

selves and upon the natives, its bright colours are cheerful in gloomy forests, or on the snow.

The luxurious and pleasurable manner in which this expedition was commenced by a trip north-westwards of nearly a thousand miles amidst an archipelago of islands, served only to throw into sharp relief the hard work and painful methods of travel necessary in order to overcome the obstacles to our advance presented by such a difficult and almost impenetrable country—the rapidity of the ice-cold rivers, the steepness of the damp mountains, the denseness of the forest and brush, and the necessity of looking to the Indians for help—help which is never withheld so long as dollars are forthcoming. So long as there are Indians, travel in these difficult regions of North-western America will be a mere question of money, for with plenty of Indians travel there is easy.

Let me endeavour, in a few condensed sentences, to give you a clear idea of the outward appearance of this portion of the Pacific coast—the Pacific seaboard of the Canadian Dominion. Its geographical characteristics are very marked. Commencing from the south, California, Oregon, and Washington present a plain coast-line to the ocean, with scarcely any good sheltered harbour. This is the case as far north as Cape Flattery, or the Straits of Juan de Fuca, where British territory commences. This is the beginning of that remarkable network of fringing islands which has its counterpart on the coast of Norway and the west coast of South America.

This Inland Passage, as I shall call it, continues northwards past British territory (the Canadian province of British Columbia), and includes the southern arm of Alaska, which is here a narrow strip of coast sheltered by the seaward islands.

At Cape Spencer, the southern projection seawards of the St. Elias Alps, the Inland Passage suddenly comes to an end, and the coast becomes more stern and shelterless than ever; there is only one harbour for vessels, and only about six places where small boats can land.

So much for the general shape and character of the coast-line between the thirtieth and sixtieth parallels of latitude.

The differences of climate in different places are very great, and admit of broad distinctions as regards the mainland of British Columbia. A dry climate, where water is precious and irrigation necessary to agriculture, exists on the landward, eastward, or leeward side of the first main range of mountains—the Cascades; and in a less marked degree this dry zone also exists in a strip on the leeward side of the main range of the Rocky Mountains and on the leeward side of all the ranges. But on the islands, and along a narrow belt of the mainland facing them, there is too much water; the winters are mild and rainy, and more rain than seems necessary falls in summer.

Consequently, vegetation on the coast is very dense: the fir and