

Railway, and a handsome percentage allowed for that which is consumed at home, an annual turnover of only between 200,000% and 800,000% would be reached, which, it will readily be seen, does not represent a large sum in wages when other expenses are deducted. There can, I think, be little room for doubt but that the lumber industry of this Province is capable of great extension. The quality of the timber is so excellent, the quantity so prodigious, the facilities for cheap transport so great, and the Government charges so moderate, that nothing but energy and skill are wanted to ensure success. I believe that the Puget Sound trade, though in no way has it the advantage, unless it be in these latter qualities, is much greater than our own. But then Puget Sound has 60,000,000 Americans at its back, and we have no real pressure from the east at all. Indeed, it is a significant fact that the largest lumber mills on the island of Vancouver are American enterprises, as if Americans, and Americans only, appreciated rightly the value of those forests of which we talk so much.

There is, however, one external influence to which we may, I think, look with no small degree of confidence in its ultimate bearing upon our lumber trade ; and that is the Nicaragua Canal.

The successful completion of that work will without doubt do more to stimulate Pacific trade, and especially the lumber trade, than anything else. It is devoutly to be hoped that, now the Panama Canal appears to have got its final quietus, nothing will stand in the way of carrying out this great and perfectly feasible scheme. Of course it will be executed by American engineers with American money, or English money borrowed by Americans: for, as in the case of the Suez Canal, our countrymen will never sufficiently appreciate its importance until after it has been completed.

But there is an industry from which far more has been expected than that of lumbering. I refer to mining in the precious and base metals. British Columbia first came into notice as a gold-producing country. It had a short but brilliant career as one of the richest placer-fields in the world. Now every other home of alluvial gold has become subsequently distinguished as a quartz producer. It was no matter of surprise, then, when geologists told us that this Province was destined to achieve a reputation as a great quartz-mining country. Even in the days before railway communication it was common enough to speak of the vast mineral wealth which was supposed to lie hid in the mountains of British Columbia, and the advocates of the Canadian Pacific line used to rely upon this argument when opponents spoke slightly of these grand works of Nature.