

# BRITISH COLUMBIA.

## GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION OF THE PROVINCE.

British Columbia, the most westerly province of Canada, lies between the 49th parallel of north latitude (the international boundary between Canada and the United States) and latitude 60° N., and extends westward from the summit of the Rockies to the Pacific Ocean, and includes Vancouver Island and Queen Charlotte Islands.

British Columbia, which contains a superficial area of about 380,000 square miles, is one of the most important provinces of the Dominion, as well from a political as from a commercial point of view. With the Island of Vancouver it is to a maritime nation invaluable, for the limits of British Columbia coal fields can only be guessed at, while enough coal has already been discovered on that Island to cover the uses of a century. The harbours of this province are unrivalled. Vancouver, the Pacific terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway is the point of embarkation for Japan, China and Australia, in the new and shortest highways to the Orient and the Antipodes. The voyage from London to Yokohama has already been made in 21 days via the Canadian Pacific Railway, and this time will be still further reduced. Its principal seaport attracts not only a large portion of the China and Australian rapid transit trade, but must necessarily secure much of the commerce of the Pacific Ocean, the steamers of the Canadian Australian Line touching at the Hawaiian and Fijian Islands. Its timber is unequalled in quantity, quality or variety; its mines already discovered, and its great extent of unexplored country, speak of vast areas of rich mineral wealth; its waters, containing marvellous quantities of most valuable fish, combine to give British Columbia a value that has been little understood.

### THE HARBOURS.

Of the many harbours, the principal are English Bay and Coal Harbour, at the entrance to Burrard Inlet, a few miles north of the Fraser River. Vancouver, the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, is situated between these harbours.

There is a good harbour for vessels drawing up to about 18 feet, at Victoria on Vancouver Island, and a fine harbour for the largest ships at Esquimalt, three miles southeast of Victoria.

Esquimalt harbour is about three miles long, and something under two miles broad in the widest part; it has an average depth of six to eight fathoms, and affords excellent holding ground, the bottom being a tenacious blue clay. The Canadian Government has built a dry-dock at Esquimalt to accommodate vessels of large size. Its length is 450 feet, and width 90 feet at the entrance.