

BRITISH COLUMBIA

ITS POSITION, RESOURCES AND CLIMATE.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

CONCERNING the Province of British Columbia, which the Canadian Pacific Railway so suddenly transformed into an easily accessible and profitable field for commercial enterprise. the majority of people have only very indistinct ideas. The object of this pamphlet is to impart reliable information of the country, its present condition and capabilities, and the important position it now holds and in the future will occupy, in its relations with the other provinces of the Dominion, the trade of the Pacific Coast, and the commerce of the world.

The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway was the dawn of a new era on the North Pacific Coast. The province that has been lightly spoken of as a "Sea of Mountains," deriving a certain majesty from its isolation, is now traversed by a railway, accurately described as the highway between Liverpool and Hong Kong. The completion of this road allows the current of trade to flow uninterruptedly between the Atlantic and the Pacific.

The history of British Columbia may be summed up in a few sentences. After a number of years, during which British Columbia, under various names, was occupied only by Indians and Traders of the Northwest Company, afterwards amalgamated with the Hudson's Bay Company; Vancouver Island, an important part of the province, was made a colony in 1849. In 1858 the mainland territory became a colony, with the name of British Columbia, and in 1866 the two colonies were united, and so remained until July 20th, 1871, when British Columbia, retaining its appellation, entered the Confederation of Canada.

In 1881 the Canadian Government entered into a contract with a syndicate of capitalists to build a railway from Ontario to the Pacific Ocean, and to complete and operate it by the year 1891. An Act of Parliament was passed embodying the contract with the Syndicate, a company was organised, and work was immediately commenced and prosecuted with such vigor that the last rail in the gigantic railway that now binds British Columbia to the Eastern provinces of Canada was laid in November, 1885, six years before the time stipulated in the contract between the Government and the Company. This road has pierced the successive ranges of the Rocky Mountains, Selkirk, Gold ranges, etc.; it has penetrated the then unknown country on the north of Lake Superior and opened a way from ocean to ocean. The busy life that teems on either side of the Atlantic already surges towards the west, impatient to reach the latent wealth of the Western provinces, and to seek on the shores of the Pacific new fields for its enterprise and capital.