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A Week's Cruise Up the West Coast of Vancouver Island

As we approach the "dog-days" (in July and August) each year all sensible folk who can possibly arrange to do so, plan to have an off-time, when life's responsibilities are left behind, and the cares and concerns that ordinarily absorb attention are, as far as possible, forgotten. At such times happy are they who, in these days of excessive city noises, can find rest at sea, whether or not it be a "Pacific" one, and whose outlook on boarding a ship has nothing unsettling or

A MOTLEY CROWD—WITH ONE CHIEF END

It is curious to note the motley crowd that, in many cases all previously unknown to each other, gathers on board a Canadian West Coast cruising steamer at the holiday season; and even more curious to observe how, as the voyage is prolonged, the general acquaintance tends to ripen into a more intimate one as groups are formed.

The chief end of all holiday-makers is to think of anything and everything but the dominant duties or assigned tasks in the work-a-day world lot of each; and while that may naturally lead to avocations not only unusual, but akin to children's play, kindred interests and affinity of outlook may be revealed in the form of fun to which place is given.

Even in trips as yet little beyond the experimental stage on these western Pacific coasts, a fair variety of humans may be found on the more or less isolated community centre or travelling island, as the steamer in a real sense becomes. Probably each of the so-called "learned-professions" will be found represented. These units, like other members of the community, are out to forget their work. The shopman and the manufacturer may find they have similar recreational interests in books or music; the nurse and the social worker more in common than tired nerves; the teacher may to observers reveal something of that aggressive rule or responsible oversight inseparable from his or her professional work; and the poet and the journalist, however far away they may wish to be from the serious side of writing, may find it difficult in casual conversations to avoid excursions into the realms of literature and life that for ever appeal to them and prompt or tempt exchange of views and recollections. In like manner an editor who sought to make the trip a rest, and went without thought of writing about it, may afterwards find difficulty only in his selection from the varied impressions of the experience that crowd upon him.

A TONIC OF TEN DAYS AT SEA FOR EVERY CITIZEN.

Whatever the social evolution of the future may hold for us, the hope may be expressed that the time will come when the conditions of life affecting workers in all ranks will ensure an option being given to everyone to have not less than

a week, and all the better if it can be extended to ten days or more, each summer, if not entirely at sea, at least away from the mainland and among the islands of such a land as this in-scenery-unexcelled one of British Columbia. The western Canadian born in Britain may be accused of conceit or excused (according to the reader's knowledge or disposition) if he ventures to suggest that topographical arrangements in much of British Columbia's mainland and also in our extensive but still too-little-known "Vancouver Island," (itself nearly as large as one of the Homelands), seem to have been formed on a pattern akin to that of some portions of North Britain, but material being more abundant—on a much larger or grander scale.

But whatever be the comparisons that travellers may make, all who have the privilege of visiting in the summer season the hundreds of miles of island waterways and majestic wooded mountain lands that comprise so much of the British Pacific Coast, will agree that he would be a prejudiced person or a pitiable soul who could pass these ways even once without ever afterwards testifying freely to the attractions of the trip.

JUST THE BEGINNING—BIG DEVELOPMENTS AHEAD

Independent references to the trip to Skagway have appeared in other years in this Magazine. With regard to the cruise up the west coast of Vancouver Island, it is a reasonable assumption that ere long there will be a steamer or steamers devoted mainly, if not entirely, to passenger traffic, circling Vancouver Island, in trips extending from seven to ten days. Meantime the C. P. R. have one steamer in commission which combines passenger service with the handling of freight and makes the best of the route in six to eight days. The fact that freight is carried, and is liable to be loaded or unloaded at all hours of the day and night at various ports of call, must, under present conditions, be recognised as something of a qualification to the attractions of the outing; but, on the other hand, the company are no doubt keeping that in mind in the moderate fare charged.

Without wishing to be in any way a carping critic, one or two suggestions would likely occur to every observant traveller who makes the trip, especially for mental rest or nerve recreation. We understand that certain additions to the steamer fittings are under consideration by the responsible officials, including the provision of an awning and a bath room; the supply of deck chairs might, with advantage be still further enlarged, and certain other details of service might be improved.

EVEN PRESENT SERVICE MORE THAN COMMENDABLE

But when all points of criticism are noted, it would, even now be in place for the independent critic to supplement the hope expressed that all earnest workers should have an option of such a rest period, with the further hope that the "social evolution" that brings about such a consummation