

VANCOUVER ISLAND.

Vancouver is the largest island on the west coast of America, being about three hundred miles long, and with an average breadth of about fifty miles, and contains an estimated area of from 12,000 to 20,000 square miles. The coast line, more particularly on the west side, is broken by numerous inlets of the sea, some of which run up to the interior of the island for many miles, between precipitous cliffs, backed by high and rugged mountains, which are clothed in fir, hemlock and cedar. At some points are sheltered bays which receive small streams, watering an open gladed country, having a growth of wild flowers and grasses—the white clover, sweet grass, cowslip, wild timothy and a profusion of berries. The two ends of Vancouver island are, comparatively speaking, flat, but there are mountains in the interior ranging from 6,000 to 8,000 feet on the highest ridges. The interior of the island, still unsettled at any distance from the sea coast, is largely interspersed with lakes and small streams. The surface is beautifully diversified by mountains, hills and open prairies, and on the east coast the soil is so good that great encouragement is offered to agricultural settlement.

In other parts the soil is light and of little depth, but it is heavily wooded. In the inland lakes, and in the indentations of the coast, there is a plentiful supply of fish, and a fair variety of game on shore.

The principal harbour is that at Esquimalt, which has long been the rendezvous of the English squadron in the North Pacific. It is situated at the south end of the island, on the eastern side, and can be approached in foggy weather by means of soundings, which are marked on the admiralty charts, for a considerable distance seaward, an advantage possessed by very few anchorages, and with the exception of Burrard Inlet, at the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, by no other large harbour on that coast. The scenery of Vancouver island is exceedingly varied and picturesque.

VICTORIA.

Victoria (pop. 20,000) is the capital of British Columbia and the chief city of Vancouver Island. It was formerly a stockaded post of the Hudsons Bay Company and was then called Fort Victoria. It is delightfully situated on a small arm of the sea, commanding a superb view of the Straits of Georgia, the mountains of the mainland, and snow-capped Mount Baker in the distance. The city's age may date from 1858, when the discovery of gold on the mainland brought a rush of miners from the south. It is now a wealthy, well-built, and very English city, with business and shipping interests of great importance. Victoria is pre-eminently a place to delight tourists, and has ample accommodation for a large floating population, having several comfortable hotels, one or two of which are noted for the excellence of their tables. Various public buildings are also worthy of more than passing notice. Most of the manufacturing interests of the province are centered at Victoria. It has the largest iron works on the Pacific Coast outside of San Francisco, and several smaller foundries and machine shops, also many factories. The city is amply provided with educational facilities, both public and private. The public schools are supported by the Government, and controlled by a school board elected by popular suffrage. Besides these there are the ladies' college, under the auspices of the Anglican Church and an academic institution, as well as a primary