

TIMBER.

The timber of Vancouver is one of its richest products. Throughout the island the celebrated "Douglas Fir" is found, and a variety of coniferous trees grow on all parts of the island. It is impossible to travel without marvelling at the forest growth. This exuberance is not confined to the mammoth fir trees, or the enormous cedars; trees of many of the deciduous varieties abound, so that either for lumber and square timber, or for the settlers' immediate requirements for the use of cities, and as arboreal adornments to the homes, the forests of Vancouver Island have a value that every year will become more apparent.

CLIMATE OF VANCOUVER ISLAND.

Concerning Vancouver Island, it only remains to say in the important matter of climate its inhabitants believe, and with some reason, that they enjoy peculiar advantages. They have a mild and even winter, with rain; the annual rainfall is estimated at 45 inches; and occasionally snow; early spring; a dry, warm summer, and a clear, bright and enjoyable autumn. Sometimes the frost is sufficiently hard to permit of skating, but this is exceptional. As a rule flowers bloom in the gardens of Victoria throughout the year. It is spoken of as England without its east winds; in reality, it is Torquay in the Pacific. Fruits of all kinds indigenous to the temperate climates ripen in the open air, and amongst them, some that are in England brought to perfection only under glass. Thunder storms seldom break over Vancouver. It is this climate, combined with the situation of Victoria, that makes that city such a pleasant abiding place.

TAXADA.

Near Vancouver is the island of Taxada, opposite the settlement at Comox, which from its wealth of iron ore, is destined to be of considerable value.

It is largely owned by speculators. The ore is in a mountainous mass that can be traced for miles, and it can be mined, smelted and shipped without difficulty. It is a coarse, granular magnetite, containing a large percentage of iron with only .003 per cent. of phosphorus.

A little to the north of Taxada is a small group of islands, and then the island of Vancouver and the mainland approach one another to within two or three miles.

THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS.

North of Vancouver island, and close to the coast of the mainland, there is a succession of islands continuing to the extreme limits of British Columbia. Of these, the Queen Charlotte Islands are the largest and most important. These are a group of which there are three principal islands, Graham, Moresby and Provost islands. They are the home of the remnant of the Hydah Indians. About 800 people, who live in villages scattered about the three islands. They are expert cannermen and fishermen, and find occupation in extracting oil from the livers of the dog fish, which abound on that coast. A company was started a few years ago called the Skidegate Oil Company, which, by introducing proper machinery for extracting the oil, obtains an excellent article, especially for lubricating. It manufactures about 40,000 gallons annually, and gives employment to the Indians during the summer months.

These islands are heavily wooded, but not with the larger kinds of fir. It is believed that there is gold on the islands, and in years past several attempts were made to find it; but, probably owing to imperfect methods, with only moderate success.