

# Rambling Comment on a Recent Vacation Trip

**Fraser Valley Backward in Agricultural Development — Promising Districts for Farming and Mining Over the Cascade Range — Growing Importance of North Thompson Valley District.**

One cannot help but be impressed with the potentialities of those districts of the province recently visited by the editor on the occasion of a short automobile trip in the Interior. He was enabled, through the courtesy of a friend, to go by automobile from Vancouver to Hope, thence taking the Kettle Valley Railway over the Coquahalla Pass to Princeton, from Princeton to Merritt, thence through the Nicola Valley to Kamloops and from Kamloops up the North Thompson River to Mount Olie and Chu Chua, thence returning to Kamloops and back by rail to Vancouver.

One very obvious, and disagreeable impression following the road out of New Westminster, is the large amount of agricultural land not being availed off for the production of garden truck and general farming, with such ready markets at hand as New Westminster and Vancouver. This is perhaps a result of the land speculation of previous years, when much of the territory opposite New Westminster was cut up into building lots because the Canadian Northern terminals were to be located there. If some means could be taken for the employment of this and other unused land of the Fraser River Valley we think that much of the importation of California and Washington vegetables could be cut off with much benefit to the province.

As one proceeds eastward the character of the land changes and farming communities spring up noticeable for their apparent substantialness and quiet prosperous appearance. As one approaches Chilliwack the signs of agricultural development increases and the evidence of farming activity and prosperity is marked by the flourishing conditions of the dairying, gardening and general farming of the territory which Chilliwack serves. The Fraser Delta from Hope west is capable of a very wide development of its great agricultural resources, and with such a huge market as Vancouver affords it is difficult to see why this development has not kept pace with the consuming demand of this terminal city.

Before the advent of the railway the town of Hope was the beginning of the pack train route over Hope Mountain, in the Cascade Range, into the valleys of the Similkameen and Nicola.

The town of Princeton is located at the juncture of the Tulameen and the Similkameen rivers, and is the centre of the mining districts of both rivers. The most notable development in the Princeton district is that at Copper Mountain, where the Canada Copper Corporation has been doing a vast amount of mining development in the proving up of a huge low-grade copper property, which by next spring is expected to be in operation. The company is building a large concentrating plant at Allenby, about seven miles nearer Princeton than the company's property at Copper Mountain. In this mine over twelve million tons of proven ore, assaying on the average of 13 1/4% copper has been blocked out, with a possible two million more tons in prospect. The company's large expenditure is built up on this proven field, and is calculated on the basis of the treatment of this large body of ore.

Considerable prospecting and development is taking place further up the Similkameen from Copper Mountain and several properties are expected to be brought up to the point where capital for future development can be interested before long. Princeton itself has a considerable field of coal, which partakes of a lignitic or semi-bituminous nature. A part of the field is being developed by the Princeton Coal & Land Company, owners of the Princeton

townsite and public utilities. The coal mined is not favorably suited for steam purposes, but makes excellent domestic coal. Mining has been severely interfered with by the occasional outbreak of fire, which has proved difficult to handle. Once this gets under control and with the advantage which the Kettle Valley Railway offers, the Princeton district for shipment to the Coast, a large amount of this coal will be used in the homes of the people of Vancouver.

Eighteen miles out from Princeton lies the town of Coalmont, which was boomed on account of coal developments in the neighborhood. This Coalmont property has had a checkered career, due more to inadequate financing than to anything wrong with the property. The coal is of a good semi-bituminous variety, and is now being shipped to Vancouver, and used for both steam and domestic purposes. The mine is severely handicapped by the fact that it has not yet a spur from the joint Kettle Valley-Great Northern tracks following the Tulameen River. A spur of five miles in extent will be necessary for the economic handling of this coal. Those in control of the property are seeking to have this spur built, but due to labor and inability of the two railways to act at present, no immediate steps are being taken. So far three trucks are transporting the coal mined down to the railway siding.

The Tulameen Valley presents splendid opportunities for the prospector and mining engineer in the investigation and development of mineral outcropping in it and valleys tributary to it. Platinum is known to occur in economic quantity, but it requires experienced engineers to bring it to the producing stage. Gold occurrence is frequent and undoubtedly is there in very profitable amounts if only intensive prospecting and development takes place. The little town of Tulameen consists of a rancher's house, a general store and a closed hotel. This is a relic of past activity, but the presage of a large development which is inevitable as this valley becomes more in the eye of the mining profession.

After crossing the divide between the Tulameen and the Otter Lake Valley the country branches out into that of a rolling character, and as one passes Aspen Grove, where several mining properties are now in process of development, the country becomes more suitable for cattle ranching and farming.

As one approaches Merritt the farming development is notable. Merritt is noted for the occurrence of coal, which is being developed by two companies with intermittent working by two more. The character of this coal is such as to warrant exploitation of a wide extent. However, financial success has not attended the opening up of these properties as was anticipated. Yet it appears that the operators are fast surmounting their difficulties and will be extending their production as conditions warrant. Proceeding north from Merritt, following the Nicola Valley, there opens up a wide grazing district to the north and east. The little town of Quilchena is the centre of this district, notable for two large ranches, known as the Guichon Ranch and the Douglas Lake Ranch. The former runs a herd of about nine thousand cattle and the latter of about thirteen thousand. To visit Douglas Lake ranch requires a detour of about 22 miles to the ranching settlement, which is a thoroughly equipped community itself. It is stated that both ranches have reached their maximum as to the number of cattle they are capable of sustaining. To run large herds will require irrigation of an enlarged extent. The opportunity for this is presented in the numerous small lakes which are capable of irrigating wide stretches of fertile land, capable of raising large alfalfa crops for winter feeding. From Quilchena north to Kamloops, the country is excellent for cattle and farming, where the possibility of irrigation is present.