

## AGRICULTURE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

**A**LTHOUGH the general surface of British Columbia is rugged and mountainous, there are thousands of acres of valley land, as fertile and productive as any the sun shines upon in its daily round. This land is of three classes—the alluvial bottoms lying along the water courses; the more level portions of the uplands of the islands and coast, and the mountain districts of the interior, now covered with timber, but possessing excellent soil and yielding largely when cleared and cultivated; the treeless benches and tablelands of the interior, which are highly productive when watered by irrigation. These embrace a total of not less than ten thousand square miles of arable soil, so diverse in character, climatic conditions and location, as to be suitable for the production of every fruit, cereal, vegetable, tree, plant and flower known to the temperate zone.

The mind must be primarily relieved of the idea, so common and so natural, that this region lies too far north for the success of general agriculture. The conditions are entirely distinct from those which exist on the Atlantic slope of America, as will be understood by reading the remarks on climate in these pages. The difficulty encountered in the agricultural development of British Columbia has never been a climatic one, but has been the result of the extremely rugged and mountainous character of the country, rendering the agricultural areas comparatively small, far removed from each other, and difficult of access. There are, in the province, thousands of acres

of good, fertile soil, to cultivate which has been impossible, because of the absence of either a local market or facilities for shipping produce to any point where it is in demand. These conditions are now rapidly changing. New transportation routes are constantly being opened. Especially has a revolution been created by the Canadian Pacific railway, whose route passes from end to end through the very heart of the province. Branch lines have been chartered, which will soon be constructed, and will penetrate a number of the largest outlying farming and stock grazing regions, giving them an easy and permanent outlet to market. There does not exist in the world a better opportunity to secure a good home, than is offered by this most western province of Canada; and especially will the young and industrious farmers of England find here an opportunity to build for themselves a happy home, in a new and progressive country, beneath the shadow of their nation's flag.

The government holds out most tempting inducements for settlers upon the public lands, requiring only good faith and compliance with the very liberal land laws on the part of the settlers. There are two classes of land—that belonging to the province, and that donated to the dominion government in consideration of railway improvement. The latter consists of a belt forty miles wide, twenty each side of the Canadian Pacific railway. Outside of this, the province owns all land not now the property of private individuals or corporations, and