

CHIEF TOWNS.

The chief centres of this district are Vancouver and New Westminster.

VANCOUVER.—On a peninsula having Burrard Inlet on the east, one of the finest harbours in the world, and English Bay on the west, is the marvellous young city of Vancouver. It is surrounded by a country of rare beauty, and the climate is milder and less varying than that of Devonshire, and more pleasant than that of Delaware. Backed in the far distance by the Olympian range, sheltered on the north by the mountains of the coast, and sheltered from the ocean by the highlands of Vancouver Island, it is protected on every side, while enjoying the sea breeze from the Straits of Georgia, whose tranquil waters bound the city on two sides. The inlet affords unlimited space for sea-going ships, the land falls gradually to the sea, rendering drainage easy, and the situation permits of indefinite expansion of the city in two directions. It has a splendid and inexhaustible water supply, brought across the inlet from a river in a ravine of one of the neighbouring heights. The Canadian Pacific Railway was completed to Vancouver in May, 1887, when the first through train arrived in that city from Montreal, Port Moody having been the western terminus from July of the preceding year. In 1887, also, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company put a line of steamships on the route between Vancouver and Japan and China, and in 1893 an excellent service was established between Vancouver and Victoria and Australia. These three important projects are giving an impetus to the growth of the city, by placing its advantages entirely beyond the realm of speculation, and the advancement made is truly marvellous.

In addition to the great transportation lines of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the steamship lines to Japan and China, the Hawaiian and Fijian Islands, New Zealand and Australia, the city has connection with all important points along the Pacific coast and with the interior. The boats employed in the mail service between Vancouver and Japan and China are three magnificent steel twin-screw steamships, specially designed for that trade—the Empress of India, the Empress of Japan and the Empress of China—which, avoiding the "horse latitudes," take the shortest and most pleasant route across the Pacific, and make the trip in from five to ten days quicker time than any other lines. The Canadian-Australian Line gives a service to Australia via Honolulu, H.I., Suva, Fiji, and Wellington, New Zealand, every four weeks. There are regular and frequent sailings to Alaskan points, by which the Klondike gold fields are reached, a choice of routes being offered by Dyea, Skagway, the Stikine, and by St. Michaels, in Behring Sea, and up the Yukon. Steamers ply between Vancouver and Victoria and Nanaimo daily, and connection is also made at Victoria for all Alaskan and Puget Sound ports and to Portland and San Francisco. The Seattle & International Railway gives close railway connection, via Mission Junction, 43 miles east of Vancouver, with the different cities and towns of the Pacific coast.

A great conflagration in June, 1886, wiped the young wooden city out of existence, leaving but one solitary building, but before the embers died materials for rebuilding were on their way, and where small wooden structures were before, there arose grand edifices of stone, brick and iron. Under the influence of the large transportation interests, which were established there the next year, the building of the city progressed rapidly, and now it is not only a great trade and