

Vancouver Island, B. C.

Canada

Its Principal Cities Outside of Victoria

In all the various districts of Vancouver Island the tokens of development and progress continue to multiply. Railway activities and the steady work of extending and improving the island roads and highways have a great deal to do with this, and the constant influx of settlers to the country communities, the towns and the cities continues to widen the sphere of action both as to urban and agricultural potentialities.

The Alberni District, with the promising and energetic little cities of Port Alberni and Alberni, is progressing with sure strides, and the incoming of the Canadian Northern Railway into the neighborhood is the latest move which is adding impetus to the already live condition of affairs. Not the least important feature of this district's future is the coming opening of Strathcona Park and its world-heralded beauties. That thousands of visitors will come through in this way to reach the park is assured, and that numbers of them will fall in love with the district and remain there is also an undisputed fact.

Nanaimo is fast coming to the front because of its geographical position, fine harbor, and vast natural resources. It has always been a great coal-mining centre, and yet this is in reality only one of its commercial factors. The lumbering and fishing industries, and more lately, manufacturing, promise to rival the mining interests in time to come, for year by year the trend of capital to Nanaimo and the signs of the financial zodiac point to very large industrial developments at this point. Nanaimo is now and has for some years past been agitating for a tramway system. That this will be installed does not admit of a doubt, and it will go far towards metropolitanizing the city. Its harbor is a splendid one, and its shipping trade considerable. A few years hence and this centrally located and thriving place will have gained greatly in population and commercial importance.

Cumberland and Ladysmith are both up-to-date, virile and go-ahead little cities, remarkable for their civic spirit and systems of municipal government. Each has rivalled the other in the matter of enthusiasm for the betterment of existing conditions, and the result has been of the greatest possible benefit to the citizens. Both are in the heart of the coal measures of their districts, and Ladysmith has a fine harbor, thus affording rail as well as sail transportation for its mining output, her situation on the main line of the E. & N. Railway giving through connection with all island points on this line. Cumberland connects by rail to Union Bay, and is moving energetically for further rail service by way of the Canadian Northern Railway. Their future is a bright one, and founded on solid advantages.

Duncan and Sidney are centres for agricultural districts, Duncan being especially favored as the trading metropolis of the famous Cowichan Valley. This recently incorporated little city has one of the finest general stores in Canada, a flourishing Creamery and Egg Association, and its reputation for the finest of butter and eggs is so firmly fixed that the highest prices are realized for its product. Sidney, at the terminus of the Victoria and Sidney Railway, may yet become an important terminal manufacturing point as well as an agricultural centre. All of these cities have their boards of trade, which are busy in forwarding the interests of their communities in every possible manner.