

CLIMATE.

As might be expected in a country so vast and of such varied latitude and altitude, British Columbia possesses great diversity of atmospheric conditions ranging from the equable and salubrious climate and perennial verdure of the coast districts to the snow-capped peaks of the distant mountains, the abode of perpetual winter. Along the whole coast from Victoria to Fort Simpson and extending far inland, the mean temperature varies but little; that of winter being about 42°, and that of summer a little over 60° Fahrenheit. In Victoria, this winter up to date, we have had but little frost and only half an inch of snow fall, which remained on the ground about twenty-four hours. The cause of this remarkable mildness of climate is due to a current of warm water, analogous to the gulf stream, commencing near the island of Formosa, on the eastern coast of China, and moving in a northeasterly direction it passes east of Japan, a part of it entering Behring Sea, while the remainder, passing south of the Aleutian Islands, ameliorates the climate of Alaska to such a degree that the annual mean temperature of Sitka, in lat. 57° is higher than that of Ottawa, in lat. 45° 25'. The former being 44.8° while the latter has only 37.4°. Esquimalt, three miles from Victoria, in latitude 45° 25', has a mean temperature only three degrees higher than that of Sitka, nine degrees further north. A remarkable similarity of climate and physical features exist between north-western Europe and north-western America. A warm current of water flows down the coast of the latter, while the shores of the former are bathed in the tepid waters of the gulf stream. Again, both are deeply indented by inlets, and the forests of the British Isles and Norway are measurably simulated by those of British Columbia. The moist climate of each is due to like causes. The vapor rising from the warm sea water is blown inland, and becoming condensed by the cooler air over the land, falls in rain or fog upon the slopes and valleys. The old forests of Great Britain and Ireland, including those of Norway, were a product of the gulf stream, while our own mighty forests are as certainly a product of the "Kuro Siwo."

That part of the province lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Cascade Range has a much drier climate with greater extremes of temperature than that of the coast districts. However the climate, even of this interior portion, is much milder and more equable than that of places in the same latitude on the eastern side of the continent, and has been described by Prof. Macoun of the Dominion Geological Survey as strongly resembling that of North Germany. Of course in the more northerly parts of this region greater extremes of temperature are experienced than in the middle and southern interior.

The average annual rain fall of the country west of the Cascade Range is about 50 inches, while the average precipitation of the middle and southern interior does not exceed 20 inches; but this dearth of rainfall, prevailing specially in the latter region, is measurably compensated by copious dews.

Agriculture and Stock Raising.

This is the most inviting field for the agriculturist or stock-raiser on the Pacific slope; here are more than fifty millions of acres eminently adapted for these pursuits. Nearly all vegetal life common to the temperate zone will thrive in British Columbia. Wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, hops, hemp which here grows wild, flax, rape, root crops of all kinds, pears, apples, plums, cherries and the small fruits grow rapidly, are of excellent quality and abundant yield, while grapes, peaches, melons and the more delicate fruits are grown successfully in the southern portion of the Province. To all these varied products of the field, the sure reward of the industrious and intelligent farmer, nature with a generous hand, has added the abounding game of the forests, the wild fowls of the air and the finny inhabitants of the water to the repletion of his stores. Although we would not, for obvious reasons, advise any one to come to this country without some capital, yet it would be quite possible for a healthy, industrious and frugal man, with but little means to come here and pre-empt, (see summary of land laws in another column) 320 acres of good agricultural land, east of the Cascade Range, for which he would only pay \$80, at the end of the year, and the same amount each year for three years thereafter; the price charged by the government being one dollar per acre, payable as above stated. Such a man could easily earn sufficient to make the necessary payments on his purchase by working a short time each year in the fisheries or other industries pursued here where labor is always in active demand, leaving him at least nine months of each year to plant and harvest, to build upon and otherwise improve his farm, which, if well selected, would be worth from \$5,000 to \$10,000 at the end of the fourth or fifth year. A portion of the C. P. R. passing through a fine agricultural section of this country will be completed during the coming summer, connecting at Yale with steamboat navigation on the Fraser, thus affording, to a large portion of the interior, cheap and rapid communication with the principal business marts of the province.

The late Sir James Douglas whose knowledge of the country, acquired by intelligent observation and long residence here, was both accurate and extensive, thus described the vast region drained by the Thompson, Bonaparte and Chapeau Rivers, and through the centre of which the railroad passes:

"The district comprehended within these limits is exceedingly beautiful and picturesque, being composed of a succession of hills and valleys, lakes and rivers, exhibiting to the traveller the grateful spectacle of miles of green hills, crowning slopes, and level meadows, almost without a bush or tree to obstruct the view, and, even the very hill tops, producing an abundant growth of grass. It is of great value as a grazing district—a circumstance which appears to be thoroughly understood and appreciated by the country packers, who are in the habit of leaving their mules and horses here when the regular work of packing goods to the mines is suspended for the winter. [The climate is so mild here that no food or shelter for stock other than that provided by nature, is necessary.—Ed.] It has never been my good fortune to visit a country more pleasing to the eye, or possessing a more healthy and agreeable climate, or a greater extent of fine pasture land; and there is no doubt that with a smaller amount of labor and outlay than in almost any other colony, the energetic settler may soon surround himself with all the elements of comfort and even affluence."