

Fleming said: "This channel is reported to be free from strong currents, shoals or other difficulties, and could be used by a railway ferry at all seasons of the year. The length of the ferry navigation between Frederick Arm, on the main shore and Otter Cove on Vancouver Island is about 15 miles." The average width of the channel is less than two miles. North of Nodales Channel is Johnstone Strait, which for 45 miles has an average breadth of not more than three miles. I note in this connection an interesting fact. The northern shore of the strait for about half its length is formed by the continental shore line, which is here nearer Vancouver Island than at any other part of the coast, a matter which may prove of very great importance as will be seen later. Loughborough Inlet and Knight Inlet are separated by a tongue of land, which, near the head of the former, is only about seven miles wide, but widens out toward the sea, until on reaching Johnstone Inlet it has attained a width of nearly thirty miles. When Knight Inlet has been passed the waterway between the Island and the Mainland widens very considerable, until in Labouchere Channel, which is opposite Hardy Bay, it has attained a width of 15 miles, and this it maintains more or less regularly although broken somewhat by small islands, until Queen Charlotte Sound and the north end of the Island are reached.

Mainland Connections.

It will be well at this point to consider the possible means of connecting Vancouver Island with the continental railway system. While such a connection is not essential to the development on the Island of a large and prosperous community, it seems to be necessary to the full utilization of the resources and advantages of the Pacific frontier of the Dominion. Many persons are disposed to look upon the proposal for a better connection between the Island and the Mainland by railway than now exists, as not much more than a sentimental demand upon the part of the residents of the Island, but it is very much more than this. It is essential to the completeness of the Canadian railway system; it is essential to the welfare of western Canada; it is essential to the interests of the Empire. There is railway connection already, between the Esquimalt and