

The Province —OF— British Columbia.

BRITISH COLUMBIA, which entered the Canadian Confederation in 1871, is the most westerly of the Canadian Provinces. It has a coast line on the Pacific Ocean of about 600 miles, that is, in a straight line. If its almost innumerable indentations and bays were measured, the coast line would extend to several thousands of miles.

The area of the Province, according to the census measurement, is 341,305 square miles. Its position on the American continent is one of great commercial importance, and its resources are in keeping with its position. If it were to be described from the characteristics of its climate, its mineral wealth, and its natural commercial relations, it might be said to be the Great Britain and California combined of the Dominion of Canada.

The Province is divided into two parts, the Islands, of which Vancouver is the principal, and the Mainland. Vancouver is about 300 miles long, with an average breadth of about 60 miles, containing an area of about 20,000 square miles.

British Columbia has numerous harbours and rivers, some of which are of importance, and all are remarkable for their bountiful, in fact, wonderful supplies of fish. The scenery which it possesses is magnificently beautiful.

The climate on the coast is more equable and much milder in winter than in any other part of Canada; but as the mountain are ascended, greater cold prevails, with more snow, and the characteristics of greater dryness of atmosphere which mark the climate of the interior of the continent are found.

There is very little frost or snow. An abstract of one year gives 201 fine days, 96 overcast, 50 rainy, and 17 on which snow fell. Gooseberry buds opened the middle of February; early plants came in leaf the 2nd of March, and native hemp 3 inches high; catkins in full bloom on March 7th; buttercups in flower March 29th; strawberries in bloom April 13th; apple trees in bloom May

6th; beans in blossom May 12th; strawberries ripe May 25th; raspberries ripe July 9th.

The climate of Victoria and its suitability for invalids is described by a traveller in the following words:—"Victoria has a climate unequalled anywhere, which is specially recommended to health seeking invalids. The atmosphere is charged with ozone peculiar to Victoria only. It originates in the snow cooled breezes in the Olympian range (about 60 miles south-west of the city), mixes with the salt air of the Pacific, giving it peculiar health restoring and life prolonging qualities, which are fast making Victoria the sanitarium of the Pacific Coast."

Every part of British Columbia is amply and well provided with excellent wood for construction and for other purposes. The coast region has the pre-eminence at present, owing to the greater facility of export. The gigantic size of forest trees is due, according to Dr. Dawson, to the mildness and humidity of the climate.

The fisheries of British Columbia are as yet almost untouched industrially, except the salmon fishery, which has rapidly become an important industry. Its chief seat at present is on the Lower Fraser, in the rich agricultural districts of New Westminster, through which the railway passes. Salmon fishing is carried on, also, on the rivers Skeena and Nass, and at various places on the coasts. Nearly all the salmon are canned and exported to England; a few are salted and smoked.

Gold is known to be almost universally distributed in the Province of British Columbia. There is scarcely a stream of any size in any part of the Province that one cannot wash a few "colours," as they say, out of, at the very least, and in 105 localities, which I catalogued in 1877, actual mining had been carried on for gold. The main auriferous belt of British Columbia runs from south-east to