

drift deposits of clay and sand, over which, for the most part, there lies a brownish-black surface soil, varying from two to four feet in thickness, and containing a large proportion of vegetable matter. In the Cowichan and Comox districts, as well as many other localities, rich loams appear. Owing to the necessary shortness and rapid descent of the streams, there are but few acres of alluvial bottom lands, though here and there small tracts exist. The soil generally is very fertile. When properly cultivated the average yield per acre of cereals is 25 bushels of wheat, 50 of oats, 40 of Chevalier barley and 50 of rough barley. Rye, buckwheat, corn, hops (in certain places), beans, peas, potatoes, melons and garden vegetables produce abundantly. All fruits of the temperate zone thrive and bear prolifically. Cattle in small bands do well and support themselves the year round by grazing upon the edible plants and grass of the more thinly wooded districts, and browsing on the tender brush and the nutritious lichens which hang from the tree branches. Little care is required, except to provide a shelter where a dry bed may be found by the animals during the rainy weather. Vancouver Island cannot, however, be termed a stock country, since the land is more valuable for agricultural purposes. The quality of beef, mutton and pork is equal to that produced in England.

Attention might be called to the various sections of the island upon which settlements can be advantageously made. The Alberni District lies 130 miles above Victoria. The arable portion is eight by four and one-half miles in dimensions. There are a score of settlers there now, and a hundred more could find good locations. Salmon River, sixty miles further north, has much desirable land open for occupation and purchase. There are also the Cowichan, Saanich, Chemainus and Sominoes districts, all on the east side. On the west side practically no settlements have been made, though along the multitude of bays and inlets there are many acres of valuable land, besides which lumber, fish and coal are there in abundance. The chief drawback is a lack of sufficient communication with Victoria, which will probably be obviated in the near future by the establishment of a regular steamer route. During the next decade Vancouver Island will settle up rapidly, and the close of that period will see a continuous line of flourishing settlements encircling the island, with extended railway and steamer transportation routes linking them together.

Victoria, the chief city and seat of government of the Province, is situated at the southeastern extremity of the island, and occupies a commanding commercial position. The harbor of the city proper offers accommodation only for vessels drawing eighteen feet of water and under, but improvements are continually being made, and the adjacent and supplementary harbor of Esquimalt supplies all that may be lacking here. A fine macadamized road connects the two ports, along which also is stretched a telephone line. These ports are by no means strangers to deep water craft from the four corners of the world; and when the completion of the great Canadian Pacific

Railway shall furnish a new trans-American route for the commerce of Asia and Australia, vessels from every Pacific port will find their way hither, and the flags of every maritime nation will be seen floating from the masthead of ships lying at anchor in the Royal Roads, just without the entrance to Esquimalt.

The universal verdict of travelers is that Victoria is the most pleasing and delightful city on the Pacific Coast. There are several which are larger, possess more imposing structures, and are more noisy and bustling, exhibiting in its widest scope that general spirit of "rush" which is so dominant in the American character; but none so charming in all its adjuncts and surroundings, so delightful as a place of residence or so attractive to visitors. Not that there is no business transacted there, for an examination of her commercial enterprises will show them to be numerous and extensive; but there is a pleasant absence of that hurly-burly which attends the transaction of business on the American side, and that general restlessness which seems to pervade even the loungers on the streets. The avenues of the city furnish most excellent drives, while splendid roads have been constructed in every direction, leading through the most charming of scenery and to many elevated points, whence views of the Straits of Fuca and the white-capped Olympic Range, on the one hand, vie in picturesqueness with the island-dotted Gulf of Georgia and its background of Cascade Mountains. The Gorge, reached by a charming drive from the city, is but one of the many attractive spots frequented by natives and visitors.

From the time the Hudson's Bay Company first established a post here, Victoria has been the general supply point for the whole Province of British Columbia. She sprang suddenly into great commercial activity in 1858, when the endless throng of miners poured into the Fraser River gold fields, 30,000 of whom wintered in and around the city. When, as the excitement abated, the greater portion of them departed, and the tented city vanished like the camp of a moving army, it was demonstrated that a city had been founded which was destined to live, to grow with the Province, and to become metropolitan as the resources of the surrounding region were developed. From that time its history has been one of steady progress. Population has increased, business has expanded and property values have steadily ascended. The steamer lines of the Province all center in Victoria, whence they reach all the coast ports where sufficient settlements have been made, and penetrate far into the interior by ascending the Fraser River. The trade of all this extended region centers in the metropolis, and increases annually as the tributary settlements and industries expand.

The business portion of the city is, in the main, well built of stone and brick, numerous substantial edifices testifying to the solid character of its commercial enterprises. The numerous public buildings are also of a superior character, some of them displaying much taste and architectural skill. The Government buildings, on James' Bay, are five in number, and are constructed of