

viz., about 700 miles, is independent of and in addition to, the saving of direct distance by the Canadian route given above.

These very important facts of position in relation to distances are very much heightened by the further fact of the possession of important stores of Coal on the Canadian Pacific Coast, and the plains east of the Rocky Mountains. This is put in a striking manner by Sir Charles Dilke, one of the late Ministers of the Crown in England, in his book entitled "Greater Britain." Sir Charles says:—

"The position of the various stores of coal in the Pacific is of extreme importance as an index to the future distribution of power in that portion of the world; but it is not enough to know where coal is to be found, without looking also to the quantity, quality, cheapness of labour and facility of transport. In China and in Borneo there are extensive coal fields, but they lie 'the wrong way' for trade; on the other hand, the California and Monto Diablo, San Diego, and Monterey coal lies well, but is of bad quality. Tasmania has good coal, but in no great quantity, and the beds nearest the coast are formed of inferior anthracite. The three countries of the Pacific which must for a time at least rise to manufacturing greatness, are Japan, Vancouver Island and New South Wales; but which of these will become wealthiest and most powerful depends mainly on the amount of coal which they respectively possess, so situated as to be cheaply raised. The dearthness of labour under which Vancouver suffers will be removed by the opening of the Pacific Railroad; but for the present New South Wales has the cheapest labour, and upon her shores at Newcastle are abundant stores of coal of good quality for manufacturing purposes, although for sea use it burns 'dirtily' and too fast. * * * The future of the Pacific shore is inevitably brilliant, but it is not New Zealand, the centre of the water hemisphere, which will occupy the position that England has taken on the Atlantic, but some country such as Japan or Vancouver, jutting out into the ocean from Asia or from America, as England juts out from Europe."

The preponderance of power which, according to Sir Charles, is to make the great nation of the future of the Pacific coast, seems to be settled by the fact of the coal deposits of British Columbia, of which more particular accounts will be given in another chapter. But it may be well to state in this relation, that according to the evidence of Dr. G. M. Dawson, before a committee of the Canadian Parliament, during its last session, tests made by officers specially employed by the Government of the United States to ascertain what coal on the western coast gave the best results for steam purposes, showed, that to produce a given quantity of steam, 1,800 lbs. Nanaimo or Wellington, (British Columbia) coal were equal to 2,400 of Seattle (Washington Territory, U.S.) coal, to 2,600 of Coos Bay (Oregon, U.S.) and the same of Monte Diablo (California) coal. This superiority in quality being established on the unbiassed authority of a test made for the U.S. Government, settles the question of preponderance mentioned by the English writer above quoted.

The simple fact of power, however, from the presence of the mineral deposits for making steam, is not the only consideration. The question of distance must also be considered, as well as the trade winds, the great advantage of favourable grades and curves, the short line passing through a rich and well watered agricultural country, instead of the hopeless deserts; and these conditions, moreover, are to be further considered in connection with the system of St. Lawrence navigation on the eastern face of the continent. Such considerations make it apparent that there are here conjunctions of commercial forces which are unique in the world; and which must, in the near future, exercise marked influence upon, if they do not command, the trade between the countries bordering on the Atlantic and those on the Pacific Ocean. These are facts which greatly affect the future commerce of the globe.

There is still another fact to be considered in relation to the position of British Columbia, namely, the great English speaking communities so rapidly growing to wealth and power in Australasia. Already a large trade has been built up between America and those enterprising provinces, in which Canada has begun to share, as shown in the recent able reports of Sir R. W. Cameron, the Canadian Commissioner to the two last Australian International Exhibitions. The easiest and most rapid route to reach the Australian Colonies from any part of this continent, has been *via* San Francisco and the Pacific Ocean. But for Canadians, the facilities are greatly increased by the opening of the Canadian Trans-Continental Railway. The petroleum from the immense deposits east of the Rocky Mountains in the Canadian North-West,