

bia, in which the people have full faith, but little has been said of its agricultural capabilities, and the tourist passing through on the railway line, which follows the course of least resistance, wonders where the farming land is, and is disposed to forgive the statesman who described the Province as "a sea of mountains"; but the enthusiastic settler who is in love with his country is not so willing to forgive or forget it, but reminds you that the presence of large mountains implies the existence of large valleys, and that distance here is deceiving, which is true, for what seems to be a mile across a valley is really five or more. It is not easy, however, for the most charitably disposed visitor to imagine that the extent of the valleys is in anything like equal proportions to the mountains. That there are large and rich valleys of farming land is, however, evident from the display of stock, grain, vegetables and fruit at the exhibitions and on the markets. Vancouver Island gives evidence of excellent agricultural land, where fruit and cattle thrive. There are grist mills at Vernon, Enderby, and elsewhere. Over 150,000 bushels of wheat have been raised round about Vernon, on the bottoms and uplands resembling rolling prairies. One farmer in Chilliwack assured us he had 3,000 bushels of wheat in his granary, and it was dry and hard. Wheat growing, however, is limited, the principal industries being dairying, fruit growing, and poultry raising, for all which products there is an excellent home market, and large quantities are shipped to Manitoba.

The Fraser River Valley, extending for ninety miles from its mouth, has an average width of twelve miles, and the greater part of this area is composed of rich agricultural land, capable of cultivation well up to the foothills, while fruit in many places can be successfully grown on the plateaus or benches of the mountains, while in the interior are extensive prairie lands, suitable for ranching purposes, on which thousands of cattle are successfully fattened, producing the finest quality of beef in the world, the climate admitting of their grazing throughout the winter. As a rule, though, it has been found to be wise here, as in most ranching districts, to provide a certain amount of prairie hay to meet the contingency of a severe and protracted storm. One of the best farming districts is

THE CHILLIWACK VALLEY.

with an area of about nine by fourteen miles, one of the richest agricultural districts in the Province, the soil being alluvial deposit of great depth and fertility. Here heavy crops of cereals are grown, wheat often averaging forty bushels and oats one hundred bushels per acre, while clover yields three to four tons per acre, and is frequently cut twice in the season and sometimes three times, and permanent meadows are a complete success. We were shown a meadow which had been over twenty years standing without ever being broken up, which yielded three and a half tons per acre this year and has more clover than any other kind of grass in it now, the clover gaining from year to year instead of running out. Immense crops of roots are grown here, and fruit in abundance, apples, pears, plums, prunes, and cherries all yielding largely. Of the latter we saw trees of the English varieties thirty feet in height and over two feet in diameter, some of which have yielded over five hundred pounds of cherries in one season. The display of fruit at the exhibition was equal in most classes to the best that can be made in Eastern Canada.

DAIRYING

is one of the leading industries in the farming districts, to which the climate and all conditions are peculiarly favorable, the winter being mild and the growth of grass luxuriant. In addition to the many private dairies, there are five fully equipped creameries at different points in the Province, which are well patronized by the farmers, some of whom have cream separators on their farms, while at many points are skimming stations, from which the cream is brought to the creameries, which are operated for the most part by joint stock companies, and are giving good satisfaction to patrons, creamery butter at the time of our visit bringing 27½ cents per pound. One of these, the

EDEN BANK CREAMERY,

on the farm of Messrs. A. C. Wells & Son, Chilliwack, it was our privilege to visit. This creamery was built and equipped by the Messrs. Wells as a private enterprise, and as such operated with success for some time, its sphere having since been enlarged by merging it into a joint stock company. It is supplied with a No. 1 separator having a capacity of 300 gallons per hour, and the churn a capacity of 400 lbs. butter. This creamery is complete, having steam power, and is conducted by Mr. Smith, who received his final training at the dairy school of the Agricultural College, Guelph, Ont. The younger Mr. Wells had also the benefit of two terms at that institution, and the knowledge acquired has stood him in good stead in the operations of the home farm. The Eden Bank farm and steading are excelled by few in the Dominion in culture and appointments, the dimensions of the barn being 120 by 68 feet, with basement stabling the full size, high, light and dry, capable of stabling 100 head of cattle comfortably, the whole building being well finished and brightly painted; the basement walls being double boarded with clear matched lumber, and standing on a solid stone foundation. Mr. A. C. Wells is an enterprising and influential man in the community, being reeve of the municipality, taking a leading part in many

public enterprises for the public good, widely read, and up to date in his methods of farming. In this neighborhood are found the first and second prize herds of Jerseys at the Provincial Exhibition, the former owned by Mr. A. C. Street, the latter by Mr. J. S. Smith, at the head of whose herd stands the champion bull of the breed at the same fair.

Other valleys of greater or less extent are equally fruitful as farming lands, among which is the Delta, which is highly spoken of, and from which came much of the best stock, fruit, and dairy produce at the fair. The Okanagan Valley is a veritable earthly paradise. Near Kelowna, Lord Aberdeen has a large fruit farm, and also a cattle ranch of 13,000 acres at Vernon, where Mr. Ellis has 50,000 acres in ranches, with 20,000 cattle. A settler at Trout Creek, on Okanagan Lake, sent 2,000 baskets of peaches to Boundary Creek mines this summer, which netted him one dollar a basket. The day we passed down the steamer Aberdeen took in six carloads of fruit and vegetables at Kelowna for Boundary Creek; going back next day we had seven tons for Manitoba. Extensive stock ranches are also in evidence at Kamloops, in the Cariboo district, and at other points in the interior.

THE EXPERIMENTAL FARM AT AGASSIZ

is conveniently situated close to the station, seventy miles east of Vancouver, on the main line of the C. P. R., in the Fraser River Valley, surrounded on three sides by mountains which one would judge would serve as a protection to vegetation, but which we are told do not answer that purpose so fully as one would expect, the north winds sweeping down at times with damaging effect upon fruit trees and arbor plants. Indeed, convenience of location is about the only redeeming feature in the selection of the site of this station, as the soil is infertile, being evidently composed principally of a deposit of river gravel and sand, not well suited to the growth of grain or grass, and only capable of growing fruit trees successfully by constantly repeated doses of manure, clover and other fertilizers. The farmers of the Province complain that the reports of this station as to yields of grain misrepresent the capabilities of the country, being very much lower than the average of the best lands in various sections. These remarks imply no reflection upon Mr. Sharpe, the intelligent and capable superintendent, who had nothing to do with the selection, and is probably doing the best work possible under adverse conditions. He is an enthusiast, and has done splendid service in the line of horticulture, which, being one of the leading industries of the Province, is of peculiar interest to its people. The apple, pear, plum and cherry orchards are completely successful, bearing heavily of high-class fruit. Apricots, prunes, figs, peaches and grapes are also successfully grown, while good work is being done in the line of arbor culture and the testing of hedge plants. An interesting experiment is also being conducted in the line of mountain-side orchards with very satisfactory results, considerable plantations (about fifteen acres) of apple, pear, peach, plum and cherry trees having been made upon four benches of the mountain at different elevations, the highest being one thousand feet above the level of the farm, and the trees are growing strong and healthy, and promising well at this altitude. There are about seventy acres in fruit, large and small, and about two thousand varieties of fruit are now under cultivation.

MINERAL AND TIMBER RESOURCES.

The vast mineral wealth of British Columbia is almost fabulous, yet it is undoubted, the most astute authorities on mining having full faith in the existence of immense stores of gold, silver, copper, and coal, which only await development, and which will be made largely available on the completion of the Crow's Nest Railway, which is being rapidly constructed, and which, when completed as contemplated, will shorten the road to the Coast by nearly three hundred miles.

Immense stores of timber of high-class quality are available, or will be as new railroads are opened up. Great forests of giant trees of cedar and fir, 4 to 10 feet in diameter, and running up to a height of 150 to 200 feet, clear of knots nearly to the top, cover the mountain sides over vast areas; and mammoth saw mills at many points are sizing timber to 3 feet square and 100 feet long, and cutting planks and deal boards for shipment to the ends of the earth. The British Admiralty test gives British Columbia fir more than twice the strength of Eastern pine and one-third more than Eastern green oak, and it gains immensely with age as compared with oak. An excellent authority has ventured the assertion that there is timber enough in British Columbia to put farm buildings on every quarter-section in the Northwest Territory and still have millions of acres to spare, enough to supply the Territories with all the lumber they will require for 1,000 years, and an equally safe authority estimates that there is coal enough in the mountains to supply the world for as many years.

THE SALMON INDUSTRY.

This season 840,000 cases of salmon—18 lbs. to the case—have been packed on the Fraser. Averaging these at \$3.50 per case, this year's pack is worth nearly \$3,000,000, and this represents only the sockeye harvest for 1897. With the northern pack added to this, the grand total this year will be over a million cases, and the value three and a half millions for a crop that swims up to the very doors of the canneries. There are forty-five canneries on

the Fraser alone. Prices are depressed, yet new canneries are being erected.

Automatic can factories at Westminster are operating on a large scale. The tin plate inserted at one end of the machinery comes out at the other end a finished can. Chinamen clean the fish and fill the cans, which are soldered automatically, being carried on a moving platform through a stream of melted solder. The sturgeon season follows, and is of large output. We hesitate to make the statement, lest our reputation for veracity suffer from suspicion, that we were invited to witness the cutting up of a sturgeon weighing eight hundred pounds, and we were assured there was one on exhibition last year weighing one thousand two hundred pounds. With this necessarily partial inventory of the industries of British Columbia in view, who can doubt the richness of the resources of the Pacific Province? Its own people have unbounded faith in its possibilities. They are full of hope for the future, and are happily sharing in the improved aspect of business and trade, which promises better things. With a transcontinental road the finest in the world to the East, and palatial ocean steamers plying from their ports to Australia, China, Japan, India, and the Occident, it is hardly strange that they begin to feel that they are at the front, and that even now they point with the thumb over the shoulder when they speak of the provinces "back East." This we can say for them without reservation: They are a brave, cheerful, broad-minded and hospitable people, enterprising, self-reliant, and deserving of the success which seems assured to them and which we sincerely hope will be theirs to realize and enjoy. J. C. S.

The Export of Store Cattle an Ultimate Loss.

(FROM OUR MANITOBA AND WESTERN EDITION.)

The heavy export of young store cattle from Manitoba (as well as from Ontario) to the corn States has continued without any abatement throughout the season. Even the increase of duty under the Dingley Bill, which went into force July 24th, has not checked the trade as was expected. Thousands of these young cattle have gone out; all through Southern Manitoba great herds were gathered up and driven across the boundary, destined for Iowa, Nebraska, and Southern Minnesota. Buyers have scoured the country from east to west and north to south and picked up everything in sight. Large numbers of all sorts have been accumulated in the C. P. R. stock yards at Winnipeg, where they are sorted over. Those fit for export or Eastern Canadian markets go forward over the C. P. R. to Montreal, and the young, thin, unfinished cattle have mostly been shipped to St. Paul for distribution among the feeders of the adjoining States. A few carloads have been sent to our own West and Northwest to be carried over and finished off grass next year or the year after. The following are some of the arguments advanced by those favoring the selling of these young cattle: 1. Very many of them are not of choicest breeding, and when finished will not be good enough to make export cattle. 2. Comparatively few of the sellers of these cattle have facilities for feeding or possess the skill and experience necessary to convert feed, no matter how abundant, into export beef. 3. Up to this year the prices paid for stall-fed steers have not been high enough to encourage an extension of this branch of stock raising. 4. The prices paid this season for one-year-old and two-year-old stockers have been tempting—\$20 to \$25 for two-year-olds off grass is a price which the farmer is not used to, nor likely to refuse. 5. Money was not a plentiful commodity, and the Americans' cash was timely and very acceptable. And, 6, since the results of this year's crop became known, and the scarcity of feed wheat, oats, and barley fully realized, many have sold the store cattle they purposed feeding.

Doubtless the sale of these thousands of stockers has been an immediate gain to the sellers; still, it cannot but prove an ultimate loss to the Province in the long run.

Soil in Manitoba, however so fertile, will, like soil in every other part of the known world, become exhausted by continual wheat cropping, unless the elements taken out of it by the wheat plant are restored in some form or other. The only practical way this can be done is by the application of manure. The only practical way to get the manure is to have it produced as a by-product while converting rough fodder, chaff, and hay, along with coarse grains, screenings, bran, and shorts, into beef or dairy products. The Ontario farmer appreciates the truth of the above, for we notice that as high as \$40 a head has been paid by them this fall for store cattle. Add to that \$10 the cost of feed, stabling, and care, and surely it cannot be expected that the steer can do much more than clear himself; but he leaves behind him on the farm the manure, which the Ontario farmer finds absolutely essential