

Cities of British Columbia.

Another city of more than local fame, already the second in size in the province, is Vancouver, the terminus of the Canadian Pacific railway. Two years ago, the town site was a dense forest, and now, a large portion of it is covered with buildings, some of them of brick, and many streets are laid out and planked. Indeed, the present improvements have risen on the ashes of their predecessors, for, on the thirteenth of June, 1886, the city, then a few months old, was almost totally destroyed by fire, only two or three small buildings being saved. Since then, upwards of a million dollars have been expended in improvements, and a city of five thousand people has sprung into being, and is growing daily in population and structures. The greater number are for business purposes, but many cottages and a number of excellent residence have been erected. Several brick blocks have been completed, or are under way, one of which is being fitted up for two banks, the Bank of British Columbia and the Bank of Montreal. The improvements under way and projected, including the street improvements, gas works, water works and railroad buildings, approximate \$2,000,000, in value.

The city occupies a peninsula, bounded by Burrard inlet on the north, and English bay and False Creek on the south. The harbor proper, known as Coal harbor, lies on the inlet, just east of the first narrows, and is a body of deep water, perfectly sheltered on all sides, three miles wide, and nearly as long at the town site. It practically extends up the inlet a distance of twelve miles, affording ample accommodation for the commerce of the largest city in the world. On the opposite, or outer, side, is English bay, a roadstead in which vessels may lie at anchor, secure from all but the severest storms. An arm of the inlet cuts through the lower end of the peninsula, to within a few yards of the bay, through which a navigable passage can be made, by which vessels can quickly pass from one to the other. The railway company's terminal works are being constructed along the bay, where huge round-houses and shops are in progress of erection. Immense warehouses, a large depot, etc., are being constructed on the inner harbor, which is the terminus proper, and will be the point for receipt, and shipment of merchandise.

The town site occupies high ground, but has no extremely steep hills. From the centre of the peninsula it slopes towards both water fronts. On this central ridge, the railway company has erected a hotel, which cost \$250,000. This will, no doubt, become a favorite stopping place for tourists, who desire to enjoy the scenery, hunting and fishing of the surrounding country, or to rest from the fatigue of a long journey.

The city will be provided with the best mountain water, which is being brought in from the mountain lakes a few miles distant. This will be conducted to the city in iron pipes, at an expense, including mains, etc., of about \$250,000. A system of gas works and pipes will be put in at once, costing about \$150,000. The electric light is also a feature of the city, and telegraph and telephone facilities of the most complete kind will be provided.

Commercially, Vancouver will speedily assume a commanding position. The Canadian Pacific is already hauling a large share of the through freight from Pacific coast ports to eastern cities. It has control of routes by which it can enter Chicago, New York and Boston, and can compete with American roads for through business between those cities and Puget sound, Portland and San Francisco. Arrangements have been made for a line of steamers to ply between Vancouver and Hong Kong. Three first-class iron steamers have been put on this route. The route from Yokohama to Coal harbor is one hundred miles shorter than to San Francisco, and from Coal harbor to New York it is one hundred and fifty miles shorter than from San Francisco. From Yokohama to Liverpool, via Vancouver, it is nine hundred miles less than via San Francisco. The advantages, in connection with the independent position of the Canadian Pacific, must have a great effect upon commerce and travel. Steamers to Japan and China, to the Sandwich islands, New Zealand and Australia, and to Puget sound ports and San Francisco, will run regularly, in connection with the road. Vancouver will become the great port of entry and shipping for the province, and the bonded port for all goods destined to the eastern portion of Canada and the United States and England.

Not within the recorded history of mankind, has a new city sprung from the wilderness with the rapidity and vigor of growth displayed by this terminal city; and nowhere, to-day, does there exist a young city with such brilliant prospects before it, with a location unsurpassed, a harbor almost unequaled, a business community of great enterprise and energy, the terminus of the greatest railway in the world, and capital flowing into it from home and abroad.

The chief city of Fraser river is New Westminster, situated on the north bank of the stream, fifteen miles above its mouth. In the early days, this was the capital of the province, and it now contains two of its most important public institutions. The site of New Westminster is happily chosen on ground rising gradually from the river, affording splendid drainage and pleasant building sites for residence. The business portion of the city occupies its natural position, near the river, the great highway of traffic to the interior. There are a number of quite imposing structures, belonging to the dominion and provincial governments, which add much to the general appearance of the city. The large building occupied by the post-office and other federal offices is constructed of brick, with stone facings, and is three stories high, surmounted by a mansard roof. The penitentiary stands on the eminence in the northwestern portion of the city, and is a substantial stone structure of pleasing architecture. The insane asylum is a brick and stone building, commanding a fine view of the river. About these two, are quite extensive grounds, well laid out and neatly kept. The district court house is a substantial structure. There are many handsome residences, surrounded by tasteful flower gardens and neatly-kept lawns, and many shade and fruit trees.

Several systems of water works supply the city with an abundance of pure water. The reservoirs being on elevated ground, the lower, or

business, portions of the city enjoy ample protection from fire, by possessing a liberal supply of hose. A more extensive system of water works is now in contemplation. The industries of New Westminster are considerable. Salmon canneries in or near the city give employment to twelve hundred men during the fishing season.

Two saw and planing mills employ two hundred and fifty men. Besides these, there are two breweries, a shipyard, a tannery, a soda and syrup factory, a foundry, and several bakeries. The city's permanent population exceeds three thousand, exclusive of Indians. Two excellent papers, the *British Columbian* and the *Mainland Guardian*, are published here, the former daily and the latter semi-weekly.

They are ably edited, and give much attention to news from the entire province. The hotel accommodations are excellent and ample, and for this reason, as well as because of the great beauty of the surrounding scenery and the splendid fishing and hunting in the immediate vicinity, it is a favorite place of resort for those seeking a few weeks of pleasure.

Surrounding New Westminster is the largest area of agricultural land in the province now contiguous to market. Besides its river facilities for transportation, it is practically a terminal point of the Canadian Pacific, with which it is connected by a short branch line. It will also, no doubt, be connected, by rail, with the great railroad systems of the United States, by way of a line along the east shore of Puget sound, to Seattle. The situation of New Westminster is such that it must always be a thriving commercial point, growing with the development of the country about it.

Yale, on the Fraser river, at the head of navigation, is quite an important point as a base of supplies for the mines and settlements to the south and east. Kamloops, on Thompson river, at the upper end of Lake Kamloops, is a prosperous commercial point enjoying both rail and water communication with the country east, west and south. It has a weekly paper, the *Inland Sentinel*, and is a thriving town. Barkerville is the chief business point in the Cariboo mining region, and is the terminus of the great wagon road from Yale.

Besides Victoria, there is another city of importance on the island. This is Nanaimo, the northern terminus of the Island railway, and chief seat of the coal mining industry. The town was founded by the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1852, as a mining village and trading post; but with the growth of the mining industry, a town has sprung up possessing considerable commercial importance. The harbor has accommodations for a large amount of shipping, and a number of vessels may always be seen loading with coal or waiting for cargoes. There are a number of wharves at Nanaimo, belonging to the Vancouver Coal Company, to the Nanaimo saw mills, and to several private individuals. The business portion of the town lies on a rocky peninsula, separated from the residence part by a deep ravine, spanned by two substantial wooden bridges. As is usually the case in mining towns, but few buildings of an ornamental character have been erected, though the indications are that the future will see a change in that respect. The court-house and a handsome stone post-office are the buildings of an official character. Aside from the extensive coal interests, there are a sawmill, a shipyard, a brewery, soda water factory, tannery, and the usual number of commercial and industrial enterprises. A volunteer fire company is ever ready for duty. An institution of the city is the *Free Press*, a weekly journal devoted to the interests of Nanaimo and its great coal industry. The population somewhat exceeds two thousand, and is steadily increasing.

The towns of North and South Wellington lie near Departure bay, opposite the Nanaimo harbor, and are less than a miles distant from each other. These are at the seat of mining operations, and consist chiefly of the works and residences of miners.—*West Shore*.