

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Port Moody is now showing unmistakable signs of life. A large gang of men, principally track layers, came down from the upper portion of the line and are now at work. This, in conjunction with the great number of strangers now at the terminus, makes things lively. Lots in every direction are changing hands daily, and several very large purchases have recently been made—probably by syndicates. Among others, Cameron's land, lot 190, containing about seventy-two acres, was sold the other day for \$25,000; Jackson has sold the remainder of his land—about thirty acres, I believe. He must have sold at a very reasonable price, for I learn that it changed hands immediately after the sale was effected at a considerable advance. The erection of stores, houses and hotels is now being engaged in vigorously; contracts are offered and several have been accepted. The new road is being pushed forward, and I am glad to hear your citizens have at last awakened to their true interests, and will do something toward its construction.—Correspondence *New Westminster Guardian*.

The following outline of British Columbia and its resources is taken from the evidence given by Dr. George E. Dawson, of the geological survey, before the Canadian committee on immigration and colonization at Ottawa. The lands in the valley of the Fraser are exceedingly fertile, and upon them stock will do well. There are something like 1,000 square miles, 500 of which might be easily utilized. The character of the soil is uniformly good, and the climate is very dry in summer. In winter the cold is considerable, but cattle can remain out all winter, and do well on the natural grasses. In the northern part of the lower country, to the extent of 1,230 square miles, the soil is uniformly good, but it is to a great extent covered with trees. It is a country that will support a large agricultural population. The coast regions are not liable to drouth or occasional summer frosts as the higher regions. The climate is mild. In the aggregate there is a large quantity of arable land. On the island of Vancouver there are 389,000 acres of agricultural land, 300,000 of which are well adapted for cultivation. At present only about 10,000 acres are cultivated. A portion of the back country, which is suitable for agriculture, is densely covered with forests, and owing to the high price of labor and the comparatively small number of people there, the economic advantages of clearing these forests, and bringing the land under cultivation, are not at present very great. On Queen Charlotte island there are 700,000 acres of land, the greater portion of which might be brought under tillage. It is covered with forest trees. I may say that all through British Columbia the soil, where cultivated, is exceedingly fertile, and the produce of the island and the mainland is exceedingly large. The wheat average is from thirty to forty bushels per acre. The Douglas fir or Oregon pine is so far the only fir that has attracted much commercial attention. That tree is found on the whole eastern coast of Vancouver island and on the mainland opposite, and is to be found in magnificent forests. The size of these trees is large. One we felled measured 305 feet in height, and was eight feet four inches in diameter for twenty feet from the base. There are also to be found

there white pine, which is unfortunately rather remote from the sea coast; hemlock, which is larger than our hemlock; oak, which is not found in sufficient quantities to be a commercial wood; yellow cedar, an excellent wood for cabinet-making, close-grained and penetrated with a resinous substance which preserves it from decay; yellow pine, maple, cedar and spruce. Through every part of British Columbia there is an excellent wood supply for all purposes. The Douglas pine is not found on Queen Charlotte island, but its place is taken there by hemlock, spruce, and yellow cypress. The area of the island is a thousand square miles. It is covered with very fine timber, and there are excellent sites for mills there. A peculiar feature in reference to that island is that, owing to the moisture of the climate, it is never visited by forest fires. Fallen trees therefore decay and never burn. In the last century a large trade was carried on there in sea-otter skins. Sea-otters are not caught on the west shore now, but fine seals are. The southern part of the island is mountainous, but the north part, known as Graham island, contains 700,000 acres of flat land, the which, though now covered with forests, will eventually be brought under cultivation. The climate is much like that of Vancouver, but if anything better. In some winters no snow falls there. In others a heavy snow falls, but it lies only a few days, when it disappears. The immediate resources of Queen Charlotte are timber, fish and minerals. In the matter of fish, the deep sea fishery consists largely of halibut. Dog fish are also caught, and a dog fish oil factory has been established there. There are a great many fishing banks around the coast, which it would be well to have surveyed. There is a small oyster there, and this fact would seem to indicate that the large eastern oyster would thrive. Mining is likely to be, in my opinion, the great central industry of British Columbia. In that province there is a district 800 by 400 miles, which yields all the ores of the western states, but it has not, owing to the large forest growth and the later deposits, been properly developed yet. Gold is almost universally distributed over the province. There is scarcely a stream of any size in the province in which one can not wash out a few colors. From 1858 to 1882 the gold produced by British Columbia miners was valued at \$46,685,000, which is a great return considering that the average population of the province was probably not more than 10,000 whites. Since 1864 the yield has declined. This is owing to the fact that up to the present placer-mining has been followed. In British Columbia, however, there is much auriferous quartz, but there is not a single quartz find worked. We are now in the time between the working of the placer mines and the working of the quartz. I anticipate, as a result of the opening up of the country, that the poorer placer mines and the quartz will come into use. There are a number of places where silver ores have been found, and I believe they are of promising description. Argentiferous galena have been sent from near the head of the Peace river. They assay from \$29 to \$50 of silver per ton, but it is too far away to be worked profitably at present. Coal and lignite are widely spread over the whole province. The only seam of anthracite as yet found was on Queen Charlotte island. At Comox and Nanaimo, on Vancouver island, a true bituminous coal of excellent quality is mined. It is

the best on the Pacific coast, and 1,800 pounds of it have produced the same quantity of steam as 2,400 pounds of Seattle coal. Nearly one-fifth of the coal used in San Francisco is Victoria coal. It is quite probable that deposits similar to those on Vancouver island will be found at the mouth of the Fraser. In the mountains at Nicolai, and on the North Thompson, both coal and lignite have been found. A large part of the country in the Peace river basin is of considerable agricultural value. The total area of country is 31,550 square miles. The soil is fine silt. It resembles that of the Red river valley, and is superior to that lying between the Red river valley and the Peace river. The fertility of the soil, owing to the small attempts made at cultivation, is chiefly evidenced by the extreme luxuriance of the vegetation. On the whole the district is one of the most attractive I have ever seen. To give some idea of its value, I would say that I estimate that it will yield wheat to the extent of 470,000,000 bushels. I believe that the whole of its area will be susceptible of cultivation, but I am not quite sure that on every part of it wheat will ripen. As far as I am able to judge of the climate, it is as good as, or better than that of Edmonton. There are summer frosts, but I do not think they are of sufficient severity to affect wheat over the greater part of the country. At least that was my experience of one year there. That year the early frosts cut down the potato tops before they were quite ripened, about the end of August, but the wheat and other grain were not affected by it. The mineral resources of the Peace river country are good, and coal and gold are found in a number of streams, and the Peace river carries with it a certain amount of fine gold, though not in sufficient quantities to offer any chance of extensive mining. The quality of coal there is excellent.

SPENCER'S BUTTE.

Near Eugene City, Oregon, a high hill rises somewhat abruptly from the valley to the height of one thousand five hundred ft., being two thousand five hundred ft. above the ocean level. It is known as "Spencer's butte," and from its top can be seen one of the most beautiful panoramas ever spread by the hand of nature. The snow-crowned peaks and timber-clad ridges of the Cascades on the east, the rocky masses of the Cascade mountains on the south, and the graceful hills of the Coast Range on the west, all deep tinged with the blue of distance, stretch for miles before the eye until they fade into the horizon. The Willamette valley, veined with wooded streams and dotted with cities and towns, lies in the embrace of these mighty hills like a lovely picture in a massive frame. So vast is the scope of vision, so grand and beautiful the scene, so intense the silence that broods over it, that even the wildest nature is inspired with a feeling of reverential awe.

A NEW ISLAND.

Returning vessels from Alaskan waters report the recent formation of a volcanic island near Oumiasia. The marine volcano is quite active and distributes its ashes over a wide area of surrounding water, quite a deck-load of them being received by a number of vessels.