

# ALBERNI DISTRICT

Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada

The District of Alberni consists of the area drained by the rivers and streams running into the Alberni Canal; along its north-eastern boundary it is only some ten miles from the East Coast of the Island. The Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway, now controlled and operated by the C. P. R., is building a line to the head of the Alberni Canal, and this line is expected to be completed by the end of 1910.

The town of Alberni is divided into two settlements—Alberni, on the Somass River, where the first townsite in the district was laid out in the year 1886, and Port Alberni, two miles distant, the terminus of the railway on the deep-water harbour. The population of the district is about 700, but is growing rapidly.

Alberni possesses a splendid harbour, an ideal townsite, magnificent timber, fertile farm-lands, large (though undeveloped) stores of coal, iron, copper, gold, building-stone, limestone, marble, brick-clay and fire-clay; great water-powers, abundance of fish in the adjacent parts of the sea, unrivalled scenic attractions, a plentiful supply of game, and a mild and equable climate which permits of outdoor work being carried on the whole year round.

## THE ALBERNI OF THE NEAR FUTURE.

The advantages of the forthcoming railway connection are enormous, and Alberni will probably show during the next few years as great, if not a greater, proportional development than any other district on the Island. The lumber industry, which the railway will call into existence, should alone make a fair-sized town, and farming will be greatly benefited by the new line. Alberni will become available as a port of call for Pacific mail steamers. These vessels are often delayed by fog and tide between Cape Beale and Vancouver, and by the Alberni route a saving of from eight to twenty hours can be effected for mail and passengers. This saving in time can be proved beyond cavil, but space forbids detailed proof. The proximity of Alberni to the open sea, the absence of rocks and shoals, and the comparative freedom from fog in the Alberni Canal (which is entirely free from tide-races, owing to its great depth) give Alberni a great advantage over some other railway ports of the Pacific North-West, and should insure lower rates for marine insurance and pilotage—a feature of great importance.

Ere long the export grain from Alberta will be shipped *via* Pacific ports, as the saving in transportation charges is so great by that route. Flour, too, will be milled at the seaports as is now done, for instance, at Tacoma. Alberni, with her unique advantages, will claim a large share of this business.

The development of the coal which is known to exist in the valley would also make Alberni a great coal port. The town should also be the distributing point for the rich, though undeveloped, West Coast of the Island.