

CLIMATE AND FARM PRODUCTS

between the Gold and Coast mountain ranges has about the same annual temperatures as the coast in the same latitudes, but the extremes of heat and cold are greater, while the climate is very dry. In the higher plateau between the Gold range and the Rockies the climate is colder, approximating to that on the eastern slope of the Rockies. In some parts of this plateau rain falls almost continuously in summer, and the snowfall in winter is very heavy, while in other sections of the same plateau it is comparatively dry. For example, the upper valley of the Columbia near the bend has a very great rainfall, but in the vicinity of the Columbia lakes the rainfall decreases, and the upper Kootenay valley in the same plateau has a dry climate. British Columbia furnishes many examples of the fact that altitude has as much effect upon climate as latitude. Above an elevation of 6,000 feet snow falls every month of the year, so that the high peaks are always capped with snow, and magnificent glaciers can be seen at various points along the transcontinental railway lines.

Owing to the mountainous character of the country the area of agricultural land is small in proportion to the size of the province, but there are valleys as well as mountains, and even a small proportion of so great a whole is equal to the agricultural area of some important countries. There are millions of acres of arable land, while the area suitable for pasturage is immense.

The area of lands suitable for agriculture is reduced by mountains on the islands as well as on the mainland, but nevertheless there are extensive acreages of good lands in Vancouver island, Queen Charlotte islands and some of the smaller islands. The settlement of these island lands, as well as those of the narrow strip of mainland territory between the Coast range and the seashore and the river valleys near the mainland coast, has been greatly retarded by the cost of clearing, owing to the dense forests and the enormous size of the trees, when undertaken by individual farmers. This work can be done much more cheaply when conducted on a large scale by companies having stumping machinery, and arrangements have been made to deal in this way with some extensive and well located railway lands in Vancouver island after the valuable timber has been taken off. The beautiful farms and rich gardens that may be seen near the city of Victoria on Vancouver island, and along the lower reaches of the Fraser river on the mainland, furnish good examples of the character of these lands when cleared. However, some of the garden lands along the lower Fraser were recovered from the river by dyking. The moist, mild climate of the islands and the coast lands, although most favourable to gardens and small fruits, is not so suitable for the growth of apples and peaches as the dry belt of the interior, where these fruits are grown to perfection in the irrigated lands. The districts in Vancouver island that have been cleared and brought under cultivation bear a remarkable resemblance to the rural districts of England.

The interior valley extending from the United States boundary to the Big Bend of the Columbia river at its junction with the Canoe river, in latitude 51° N., which is drained by the Columbia and Kootenay rivers, is now generally recognized as a great fruit country. A bulletin