

They were united in 1866, and joined the Canadian confederation in 1871. Three years later the province exceeded both Manitoba and Prince Edward Island in the value of its exports, and also showed an excess of exports over imports. It has a Lieutenant-Governor and Legislative Assembly, and is represented at Ottawa in accordance with the Canadian system. Its people have been more closely related to ours in business than those of any other province, and they entertain a warmly friendly feeling toward "the States." In the larger cities the Fourth of July is informally but generally observed as a holiday.

British Columbia is of immense size. It is as extensive as the combination of New England, the Middle States and Maryland, the Virginias, the Carolinas, and Georgia, leaving Delaware out. It is larger than Texas, Colorado, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire joined together. Yet it has been all but overlooked by man, and may be said to be an empire with only one wagon road, and that is but a blind artery halting in the middle of the country. But whoever follows this necessarily incomplete survey of what man has found that region to be, and of what his yet puny hands have drawn from it, will dismiss the popular and natural suspicion that it is a wilderness worthy of its present fate. Until the whole globe is banded with steel rails and yields to the plough, we will continue to regard whatever region lies beyond our doors as waste-land, and to fancy that every line of latitude has its own unvarying climatic characteristics. There is an opulent civilization in what we once were taught was "the Great American Desert," and far up at Edmonton, on the Peate River, farming flourishes despite the fact that it is where our school-books located a zone of perpetual snow. Farther along we shall study a country crossed by the same parallels of latitude that dissect inhospitable Labrador, and we shall discover that as great a difference exists between the two shores of the continent on that zone as that which distinguishes California from Massachusetts. Upon the coast of this neglected corner of the world we shall see that a climate like that of England is produced, as England's is, by a warm current in the sea; in the southern half of the interior we shall discover valleys as inviting as those in our

New England; and far north, at Port Simpson, just below the down-reaching claw of our Alaska, we shall find such a climate as Halifax enjoys.

British Columbia has a length of eight hundred miles, and averages four hundred miles in width. To whoever crosses the country it seems the scene of a vast earth-disturbance, over which mountains are scattered without system. In fact, however, the Cordillera belt is there divided into four ranges, the Rockies forming the eastern boundary, then the Gold Range, then the Coast Range, and, last of all, that partially submerged chain whose upraised parts form Vancouver and the other mountainous islands near the mainland in the Pacific. A vast valley flanks the southwestern side of the Rocky Mountains, accompanying them from where they leave our Northwestern States in a wide straight furrow for a distance of seven hundred miles. Such great rivers as the Columbia, the Fraser, the Parsnip, the Kootenay, and the Finlay are encountered in it. While it has a lesser agricultural value than other valleys in the province, its mineral possibilities are considered to be very great, and when, as must be the case, it is made the route of communication between one end of the territory and the other, a vast timber supply will be rendered marketable.

The Gold Range, next to the westward, is not bald, like the Rockies, but, excepting the higher peaks, is timbered with a dense forest growth. Those busiest of all British Columbian explorers, the "prospectors," have found much of this system too difficult even for their pertinacity. But the character of the region is well understood. Here are high plateaus of rolling country, and in the mountains are glaciers and snow fields. Between this system and the Coast Range is what is called the Interior Plateau, averaging one hundred miles in width, and following the trend of that portion of the continent, with an elevation that grows less as the north is approached. This plateau is crossed and followed by valleys that take every direction, and these are the seats of rivers and watercourses. In the southern part of this plateau is the best grazing land in the province, and much fine agricultural country, while in the north, where the climate is more moist, the timber increases, and parts of the land are thought to be convertible into