

British Columbia

GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION OF THE PROVINCE

British Columbia, the most westerly province of Canada, is also one of the largest and richest in the variety and volume of its resources. Its commanding position on the North Pacific Ocean—bearing a somewhat similar relation to the larger portion of the American continent that Great Britain does to Europe for the trade of the world—makes it one of the most important and valuable provinces of the Dominion, both commercially and politically, and its trade, which is yearly rapidly increasing in volume, has assumed immense proportions, and reaches to all parts of the civilized globe, with which it has established means of direct communication. It is Canada's western outlet to China, Japan and the far East, to Australasia and the Islands of the South Pacific, and to the great gold basin of the Yukon, which lies immediately to the north of it.

The province, which is about 700 miles in length, with an average width of 400 miles, contains an estimated area of 383,000 square miles—a larger area than that of any country of Europe, Russia alone excepted. Its limits extend from the 49th parallel—the international boundary between the Dominion and the United States—on the south to the 60th degree of north latitude, and from the summit of the Rocky Mountains westward to the Pacific Ocean—Vancouver, Queen Charlotte Islands, and a large part of the archipelago of the Pacific coast being included within its bounds, and forming a portion of Canada's great maritime province of the West. Speaking generally, British Columbia is a mountainous country, with intervening valleys of rich prairie, magnificent stretches of forest lands and incomparable waterways. Its natural resources—in its mines, forests, streams and soil—are numerous, diversified and practically illimitable. Its timber is unequalled in quality, quantity and variety; its numerous mines already discovered, and under process of development, and its wide extent of unexplored country, speak of vast areas of mineral wealth; its wide, fertile valleys indicate wonderful agricultural possibilities; and its waters, containing marvellous quantities of the most palatable and valuable fish, combine to give British Columbia a value that is now only beginning to be comprehended. The whole country, which is awakening to a new life through the rapid development of its boundless resources, offers unparalleled inducements to the homeseeker, whether it be the settler in search of a farm, the miner in quest