creek, Lower Naas, and numerous other valleys, most of which are suitable for agriculture and stock.

British Columbia cannot be considered a great farming country when we compare the amount of land suitable for agriculture with the area of the entire Province, though it cannot be denied that it possesses considerable wealth in this respect, and will eventually support a large farming population. The Province is almost alone in the great

variety of climate which it embraces, from the moist humid air of the coast to the dry cold or warmth of the interior, with its pure atmosphere; in fact, it might almost be safe to state that in every valley of any size the climate varies somewhat in this respect. Some persons who have only had an acquaintance with a part of this immense country might possibly describe the climate in the district in which they had lived as moist, while others would be equally within the truth by stating that it was dry and cold, and though both statements would appear contradictory, they would be correct so far as their experience had led them to believe.

Strangers arriving by the Canadian Pacific Railway will have a very poor and mistaken idea of the country, as the railway travels through the most rocky and mountainous portion of British Columbia, which, though exceedingly picturesque to the artistic eye, is somewhat disappointing to that of the immigrant who has decided to make it his home. It might be asked why was this route then selected, but this question can easily be answered when we consider that this is the most direct route to the coast, and was chosen on account of the saving of distance. The great advantage this country possesses over many others is that, owing to its varied resources, it could, if needful, be almost independent of the outside world, providing it had the necessary capital to work the same. A person can have no idea of the natural wealth of British Columbia unless one has become intimately acquainted with its natural resources by long residence and extensive travel. Many express an opinion which is given out as authentic, but on examination it very often proves superficial, and is liable to give the public a wrong and mistaken idea for want of proper investigation.

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