

The number of islands and rocks make the Inland Passage difficult of navigation. I met a man trading on the Skeena river who had turned up a wrong inlet or passage near Banks Island, and sailed northwards for three days, till he reached the head of this arm of the sea, before discovering his error, and was obliged to sail back some hundreds of miles. I asked him whether the Indians were dying off. He answered, "Yes, nicely."

Then again the tides are most complicated. In some inlets there is but one tide a day for some months in the year, sometimes no tide, and sometimes three. In other inlets the tides seem to follow no rule at all; the whirls and rips are most dangerous in certain places to small boats, while the velocity reaches 12 knots an hour in narrow parts. Is it any wonder that the Canadians have given up any attempt at a tide-table in despair?

Finally, to close these introductory remarks, I will endeavour to give an idea of the scenery and surroundings passed through as I travelled north by one of the periodical steamers which keep up the increasing communications between the new-world ports and newly-discovered harbours in Puget Sound and on Vancouver Island (such as Tacoma and Victoria) on the one hand, and the new settlements along the coast, the old Russian fortress of Sitka, and other points as far north as Chiloat on the other hand.

The distance from San Francisco and return is about four thousand miles, and the time occupied varies from twenty to thirty days, and from Puget Sound from twelve to twenty-two days.

Commencing at the south part of the Inland Passage, the first inlet is Puget Sound, nearly two hundred miles long, and 1600 miles in circumference, with numerous islands all thickly wooded.

On a cloudless day snow-mountains can be seen glittering in every direction—some on Vancouver Island, some on the mainland to the eastward, others in the Olympic Range.

In April I left Victoria for my fourth journey up the coast. A line of railway connects Victoria with the coalfields. Thence in the steamer I proceeded westward between Vancouver Island and the mainland, through the wide channel named Straits of Georgia. On the side towards the mainland are two deep inlets—Bute Inlet, which I traversed by canoe with Indians in 1887, which is about thirty miles long, and with mountains over eight thousand feet high, rising sheer from the water, and Jervis Inlet. These are not seen from the straits. It is necessary to penetrate the narrow passages between the groups of islands before they become visible. All the rocks I examined in Bute Inlet were granite. On Vancouver Island at this point the mountains towards the centre are heavily timbered, generally obscured by cloud, and over five thousand feet in altitude. Farther to the west there are peaks on the island which rise to over seven thousand feet.

The way now lies through Discovery Passage, passing Cape Mudge