

BUSH LANDS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

IN the Lower Fraser Valley and Coast Districts of British Columbia there is practically no naturally clear, open land except lands which flood every year, which are usually covered with a rank growth of grass (either broad leaved swamp grass, blue-joint or red-top), or consist of swamps more or less peaty in character, requiring ditching and under-draining, and often also some light clearing. Land which does not flood and is not swampy is invariably timbered, the timber being scattered first growth fir and cedar, 3 to 4 feet in diameter, groves of second growth fir, 12 inches to 24 inches in diameter, mixed all through with alder, maple, cherry, birch and crab-apple, with patches of vine maple, willow and hazel, berry bushes, rose bushes and hardhack (in the wet places), with occasional fir and cedar logs scattered through the whole, at first sight presenting a pretty hard looking tangle. This represents in a general way the average character of the timbered land of the Lower Fraser Valley and Coast Districts, none of which requires irrigation.

In the interior districts are large areas of open range land covered with bunch and other similar nutritious grasses and almost invariably requiring irrigation. There are also large areas timbered, almost entirely with the coniferous woods, chiefly fir and pine, with no underbrush, the trees being fairly large, from 2 to 4 feet in diameter. Some of this land requires irrigation, although there are portions of it which will produce grain and other crops with the natural moisture. There are also in most of the interior districts patches of bottom land timbered with small willow, cottonwood, etc., etc., and with very few large trees, which do not require irrigation.

The various clearing operations described herein will apply to any of the timbered districts of the Province, although they are written more particularly with reference to the Coast and Lower Fraser Valley Districts and to those parts of the Province lying to the west of the Cascade Mountains, as these districts are the ones wherein the clearing problem assumes most prominence.

It should, however, be distinctly understood that the operations described are not intended to apply to timbered lands which would come under the head of timber limits, as the timber on such lands could not be cleared off for farming at any price which would make it commercially profitable, even if the character of the land when cleared was suitable for farming, which, often, it is not.

The character of the soil of the average timbered uplands of the Lower Fraser Valley and Coast Districts is a good clay loam, free from gravel or stones except perhaps in odd spots, no rock, more or less rolling as to surface, with wet bottoms and occasional creeks running through. There is, however, a great variety of soil in this district, running all the way from a heavy alluvial clay to a light sandy or gravelly loam. The soil in the interior valleys varies also very greatly in different districts, and soil suitable for almost any kind of crop desired can be obtained.