

shepherd, and carried off some sheep. Soon afterwards a British gunboat visited the Indian village and the murderers were hanged. Those pioneer flockmasters would smile at our present-day hindrances to sheep-raising.

The first importation of pure-bred sheep by private individuals were of the Leicester breed in the early seventies, followed by Southdowns and Shropshires from Ontario. The industry spread to the islands in the Gulf of Georgia, and when the Island of San Juan was finally ceded to the United States a good deal of smuggling was carried on. The practice was to secretly land American lambs on the Canadian islands, whence they were shipped to Victoria as the produce of Canadian ewes. The small number of ewes on the Canadian islands thus obtained a surprising reputation for prolificacy.

In the sixties and seventies sheep-ranching was a flourishing industry in the Interior of the Province, notably in Cariboo and Nicola. Large bands of as many as 10,000 were ranged by experienced herders from Australia and California. No winter feeding was done in those days, except that in some cases the rams were winter-fed. Instead of providing hay the lower benches were kept ungrazed for winter feeding where there was least snow. In the growing season the bands were driven to higher elevations as the vegetation started to grow. In this way the winter, summer, and fall ranges were always widely separated and long distances were covered in a year's grazing. In those days sheepmen could pick and choose their ranges according to the season. Now, owing to closer settlement, they cannot.

The Cariboo goldfields provided a fine market while it lasted, but when that dwindled the sheep had to be marketed at the Coast. The cost of transport to Victoria and the low prices (\$3 to \$4 each, and 5 to 10 cents a pound for wool) obtained in competition with American sheep discouraged the Interior sheep-raisers. Added to this was the marked hostility of the cattlemen, who claimed that the sheep ruined the grazing, and who were not above resorting to personal violence. Owing to these conditions the industry languished. In the Coast districts the keeping of small flocks was never very extensive, and these dwindled with the advent of low prices after the gold-rush.

The days of the large-range flocks of many thousand head are gone by owing to the range being mostly taken up and the impossibility of obtaining adequate winter, summer, and fall range in one tract. Several fairly large flocks up to as many as 2,000 head are still run in the Interior, and extensive grazing tracts still unoccupied give room for more. It may be said, however, that owing to closer settlement the range-sheep industry is not capable of as great expansion as some people suppose.

It is to the establishment and increasing of the smaller flocks that we must look for the largest increase in numbers of sheep in the Province. On the rich lowlands of the Lower Fraser Valley now devoted to dairying there are many fine pure-bred and grade flocks, but there is no good reason why sheep should not be kept on our Coast dairy-farms far more extensively than at present. Sheep are just as necessary and profitable on high-priced land as on our rough, cheap lands.

In the Interior of the Province (apart from the menace of coyotes, which do much damage) the climate and general conditions are nearly everywhere ideal for sheep. On the ranches and smaller mixed farms of the Interior, and even in the fruit-growing sections, sheep are proving very profitable in small flocks, well managed. Mutton and wool are bound to be high for years, due to the crowding-out of American range flocks. A small flock of sheep is a good investment at this time.

DISTRICTS FOR SHEEP-RAISING.

To the new or intending settler who asks what is the best district for engaging extensively in sheep-raising, we would say that, while sheep thrive in all our districts under proper management, some parts offer larger openings than others. Flocks are particularly healthy throughout the Province, no extensive disease being present although it is true that gaitre seems to affect some districts to some extent,