

Are You Going to the Coast?

So great has been the interest taken in the illustrated article on the Chilliwack Valley, which appeared in one of our January issues, that we have obtained from Mr. Chas. E. Hope, of Vancouver, B. C., some valuable information, which we shall be pleased to give from time to time, in the hope that it may prove useful to prospective settlers on the Pacific Coast. Mr. Hope is one well fitted to speak upon the subject, having had a long and successful practical experience in clearing, draining and cultivating land in British Columbia. He says:

"The very large number of enquiries received since the publication of the illustrated article in your paper (as many as 40 and 50 letters a day having been received at the offices of the Settlers' Association here) shows a widespread interest in the fertile lands of the Pacific Coast province, and, incidentally, the wide range of readers possessed by the 'Farmer's Advocate.' This interest is scarcely to be wondered at, considering the extraordinarily mild climate of the more fertile parts of this province. This season we have had practically no winter, the cold weather being confined to three or four slightly frosty nights, and a few light snowfalls, which disappeared within a few days.

"A great many enquiries, evidently prompted by the expected building of the G. T. P. R. through the northern part of the province, are being received regarding lands in the vicinity of Fort Simpson and the Yellowhead pass. As yet, nothing is known definitely regarding the route this railway will take. However, the climate around Fort Simpson is mild, not unlike that of the Lower Fraser Valley, but slightly colder in winter. Across the Coast Range, toward the Yellowhead and other passes, the climate is similar to that of the Northwest Territories.

"As regards free homesteading, British Columbia is no country for the homesteader, as there are few situations which can be recommended for his purpose. When the new railway is built, it will, no doubt, open up fresh tracts for such grants, but these, being several

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hundred miles farther north and at a much higher altitude, can never be as desirable as the lands in the south. The equivalent, here, of homesteading on the prairies, is the buying of twenty-acre blocks of timbered land; in the more settled parts, particularly in the Lower Fraser Valley, these can be got at about \$10 per acre, or possibly at a little more in the better situated parts, on very easy terms, payments being spread over four or five years; and although a man could not make a living off them till they are cleared, outside work is plentiful and wages good. When the land is cleared, a very comfortable living can be made even at dairying and mixed farming, or an even better one at small fruits and poultry. This area may seem absurdly small to anyone who has been used to the large prairie farms; but it must be remembered that there is no need to summer-fallow any of the land here. Ten milk cows, besides a brood sow and some poultry, can be kept very nicely on twenty acres, or even less, if the land is good and it is well farmed. The majority of the farmers on

the Lower Fraser Valley have no more than this in actual cultivation. In making comparisons with conditions in the N.-W. T. and Manitoba, several things should be kept in mind. In the first place, cows can be milked all the year round, as they are rarely dried up for longer than two months before calving. Any common cow with ordinary care will produce \$50 in butter during the year, and a good one from \$70 to \$100. Young pigs about six months old will bring about 6 cents per lb. live weight on the farm, and these young pigs, remember, have never had anything but clover pasture and a little skim milk. Eggs fetch from 20 cents to 40 cents per dozen (depending on time of year), at the nearest store; and chickens from \$3.00 to \$7.50 per dozen according to size; so it will be readily seen that it is no exaggeration to say that a twenty-acre farm will give a good living, and many luxuries, such as fresh fruit, etc., which cannot be got on a prairie farm of ten times the size. I can speak from a personal experience on this subject extending over eighteen years, during which

time I have seen some failures, but none where the work has been gone about in the right way. All the work on the farm can be done by the owner himself; he gets the bulk of his returns monthly; he is working steadily the year round, not rushed to death for one part of the year and hardly anything to do another part. The country is a pleasant one to live in, and living is cheap; the groceries you buy cost no more than they do in Manitoba; your winter clothing costs less; fuel is plentiful and costs practically nothing but the labor of getting it; and every man can have either a creek of water or a good well on his own farm.

CHAS. E. HOPE.
The Settlers' Association, Vancouver, B. C.

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