

## The Kuro Shiwo

LET us now turn our eyes westward, and see something of the vast Pacific Ocean, which bounds the Dominion on the west. British Columbia lies in the same latitude as Newfoundland and the east coast of Labrador, but there is a remarkable difference between them in climate. On the Atlantic coast are icebergs, frozen bays, stunted shrubs and hardy plants and grasses. On the Pacific coast are noble forests, luxuriant pastures, and a climate almost free from winter frosts. The trees of the west coast are famous all over the world for their great size.

Our Atlantic coast, as we have seen, is somewhat harshly treated by the ocean; the polar current and the northerly winds make the climate much colder than it would otherwise be. The Pacific coast, on the other hand, is specially favoured by the waters which wash its shores. Not only is it free from any polar drift, but it enjoys a climate modified by the warmth of a great Pacific current—or rather two currents, for the ocean current is itself produced by an atmospheric current which flows in the same direction and produces even more beneficial results.

The waters of the north Pacific, like those of the north Atlantic, move in a vast circular current or eddy. Near the equator this current flows westwards from Mexico towards the coast of China, under the steady influence of the trade winds. Off the coast of Asia the current turns northwards past the island empire of Japan. It is a warm current, like the Gulf Stream, and gives these islands an equable climate, much milder than that of the mainland opposite.

A part of this warm stream drifts eastwards to our own shores, urged on by the great air current which blows from the westward, and, dividing as it nears the land, sends a branch northwards past Vancouver and the other islands on our western coasts. This warm current, with the mild and moisture-laden winds which drive it along, gives to these coasts