

Before the advent of the Canadian Pacific Railway there were in the Province three cities, viz., Victoria, Nanaimo and New Westminster, the two first situated on Vancouver Island and the latter on the Fraser River, seventeen miles from the Straits of Georgia; the aggregate population of these cities in 1880 was 9,070. Since then by reason of the greater facilities for transportation afforded by steamships and railway companies with increased mileage and improvement of highways, the industries connected with the natural resources of the country have prospered and extended their operations. The cities, including Vancouver, the Pacific terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and Prince Rupert, the western terminus of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, have increased in number to twenty-five, with a total urban population of 203,689 and a rural population tributary thereto, including those living both in organized and unorganized districts, of 188,796, making the total population of the Province, according to the public census of 1911, 392,485.

The principal centres of population and of commercial and mining industries are at present along the Canadian Pacific Railway, which enters the Province by way of the Kicking Horse Pass, and between that railway and the international boundary line, a zone which, in consequence of the construction of railways and of its close connection with the United States, has attracted up to this time the greatest degree of attention.

Those portions of the Province lying north of the Canadian Pacific Railway, known as the Lillooet, Cariboo and Peace River Districts, rich in agricultural and mineral possibilities, have suffered for want of reasonable transportation facilities other than those offered by highways, no matter how good these may be. Roads are necessary as tributaries to railways for comparatively short distances, but to depend upon them for conveying freight or transporting ore long distances does not encourage economic development.

The remedies for this are now being applied. The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway, two trans-continental lines, enter the Province by way of the Yellowhead Pass. The former, proceeding west from Yellowhead Pass, terminates at Prince Rupert on the coast, about 700 miles north of Vancouver, while the latter turning south, about 40 miles west of the pass, to the North Thompson River, thence follows that stream, and the main Thompson and Fraser Rivers to Vancouver. The Pacific Great Eastern Railway, in course of construction from Vancouver to Prince George, a distance of 479½ miles, connects at the latter place with the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. It is the intention to extend it north and east into the Peace River country, as far as the east boundary of the Province.

The Province of British Columbia comprises the mainland and