

VANCOUVER ISLAND.

Vancouver Island, separated from the mainland of British Columbia and the State of Washington by the Strait of Georgia and Juan de Fuca Strait, is about 250 miles long, with an average width of about 40 miles, and contains some 10,000,000 acres. Although much broken by mountain ranges, this includes many considerable and important tracts of agricultural and pastoral lands, contiguous to the coast and in the numerous valleys which intersect it from north to south. The climate, owing to the influence of the Japan current, is mild and humid, favoring a luxuriant vegetation and the growth of all the fruits, vegetables and cereals of the temperate zone in perfection. The greater portion of the land is heavily timbered—a fact which has retarded settlement, but the extensive lumbering and mining operations now being carried on will serve to alter that state of affairs in the near future. The principal farming districts are: Victoria, Saanich, Metchosin and Cowichan, in the south; Alberni, in the west, and Comox, in the north-east. These are well-settled, prosperous communities, the farmers finding ready sale for their produce at good prices at the mines and lumber camps in their respective neighborhoods. The interior of the Island is practically unexplored, but from reports of prospectors, timber cruisers and hunters there are many fertile valleys which will be made available for settlement when the country is traversed by a railway. At the northern end of the Island is a large, level tract, not too heavily timbered, which affords almost ideal conditions for stock-raising and dairying. This area contains about 140,000 acres, and much of it could be converted into agricultural land by drainage. While mining, lumbering and fishing are the chief industries of Vancouver Island, no other portion of the Province affords better opportunities for mixed farming. The transportation facilities are good, every settlement being served either by railway or steamboat, and the wagon roads are excellent. There is a steady demand in a local market for every product of the farm. The soil is fertile, and the climate mild. The principal drawback is the first cost of clearing the land, but, as an offset, it should be remembered that a man can support himself and family in comfort on a much smaller area than in older countries where the soil is worn out, or on the prairie where his sole dependence is upon wheat.

OTHER ISLANDS.

Lying between Vancouver Island and the mainland are several smaller islands, some of which are partly cleared of timber and cultivated. Among these may

be mentioned Salt Spring (or Admiral), Valdez, Mayne, Moresby, Saturna and Cortez, on all of which there are considerable areas of land available for settlement. Sheep-raising would pay well on some of these islands, as there are many grassy meadows. Large and small fruits, oats, potatoes, hay and barley grow to perfection and give good crops, while much profit is derived from poultry-raising.

ESQUIMALT

includes Esquimalt, Highland, Metchosin and Sooke districts. These are the most southern districts in British Columbia, being at the extreme southern end of Vancouver Island, and lying very little above sea

level. Perhaps the most successful industry so far tried has been that of poultry-raising. Prices range to \$3.50 and \$7.00 per dozen for live poultry, and from twenty to sixty cents a dozen for eggs. Potatoes are successfully grown, and yield about 200 bushels to the acre, prices being from \$15 to \$18 per ton. There is no Government land for pre-emption in this district. The price of improved land varies very much, being all the way from \$5 to \$200 per acre, according to the nature of the soil, extent of improvements, and location. On the whole, the extent of good agricultural land is limited.

SAANICH

includes Victoria, Lake, North and South Saanich and James Island. These districts lie to the northward of the City of Victoria, and are connected with it by good wagon roads, railroad and water. The principal products are hops, roots, vegetables, hay, dairy products and fruit.

Victoria district comprises all that part between Esquimalt and Highland, on one side, and Lake district on the other. A large portion of the land is slightly wooded, and much of it is partly open oak land.

Lake is a district north of Victoria, and between it and South Saanich, the eastern boundary being Haro Straits. Most of the land is timbered, lightly in some parts and heavily in others. The district is well watered by streams and lakes. Fruit-raising and market gardening are principally followed.

South Saanich, on the Saanich Peninsula, is about twelve miles north of Victoria, with which it is connected by good wagon roads and railway. Saanich Arm separates the peninsula from the main island, so that its eastern and western boundaries are the salt water, the south being Lake district, and the north, North Saanich.

North Saanich adjoins South Saanich to the north, and occupies the end of the peninsula. Sidney, the terminus of the railway from Victoria, is on the east coast. Several good wagon roads also give access to Victoria. This is a beautiful district, well suited to the cultivation of hops and fruits of all kinds.

James Island lies off North Saanich, and very near to it. The settlers cross in small boats with produce for the markets. It is noted for the large quantities of strawberries produced, of good quality, and usually about first of Provincial product in local market.

On the Saanich Peninsula, which comprises a large portion of the section referred to, the area of agricultural land is very considerable, and its character, generally speaking, is first-class. Grain-growing is not



Farm of Lapor French, Saanich, near Victoria, Vancouver Island, B. C.

level. Access can be had to every part by one or the other of the following means, viz.: good wagon roads, railroads and water. The city of Victoria affords a local market for the produce of this section.

The districts of Esquimalt, Goldstream and Highland adjoin Victoria District to the westward, and much of the same characteristics prevail as in Metchosin, Highland being more hilly and rocky and heavily timbered. Good wagon roads and the E. & N. Railway run through it.

In this district, as in nearly every other district in Vancouver Island and the lower mainland, grain-growing is not extensively carried on. Wheat is only raised as chicken feed, while oats are grown particularly to feed on the farm. Fruit does well when properly attended.



Panoramic View from Mount Tolmie, near Victoria, Vancouver Island, B. C.