

The Commercial

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE FINANCIAL, MERCANTILE AND MANUFACTURING INTERESTS OF THE CANADIAN NORTH-WEST.

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INTRODUCTORY.

THE following pages deal with a portion of British Columbia which heretofore has never had comprehensive treatment in the form attempted in this volume. A good deal has been written in a desultory and general way about the "resources" and "possibilities" of British Columbia as a whole, and about the cities of the Coast. Numerous "write ups" have appeared at so much a column, which, however, have aimed largely to appeal to personal vanity, and depended for success upon advertising patronage. As business ventures these publications no doubt were profitable to the publishers, but as efforts to enlighten the outside public on the natural wealth of the country, pictures of business blocks, biographical notices and vague generalities, are not calculated to accomplish the objects for which the public support such undertakings. The cities and their leading citizens have had as much attention paid to them as is desirable. They have been, if anything, too extensively advertised.

In the present volume the object has been to present a fair, readable exposition of the resources of a section of the Province heretofore largely neglected and on lines uniform with the policy of a commercial paper such as THE COMMERCIAL is, the special field of which has been to deal with the resources entering into the industrial and business life of the country. While not leaving out of sight entirely personal factors and individual interests, an honest effort has been made to deal practically and somewhat in detail with the subjects treated of in a way that will be useful to those

endeavoring to make up their minds about this country, or are seeking reliable information regarding it.

It is impossible, without assuming an expense altogether unjustifiable in view of the possible return, to deal with the whole of the Province in this way at once; so it was decided to confine the description to Vancouver Island, the coast as far north as Alaska, including adjacent islands; and the Northern Interior. Last year the special number of THE COMMERCIAL, on the Kootenay county, was received with so much satisfaction by the general public and contributed so largely to the knowledge concerning that country that a request was made for a special number dealing similarly with the districts just referred to, and its publication has been undertaken with the sincere hope that the effort, which has been made at the considerable expense of both time and money, will not be less useful or highly appreciated.

The indications are that enterprises of great moment will be shortly set on foot whereby this vast region will be ultimately brought into touch with the world's commerce, whereby the fisheries will be developed, minerals and construction materials brought into requisition, electric communication extended up and down the coast, the extensive interior plateaux colonized and tapped by railways, and cities, towns and villages not now dreamed of will spring into life.

There are few people who thoroughly appreciate the aggregate wealth of this now almost wholly unorganized territory. It is with justifiable pride that the people of this Province point to the richness of the Fraser Valley, Old Cariboo, the two Kootenays, and the districts included in Yale, but there is a country in British Columbia greater in area than all these put together, out of which, from coal, timber and fish, arise the principal revenues of the Province at present, and for mineral and agricultural possibilities is destined to rank with the great producing areas of this continent.