

to become *bona fide* occupiers, with liberal terms of lease or purchase. Notably, the system introduced by Mr. Robins, of the division of large areas, into five acre lots, which are let on lease with right of purchase, has been taken advantage largely of—by the workmen principally. The company have cleared, out of the forest, and bushy swamp or bottom lands about 500 acres in several tracts, and have followed up the clearance by thorough tile drainage and culture for production of grain, roots and hay, meadows having been also sown in grass. The "Farm," while productive of crops that ought to yield, if not instantly in due course, a fair return, for the considerable necessary outlay.

The preliminary operations of clearing the thousands of sturdy giants of the woods, root and branch, with the smaller timber, bush, tangled undergrowth, ferns and all out of sight and mind, were of the greatest use as an object lesson, and so with the drainage, classification and mixture of dressing of soils, comprising every kind almost—clay, peat, loam, gravelly loam, light sandy soil, and black vegetable soil. Under the direction of Mr. Robins dressings of the peaty soil from swampy low lands have been applied to the gravelly soil of which the up lands mostly consist with excellent effect, in fact, it acts like manure. On the other hand, a top dressing of gravelly soil, carted from the hill side, and spread over the peaty land, has an equally beneficial result. The explanation of this is, that mixture of the inert peat soil, with the sand or gravel, makes an open soil, that allows access to the air, and so converts the dead chemical matter into plant food. In short, whilst the peat alone, and the gravel alone, will grow almost nothing, the two mixed together, produce abundant crops. The heaviest crop of timothy hay produced in the district was grown on soil that was little better than road metal, but had been top dressed with peat from a neighbouring swamp. The company has laid about sixty miles of drain tiles, from three inch to twelve inch diameter and has excavated several miles of open ditches.

In the matter of roads, both as to excellence of construction and finish—in most instances well crowned and coated with a thick layer of gravel, the company are accorded much praise by the occupiers of the five acre lots and also by the public at large—these efficient roads, on the whole, are quite twenty miles in length, and include substantial bridges over rivers and streams.

The farm and its divisions, the several paddocks of grass and hay lands, and other portions of the company's property, are well fenced with board fences, extending over fifteen miles in length. Gates for traffic, wickets for pedestrians and paths are provided, admitting of passage through all parts of the estate, besides lovers' walks and trails through the woodlands held in reserve around the town. The clearing and cultivating have not driven the chivalry and romance from Nanaimo. The clearing of land for the plough that was only covered by wild grasses, willow and small brush, has cost from \$50 per acre, and where timber was large and growing thickly as much as \$400 an acre.

Experience, so far, shows that in the heavy timbered land, such as is found at the back of Nanaimo, an inexpensive powder, if it could be produced (and an association of farmers could manufacture a suit-

able powder themselves) would reduce the cost of clearing by nearly one half.

About 500 acres of forest land has also been cleared by holders of five acre lots, and the same is built upon substantially—in many cases ornately—and under cultivation.

The story of the coal industry of Vancouver Island is not half told and our available space is exhausted.

The wonderful Wellington colliery, the property of Messrs. Dunsmuir and Sons, with its several pits, where a first-class article known as Wellington coal is mined, conveyed to Departure Bay, by locomotives and waggons, along a line of narrow gauge railway of five miles, and there shipped at their extensive wharves, alone would form a subject of interesting and edifying description, but this subject, as well as an account of the mines of the Union Colliery Company, at Union, in Comox district, which with their renowned coke ovens, are also of first importance and where operations are carried on in a large way, and also of those valuable enterprises of the West Wellington Coal Company, the Wellington Extension mine and the Alexandra mine, (of the E. & N. Railway Company) as well as the undertakings of the Oyster Harbour Coal Company and of the Cambrian Coal Company, must perforce of circumstances, at present, to our regret, remain in abeyance, until the next favourable opportunity, when we trust to do them ample justice, and at the same time afford our readers a view of the great coal industry of our favoured island.

In the meantime we wish them one and all success and prosperity in their efforts to raise the coal production of Vancouver Island to a position that will command the foreign markets of California, Central America, Mexico, Hawaii, Alaska and Japan.

SOUTH KOOTENAY HAPPENINGS.

MINING business in Kootenay was never more active than at present and the mineral exports still continue to be enormous, amounting to over a million and a half for the first six weeks of the year.

It seems fairly certain that the Crow's Nest Pass line will be built through to Nelson as quickly as possible. The reason alleged for this change of plan is that the Dominion Government has announced to



FERRYING THE COLUMBIA RIVER AT TRAIL.

the C.P.R. that there will be no subsidy forthcoming until the whole line is completed. There are two par-