

THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

BRITISH COLUMBIA is a Province of the Dominion of Canada, and is the only dependency of the British Crown bordering the Pacific Ocean on the west coast of America. No other member of that great confederation has resources so rich, varied and inexhaustible; a climate so healthful, invigorating and agreeable; a coast line so magnificent, abounding in excellent harbors, safe entrances to navigable streams and long stretches of inland sea, or sheltered gulfs, sounds, bays and inlets; such a wealth of economic and precious metals, timber, coal and fish; none for which Nature has done so much—and man so little. Now comparatively easy of access from the great centers of population—and soon, by the completion of the great Canadian Pacific Railway, to be rendered even more so—British Columbia stands with doors wide open, inviting the enterprising capitalist, the enlightened farmer, the skilled artisan, the frugal and industrious laborer, and all who understand the use of hands and brains, to enter and participate in the work of developing her dormant resources, increase her budding industries, and make for themselves homes where they may enjoy the comforts, and, in time, even the luxuries, of life. Nor is this invitation extended simply to the subjects of Great Britain alone, for the intelligent, industrious and law-abiding of every nation will meet with a cordial reception, and will find his rights of person and property as well, and often better, protected as they were in his native land. Citizenship, with all its rights, privileges and honors, is conferred upon the deserving of every race, those who declare their allegiance to her Majesty, the Queen of England, and conform to the liberal laws of naturalization. Desirable as this is for the mutual welfare of the individual and the Province, it is by no means necessary, full and complete security of property and person and protection in the transaction of business being accorded to all.

The Province has the general shape of a parallelogram, 760 miles long and 500 broad, containing a superficial area of 350,000 square miles. The Rocky Mountains, the great "backbone of the continent," form the eastern boundary, separating it from the remainder of Canada, and the Pacific Ocean bounds it on the west, save for a distance of about 300 miles on the extreme north, where the Alaska possessions of the United States interpose between it and the sea. Its southern limit is the forty-ninth parallel, which forms the international boundary line between the Province and the United States, and the northern is the sixtieth parallel. The general surface of the country is mountainous and broken, consisting of short mountain ranges, detached groups of mountains, elevated plateaus and many valleys of various extent. Running parallel with the Rocky Mountains, and in many places scarcely distinguishable from them, are masses of mountains, and along the coast lies a high range usually indicated as a continuation of the Cascades, but, in fact, a northern extension of the great Coast Range. Lying between these two, and extending as far north as latitude 55 30 degrees, is an irregular belt of

elevated plateau. Beyond this the mountains, except those bordering the coast, decrease in height, and before the limit of the Province is reached the land has a gentle slope towards the Arctic Ocean, Peace River and other streams of the Arctic watershed finding their sources there. Such are the general features of the interior—high mountain ridges on the east and west, enclosing a high plateau, down the center of which flows the Fraser River, its general course being south until almost to the international line, where it turns sharply to the west and enters the ocean. The other great streams of the interior are Thompson River, entering the Fraser from the east, and the Okanagan, Columbia and Kootenay, the last two having very eccentric courses. The Columbia rises almost in the extreme southeastern corner, sweeps northerly around the upper end of the Selkirk Range, and then flows directly south between the Selkirk and Gold mountains into the United States. The Kootenay has its source in the same region as the Columbia, makes a long sweep to the south, crossing the boundary line, and, returning again, discharges its waters into the Columbia. One peculiarity of this region is that nearly every stream of consequence has its origin in, or passes through, one or more long, narrow lakes, consisting in many places of simply a broadening of the river, and at others a well-defined lake of considerable area. Such are Shuswap Lake, whence flows the Thompson, and Lake Kamloops, through which the same stream passes; also Upper and Lower Columbia and Upper and Lower Arrow lakes along the course of the Columbia, and Lakes Kootenay and Okanagan, features of the streams thus christened. Lakes and water courses abound from one end of the Province to the other, many of them navigable by steamers of a light draught for great distances.

The coast line is the most wonderful in the world. The mountains border closely upon the sea, the shore being indented by a multitude of bays and inlets and fringed by countless small islands, between which run tortuous, but safe and navigable, channels. Outside of these, and protecting these inland channels for nearly the entire length of the coast, are a series of large islands, the greatest and most southerly of which is that of Vancouver, on which Victoria is situated. In referring to this peculiarity the Earl of Dufferin, at that time Governor-General of Canada, said, in a speech delivered at Victoria on the 10th of September, 1876: "Such a spectacle as its coast line presents is not to be paralleled by any country in the world. Day after day, for a whole week, in a vessel of nearly 2,000 tons, we threaded an interminable labyrinth of watery lanes and reaches that wound endlessly in and out of a network of islands, promontories and peninsulas for thousands of miles, unruffled by the slightest swell from the adjoining ocean, and presenting at every turn an ever-shifting combination of rock, verdure, forest, glacier and snow-capped mountain of unrivaled grandeur and beauty. When it is remembered that this wonderful system of navigation, equally well adapted to the largest line of battle-ship and the frailest canoe, fringes the entire seaboard of your