

## FORESTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

OWING to the heavy rainfall of the islands, mainland coast and interior mountains of British Columbia, those regions are covered with a dense forest growth. The prevailing timber is the Douglas fir (*abies Douglasii*), which first became known in the lumber markets of the coast as "Oregon pine." This tree covers the coasts and islands in dense forests as far north as the Skeena river, almost to Alaska. It extends into the interior as far as the Rocky mountains, being the prevailing variety wherever there is any forest whatever. In the warm and humid atmosphere of the coast and islands, it attains gigantic proportions, usually varying from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet in height, and from ten to twenty feet in circumference, though much larger and taller specimens are frequently found. A section of one of these trees, cut at a distance of twenty feet from the ground, from a tree three hundred and five feet high, stands on the grounds of the Dominion parliament, at Ottawa, and is eight feet four inches in diameter. Trees are straight and without lower limbs, affording a large quantity of clear lumber. The grain is coarse, but exceedingly tough and tenacious. It will bear more weight than oak. A piece one foot long and one inch square, supported at the ends, requires a weight of six hundred and thirty-eight pounds to break it; oak requiring but five hundred and fifty, and maple five hundred and eighty. Its mean crushing load, endwise, is seven thousand pounds to the square inch, and sidewise, seventeen hundred and fifty pounds. This timber has

come into favor with railroads west of the great lakes and the Mississippi, for ties and bridge timbers, because of its strength and durability. Masts have been shipped which were one hundred and thirty feet long and forty-two inches in diameter, hewn octagonally. It is a peculiarity of this timber that it can be used green, fresh from the saw, without danger of shrinking or swelling. The city of Vancouver is an instance of this, the buildings being constructed of lumber which was hauled from the mill as fast as sawed. In the morning the log was hauled out of the water, and in the afternoon the lumber was nailed to its place in the structure. This is almost the only timber cut in the mills of the province.

The red cedar (*taxus gigantea*) grows in abundance along the lower coast, and extends, in more limited quantities, inland as far as the Rocky mountains. This is also used for railroad ties, and is very durable. The Indians use it for canoes. They also weave the fibre into blankets, and roof their houses with the bark. This is the favorite finishing lumber of the coast, taking the place of the white pine of the Atlantic slope. Its grain is about as dense as that of the white cedar of Michigan, but the wood is more beautiful, and when finished up in the natural color, is not inferior, in appearance, to cherry or mahogany. For doors, windows, blinds, ceilings, wainscotings, etc., it is unequalled. It takes paint well, but the natural finish is so fine that paint is seldom used. There is a beautiful yellow cedar, or juniper, which grows in small tracts on the up-