

Flora of Kitamaat Valley.

BY EDWARD S. WILKINSON, D.E.

The south end of this interesting valley, where the Kitamaat river enters the Inlet, forming a delta, is occupied by extensive tide flats which are occasionally overflowed when the river in flood time meets the high tides. Owing to the large percentage of fresh water, the vegetation is not injured by the overflow and the flats are covered with a luxuriant growth of wild flowers, tall grasses, etc. The common blue lupin occurs all over the flats and the Pea-vine climbs up the shrubs to a height of from six to ten feet. Reed-like grasses, often four feet high, make walking very tedious.

Numerous sloughs and old channels of the river intersect the flats, and the river itself is constantly changing its course, cutting through in one place, silting up in another, and bringing down large trunks of trees which form into log jams or are carried out into the Inlet. I measured one large spruce tree that was stranded on a gravel bar. It was more than two hundred feet long and seven feet in diameter near the butt. When we leave the flats we plunge at once into a dense forest, fringed with groves of crab apple trees and composed of Spruce, Hemlock, Red Cedar, Balsam, Cottonwood, Alder, Maple, Yew, etc. and Yellow Cedar on the higher levels. Among the smaller shrubs are the high and low bush Cranberries, various indloms and vacciniums. Several fine varieties of ferns, some from four to ten feet high, abound in the rich black swamps together with Skunk Cabbage, and Devil's Club. Swampy flats occur in openings in the timber, often surrounded with groves of Alder, and in them a variety of wild flowers bloom. A species of Sun Dew and a plant with a snowy, cotton-like tuft grow here and there among spongy beds of sphagnum

together with small cranberries. This is a favorite haunt of the Black and Grizzly bears, which wander through the woods and swamps along the river side. Near one small stream I found a species of minute plant with beautiful pale pink flowers. Near the side of the valley, on the granite rocks, a small Spirea with long pendant white flowers grows in the crevices together with masses of maiden-hair ferns. I must not forget to mention the beautiful mosses and lichens that spread over the rocks and trunks of fallen trees in every shade of green, grey and brown, forming a soft and charming carpet to walk on. On travelling up the valley thirty miles and reaching a higher plateau, a gradual change takes place in the vegetation. Graceful Birch trees scattered through large swampy plains, also Black Pines and Hemlock of smaller growth, denote a change from the flora of the coast and an approach to the forms of life peculiar to the climate of the interior of the province.

A trip through this fine valley destined to be one of the future highways to the interior, can be taken in three days and will amply repay any lover of nature both in its wild and richest aspects.

About 20 boys are in residence at the Boys' Home, Port Simpson, under the able management of Mr. C. V. Richards. The building has been enlarged during the year. More could be accommodated, if only a grant sufficient for their support could be obtained. A matron is much needed.

Our council of Chiefs have been very active. The side-walk has been extended, the grounds about the church cleared up, and a road built up the hillside to the burying ground. Kitamaat now takes its place as one of the neatest and most picturesque villages on the Pacific coast.