REPORT OF THE AGENT-GENERAL'S OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR 1913.

SALISBURY HOUSE, LONDON, January, 1914.

The Hon. Sir Richard McBride, K.C.M.G.,
Premier of British Columbia, Victoria.

DEAR SIR,—During the year 1913 there has been a steady advance in the general work of this office, arising, no doubt, largely from the increased and more accurate knowledge of British Columbia amongst the people of all classes throughout Great Britain and Ireland. This has been brought about by the liberal distribution of the excellent and reliable British Columbia Government pamphlets relating to all the natural resources, industries, education, health statistics, climate, and general attractions of the Province. Undoubtedly the fruit-shows held at many Provincial towns, as well as in London, have had an immense effect in the direction of educating the people of the Mother-country as to the possibilities of the Province. These shows are not only always well attended, but they are highly appreciated wherever they have been held. People seeing the very attractive-looking fruit at once realize that the country in which it is grown must have a good climate as well as suitable land. This at once leads to inquiries and applications at the office for fuller particulars and pamphlets, and very greatly increased correspondence results.

The great interest being taken in the Province at the present time is not only by one class of people, but applies to all grades of society, and leads many to decide on making our Province their future home.

During the autumn and winter of 1912 but little fruit was sent over, but a creditable show was made at the Manchester Winter Exhibition, extending from December 5th, 1912, to January 18th, 1913, and the Government of the Province was awarded a set of medals comprising the grand prize. There was also an excellent show at the Royal Horticultural Society's Hall at Westminster on December 3rd and 4th, 1912, at which a gold medal was awarded for the excellence of the fruit. After the shows the fruit was largely distributed throughout the country, and excellent exhibitions were made in the windows of the Canadian Government Offices in London and throughout the Provinces; also in the windows of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Railways in a large number of towns.

On November 7th, 1913, two car-loads of apples arrived at Liverpool for exhibition purposes, and shows were at once commenced, and during the winter they were held as follows:—

November 13th to 15th—Scottish Horticultural Association, Waverley Market, Edinburgh.
" 13th to 15th—Sheffield Chrysanthemum Society, Corn Exchange, Sheffield.
" 18th and 19th—Chester Paxton Society, Town Hall, Chester.
" 19th and 20th—Bristol Chrysanthemum Society, The Coliseum, Park Row, Bristol.
" 21st and 22nd—Hawick Horticultural Society, Town Hall, Hawick.
" 21st and 22nd—Bolton Horticultural and Chrysanthemum Society, Town Hall, Bolton.

December 2nd and 3rd—Royal Horticultural Society, Vincent Square, Westminster.
" 2nd and 3rd—Leeds Smithfield Club, Victoria Cattle Market, Gelderd Road, Leeds.
" 9th and 10th—Chichester Xmas Fat Stock Show Society, Corn Exchange, Chichester.
" 8th to 12th—Smithfield Club Show, Agricultural Hall, Islington, N.
" 15th and 16th—Ashford Cattle Show, Cattle Market Buildings, Ashford, Kent.
" 15th and 16th—Suffolk Fat Cattle Club, Butter Market, Ipswich.

At these shows during 1913 the following gold medals were awarded: At Edinburgh, Chester, Bristol, Hawick, Royal Horticultural Society, and Chichester; silver gilt medals at Sheffield and Bolton; silver medal at Leeds.

After the shows fine displays of apples were arranged in the windows of the City and West End Offices of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the West End Offices of the Grand Trunk Pacific and Canadian Northern Railways, as well as at the Government Emigration Offices and all the Provincial Offices; and also the above-mentioned Railway Offices throughout the country.

The number of country offices at which shows were made are as follows:—

Canadian Government Offices	11
Canadian Pacific Railway Offices	6
Canadian Northern Railway Offices	6
Grand Trunk Railway Offices	2

Special packages of apples were selected and sent to His Majesty the King, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Argyll, His Royal Highness Prince Arthur of Connaught, and many other eminent and distinguished personages, and very appreciative acknowledgments have been received from all of them.

We were favoured with a visit from our very able and popular Deputy Minister of Agriculture, W. E. Scott, Esq. He attended many of the shows and was able to speak at a number of public functions and entertainments, adding greatly to the interest of the shows and giving thoroughly reliable particulars of our country to the many hundreds of inquirers.

Mr. Scott was able to inspect the condition of the apples when opened up for exhibition purposes, and fully realized that it was most important, particularly with the view of opening up a further trade in fruit with the Mother-country, that the apples should be of the very finest quality, well selected and packed, and shipped with much care, and, if possible, direct from the orchards and not used for exhibition purposes in the Province before having been forwarded to Great Britain.

Lectures were given in various parts of Great Britain and Ireland during 1913, and authority was given by the Government directing me to make an agreement with an expert to be sent to British Columbia for the purpose of taking kinematograph pictures in natural colours, as well as in black and white effects, of the magnificent scenery of British Columbia, its industries, its towns, and its social functions. The operator sent out was one of the best from the Kineto Company, a representative of which company accompanied Their Majesties the King and Queen on their visit to India and took the authentic pictures of the Durbar, which have since been shown all over the world. Unfortunately the new films did not reach me in time for the fruit-shows of 1913, but they have since been gone over and thoroughly prepared and are now ready for exhibition purposes. They are pronounced by experts to be some of the best pictures that have been shown in this country. I have made arrangements for them to be exhibited during the coming spring and summer by a kinematograph company working in conjuction with the Australian Government, and they will be shown in towns

throughout Great Britain and Ireland, and at these demonstrations our British Columbia Government pamphlets will be distributed to all applicants. I hope that a further supply of these kinematograph films will shortly arrive, and arrangements will then be made to show them thoroughly in London. It is very certain that these very vivid, real-life pictures will lead to a still greater appreciation by the people of the Mother-country of the wonderful natural resources and business activity of our great Pacific Province.

A very important time in the history of this office has now been reached, as during 1913 I was authorized by the Government to obtain a site in London on which to erect a British Columbia building. After examining very many sites in different parts of London, and having experienced advice respecting them, I nearly decided on the island site in the Strand, but after very careful investigations and inquiry, including conversations with the Australian Agent-General, who has already a building on part of that site, I came to the conclusion that it would be better, if we left the city at all, to go right to the West End, as being much more suitable for the Province in many respects, and being of more value from the fact that offices are in great demand in that part of London. Finally it was decided to purchase the lease of Nos. 1 and 3 Regent Street at the corner of Charles Street, at the head of Waterloo Place, within a few yards of Pall Mall and all the great club-houses, as well as the offices of the Cunard, Allan, White Star, Dominion, Canadian Pacific, Great Northern, Canadian Northern, and German and French Steamship and Railway Lines, and in proximity to Trafalgar Square, the Admiralty, Treasury, War Office, Downing Street, and all the Imperial Government Offices. This land is owned by the Imperial Government, which practically owns all Regent Street for about a mile, and also part of Pall Mall, the whole of which is under lease. These leases are falling in, and almost all the street is to be rebuilt on plans to be approved by the Board of Works, so that all the buildings should harmonize, no one of them overshadowing or being out of artistic effect with the rest. Some delay occurred in obtaining possession of the ground and in the design of the building to be approved by the Government, but the work is now well under way; the original building, the Hotel Continental, has nearly all been removed, and actual construction on the new British Columbia building will shortly commence. It is expected that it will be so far advanced as to be ready for the laying of the corner-stone by the first week in May. His Royal Highness Prince Arthur of Connaught has consented to perform this ceremony. Plans and elevation of the building have already been sent to the Government. There will be part of the basement and four floors to let for office purposes, and they are likely to find tenants very readily, as the site is considered to be one, at any rate, of the best in London. Several applications have already been received, and one particularly recently for the whole of the upper floor. I have no doubt that the value of the lease, which is for ninety-nine years, will in ten years have increased by at least 20 per cent.

It is proposed to fit up the interior in a good but not extravagant manner, but so as to make it a convenient and comfortable place for reading and writing and for inquirers—for people not only of the Mother-country, bnt for visitors from British Columbia, who should always register at this, their own office. On the ground floor it is intended to make an exhibition hall, in which practically all the productions of British Columbia can be well and artistically exhibited, as well as a very complete set of large photographs of all parts of the Province. It is hoped that complete and well-selected specimens of its timber, minerals, fish, agricultural productions, as well as a fair exhibit of the game of the country, may be made there.

I cannot close this report without again referring to the handicap British Columbia is under owing to the heavy costs of the journey from England, the lowest rate amounting to at least £16 or £17, whilst the journey to Australia is about £8, and the Government of that

country lends the settler part of that amount. I quite understand that at present a large number of mechanics and artisans are not wanted in British Columbia, the supply being in excess of the demand, but good and reliable farm-hands, who want to go on to the land and not to loaf round towns, are still much wanted, and would prove a valuable asset to the Province and greatly increase the prosperity of its inhabitants. There are many thousands of these in this country that could be fully relied on to become valuable citizens of our Province, but how can they go out at the present rates? This being the case, very many are now going to Australia, though quite a considerable number are now taking passage to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and it is somewant remarkable that since the appointment of Dr. Pelletier as Agent-General for Quebec, quite a number of good settlers are now going out to that Province.

I still think it of the greatest importance that British Columbia should be kept well before the people of the British Islands by fruit and other shows of the natural productions of the Province, and the important cities and towns of the Province would, I am confident, find it greatly to their advantage if they would have a complete plan of advertising in the principal railway-stations of this country by large and well-got-up coloured posters; these are being made here now, exquisitely coloured and printed, and are proving very attractive and effective. Those constantly being brought out by the Underground and other railways are works of art and are supplied at very moderate prices.

I have the honour to remain,

Your obedient servant,

J. H. TURNER,

Agent-General for British Columbia.

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1914.