

THE COMMERCIAL—PANORAMIC SUPPLEMENT.

The place is reached either by water or by rail from Victoria. The harbor is a splendid one. There are three companies operating here. The Vancouver coal is really the only good coal mined on the Pacific Coast. There are mines on Puget Sound in the United States, but the coal found there will not compete in quality with the Vancouver coal, hence large quantities of the latter are shipped to San Francisco and other Pacific coast points in the United States, in spite of the duty on imports charged at these ports. Last year the shipments of Vancouver Island coal were about 850,000 tons. The high quality of this coal will keep it in demand, and thus the progress of the mined district is assured.

In addition to coal mining, Nanaimo has foundries, and machine shops, and saw mills. The city is progressive and has water works, electric lighting, good schools, etc. Steamers run to principal points.

THE COAST COUNTRY.

THE coast line of British Columbia, both of the mainland and islands, is bold and heavily timbered, and indented with numerous deep-water inlets. These inlets afford good harbor accommodation. Vancouver and other islands stretching along the coast protect the inner coast line from the sweep of the ocean. Ships take advantage of the navigable channel between the islands and the mainland and thus pass in safety in all kinds of weather. Population is very sparse and is principally engaged in lumbering, salmon canning, fishing, etc. There is a considerable population of the Indian aborigines at points along the coast who engage in sealing, fishing and any other employment offered by the whites. The coast region has immense wealth in timber, minerals and fisheries, and there is abundant room for the employment of capital in the development of these and kindred industries. In the summer season excursion steamers run up the north coast, following the channel among the numerous islands, and these excursions are largely taken advantage of by tourists. It affords a delightful trip in a cool climate during the heated term. The scenery along the route is unequalled anywhere.

THE GREAT PROVINCE.

A FEW words about the Pacific province as a whole, in conclusion. British Columbia is great enough in extent for an empire. The Province has an estimated area of 383,000 square miles, or more than three times as great as the combined area of England, Scotland and Ireland put together. The population, according to the last official census was 98,173, made up of 54,061 whites, 35,202 Indians, and 8,910 Chinese. The province is a great quadrangle of territory, 700 miles long by 400 wide, lying north of latitude 49°, and west of the central core of the Rocky Mountains, extending along the Pacific Coast as far as latitude 55°, and including a large number of adjacent islands. Striking inland to latitude 60°, it is shut off from the seaboard by a narrow strip of Alaskan territory, and is bounded on the east by longitude 120°. The great mountain

ranges of the province—The Rockies and Selkirks on the east, and the Coast and Island ranges on the west—exercise a very important influence upon the country, climatically as well as commercially. There is no scenery in the world to compare with that of British Columbia, nor are better facilities anywhere afforded of enjoying it.

MINERAL RESOURCES.

It is not alone the scenic grandeur of these magnificent ranges that is their chief commendation, but their astonishing mineral wealth, which is indeed phenomenal. To her mineral wealth is due the first prominence which the country attained, her gold placers for a long time being the chief attraction to her shore. The base and precious metals are almost everywhere to be found in the province, and are bound to prove a chief factor in her future development. It is a well-established fact that a purely agricultural country rarely attains to any very high degree of wealth or importance, as compared to one in which mineral deposits are rich. It must not however, be inferred that British Columbia lacks in fertility of soil or salubrity of climate, for in both respects she is liberally endowed. But then the speedy accumulation of wealth, which naturally follows in the wake of successful mining of the precious metals, and the impetus given to manufacture by the presence of coal and iron in abundance, have ever been found an attraction to any country blessed with these indispensables to prosperity. Mining, however, has heretofore been conducted after a very crude fashion; but a better day has dawned, science, mechanism, capital and system being brought to the aid of enterprise and labor. New roads are being constructed in the richer of the mineral regions, railway systems built up, and the most improved machinery introduced for the treatment of the ores. Writing of the resources of British Columbia, Professor Dawson, C. M. G., F. R. S., (*Mineral Wealth*, p. 15) says:—

"Everything which has been ascertained of the geological character of the Province, as a whole, tends to the belief that so soon as means of travel and transport shall be extended to what are still the more inaccessible districts these also will be discovered to be equally rich in minerals, particularly in the precious metals, gold and silver."

LUMBER.

The timber limits of British Columbia are among the finest in the world, but unfortunately the trade in lumber cannot be said to be much more than in its infancy. As, however, the supplies of the forest States of the Union, eastern Canada or other great sources of supply become exhausted, or the lumberman is driven back from the navigable waters, the prospects for the trade of this province must necessarily become very bright. Cedar and Douglas fir are the woods chiefly handled, the supply in each case being unlimited. Good specimens of the former measure from sixty to eighty feet in circumference, and the number of such trees to the acre can be estimated when it is stated that 30,000 feet is considered a low average in some of the limits on Vancouver Island as well as on the mainland. Timber limits or forest areas can be leased from the government upon very favorable terms—ten cents per acre per annum; fifty cents per thousand feet cut, with a rebate of twenty-five cents per thousand exported out of the province, is the royalty.