

It is the route into the great gold country of Omineca. The scenery up to Hazelton and beyond is not unlike that of the Fraser, and in some places quite equals it. Its rugged canyons and fierce rapids require skilful navigation. It is to the Forks of the Skeena, where one of the alternative surveys for the C. P. R. was run, and here in '66 the Western Union Telegraph Co. reached with a line which was to connect overland, by crossing Behring Straits, with a Siberian line, when the news of the Atlantic cable being laid was received and the scheme was abandoned. We, however, only explore the mouth of the wonderful river as far as Port Essington. In it are located seven canneries and three saw mills, the timber used being cedar, cypress, hemlock and spruce. Another cannery is being erected, and all of them are thoroughly equipped. They have an annual capacity each of about 12,000 cases. There is an Indian village here and a church. The view from any point here is very fine, and there is a great deal to interest tourists. The river is prolific with salmon, and is said to drain rich mineral deposits of gold and coal. The shores are heavily wooded with mountainous back-ground, and potatoes and berries of all kinds are very plentiful.

Leaving the Skeena we pass out into Chatham Straits, and rounding the Isimpshean peninsula, soon arrive at one of the most noted places on the coast, Metlakahtla, a very prettily situated Indian village about twelve miles from the Skeena.

METLAKAHTLA.

This at one time used to be a veritable beehive, under the management of Rev. Mr. Duncan, a missionary sent out in early days by the S. P. G. Society of London, England. He had a sawmill, a woolen mill, a cannery, a brick yard, a boys' home, a girls' home, an industrial school, and many other means of keeping the Indians employed. But the Home Society began to think he was getting too rich himself and sent out Bishop Ridley (the Bishop of Caledonia), to take charge and look after the Society's interests. This caused a strife between two factions which arose, some siding with Duncan and others with the Bishop, and ended in Duncan leaving with his adherents for a new settlement some 30 miles above Fort Simpson, called "New Metlakahtla." Now since his departure "Ichabod" may be written over the cannery, the brickyard and the sawmill and woolen mill. They are all shut down. The boys' and girls' homes are still running and the Industrial School is doing good work. But in fishing season the beautiful little village is almost deserted, the Indians going down to the Skeena to work in the canneries, and when that season is completed many of them leave for the hop fields in Washington. They have, if anything, been a little too well educated, one effect of it being to make them artful and conceited.

Their houses, until lately, were all built in one style, a lofty two-storey building which, if divided up, would contain about eight or ten rooms, and each one has a nice little garden patch laid out in fruit trees and vegetables, which have been much neglected of late, but nevertheless, gooseberries, raspberries, currants and strawberries thrive here wonderfully. The Church of England, built by Mr. Duncan, is a beautiful piece of work, and is the largest and most Anglican appearing in the province. The Indians are very musical, and have a brass band, and in almost every other house an organ. The church organist is an Indian. An excellent hospital has recently been established here. Metlakahtla is situated on the great Isimpshean peninsula, inhabited by the once mighty Isimpshean nation

of Indians, of which those at Metlakahtla and Fort Simpson are notable examples.

FORT SIMPSON.

A few miles farther north, the chief of the Hudson's Bay Co.'s trading posts, is a populous Indian village situated on an excellent harbor, which was once also an aspirant as a terminus of the C. P. R. by way of the Forks of the Skeena. Even now there has been an incipient boom in town lots, looking in the direction of another railway. The Hudson's Bay Co. have a large store here where anything can be procured from a needle to the latest pattern Winchester rifle. They have also wharves about a quarter of a mile long and a warehouse at the extremity. The harbor here affords excellent anchorage at any depth up to 30 fathoms, with good mud and sand bottom. The rise and fall of the tide is from 18 to 20 feet, and on this account considerable of the shore is dry at low water tide. These Metlakahtla Indians are first cousins to the Fort Simpson's, with whom they intermarry. The latter, however, are Methodists. They have a church, two school-houses, a fire hall, two stories with a tower, a two-storey drill hall, a sash and door factory, a shingle mill, worked by water power, a turning mill, worked by water power, a boys' home, a girls' home, also an excellent mission house and a hospital is in course of construction. They have also an excellent brass band which discourses sweet music of an evening from the tower of the fire hall.

Bidding good-bye to Fort Simpson, we sail past the mouth of the Naas River, where there are several canneries and imposing views, across Chatham, around Cape Fox, into Dixon's entrance and into Alaska. On the way up we sail by Tongas Islands, the home of the Tongas Indians, who are allied to the Isimpsheans. In early days the natives knew nothing of boundary lines. Tongas is where Mr. Duncan has established his celebrated mission, "New Metlakahtla." On the way up we visit Sitka and Juneau, and circle around among numerous channels and enter several noted glacier bays. This is the land of the midnight sun and a great attraction to American tourists, but for diversity of scenery, for beauty, and for interest, apart from icebergs and glaciers, it is incomparable with the great route just passed over, wholly in British Columbia waters and in Canadian territory.

THE NORTHERN INTERIOR.

An Immense Country of vast Agricultural, Pastoral and Mineral Possibilities.

A WAY to the north of Cariboo, in itself one of the richest gold countries in the world, and a pastoral district of importance, there lies an immense territory, the agricultural capabilities of which through recent survey and exploring parties have been to some extent ascertained. The Chilcotin plateau and the country north of it, including the Blackwater and Nechaco valleys, form the greater part of the region discovered by Sir Alexander McKenzie one hundred years ago, named by him New Caledonia. Geographically it answers to the interior plateau of Idaho, Nevada and Utah. In fact, it is part of that great plateau, which extends almost uninterruptedly from the Gulf of Mexico, through the United States and British Columbia, to the northern boundary