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## Land Settlement Problems in British Columbia

**Keeping Transportation Ahead of Settlement, and the Adaptation of Land to the Purpose for Which It Is Best Fitted, Will Insure the Best Chances of Successful Settlement.**

In British Columbia many thousands of acres await settlement; thousands of acres await clearing, others to have water brought upon them. Rich areas of grass lands that will grow vast amounts of beef or mutton await development. Settlement is proceeding steadily. The extension of transportation facilities—the 2,300 miles of new railroads which are being completed to open up the central and northern part of the Province—are having effect upon land settlement. The Government of British Columbia realized that in view of the topographic features of this Province, the basic factors of land settlement are extensive surveys and railroads, steamship services, bridges; and that it would be unwise to induce people to settle until the necessary transportation facilities and means of securing the comforts of civilization have been provided within reach of those who go on the land. Settlers are needed, and when the foundations for successful settlement, now being laid, are completed, the Government will take steps to secure them. Meanwhile it prefers to lay the foundations for successful settlement rather than induce hasty settlement and wait on the failures of pioneers to light the way to successful achievement.

Much has been done in the past two years. When the railroads now under contract are completed there will be 6,000 miles in British Columbia, and there are 15,000 miles of wagon roads, over 6,000 miles of trail, while 200 vessels ply on upwards of 2,000 miles of navigable inland waters. In Central and Northern British Columbia there is under development today an Inland Empire that half-a-dozen years ago was the wandering ground of the trapper and prospector. The packhorse and the canoe provided transportation for the thin trickle of trade that penetrated the silent places of this area. It was known that the rich arable plateaux and valleys contained millions of acres of land that would attract the settler; but it was all too remote, its possibilities were all too much of the future, and

most people felt that development would be a matter of interest to the next generation rather than to those who lived and worked for the upbuilding of this one. Yet in a few short years the railroads have been pushed forward, roads and bridges built, experimental farms established in order that intending settlers may be shown what crops are most suitable, and settlement is proceeding in a steady, healthy manner. It is interesting to note that despite the fact that the Government of British Columbia has not

begun to induce settlement in advance of its development work in preparation, that settlers are coming into this Province to a greater extent than to the Provinces of the Northwest. In no other Province of the Dominion is the percentage of increase in population of rural and urban so nearly equal as in British Columbia. When it is taken into consideration that Alberta and Saskatchewan are prairie provinces, and that all the settler has to do is to pitch his tent and start to work; that the energies of the Dominion and C. P. Railway Emigration Departments are devoted to directing emigration to these prairie provinces; and that British Columbia, notwithstanding these facts, without an Emigration Department, is attracting settlers, it is evident that when the foundations now being laid, the surveys, railroads, public works, experimental farms, etc., are completed and the Government is in a position to induce the settler to come, the response will be ready.

The Government of British Columbia, which has always realised the value of the potential wealth of this, the richest Province of the Dominion, took up the problem of transportation with energy, with the result that in a few short years the wilderness which many considered would await development until another generation was ready to take up the work was opened up by railroads and highways. The Government took up the problem of transportation with energy. The Pacific Great Eastern Railway, north and south, through the centre of the Lillooet and Cariboo districts, connecting the Pacific Coast with Fort George, to be followed with another connecting road northward from Fort George through the Peace River District to the Albertan border; the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway

### CONTENTS

LAND SETTLEMENT PROBLEMS IN  
BRITISH COLUMBIA.

THE LUMBER INDUSTRY AND HARBOR  
TOLLS.

TAXATION OF INSURANCE COMPANIES.

RECENT ANNUAL REPORTS.

TRUST COMPANIES COMPLYING WITH  
THE ACT.

MINERAL OUTPUT OF B. C. FOR 1913.

STOCKS, MUNICIPAL, INSURANCE, COM-  
PANY AND MINING INFORMATION.