

Manitoba that the greatest contrast with either of the above provinces can be found. Lying only about one degree north of the latitude of Vancouver and four degrees above Ottawa, the City of Winnipeg, which is the capital of Manitoba, has an extreme variation in respect of summer and winter temperatures. In summer the thermometer averages  $59^{\circ}$  and in winter  $1.5^{\circ}$ . So that here there is an illustration of how much the winter conditions vary within a narrow range of latitude. Consequently, in a journey across the continent by the railway that connects the two coasts, and which takes an almost direct course from Vancouver through Winnipeg, the influence of these extremes on industrial occupation is noticeable. For instance, the stock of Manitoba have to be housed in winter, and this fact precludes the idea that it can ever be a very profitable cattle- or sheep-raising country. British Columbia, on the other hand, although not very favourable to sheep-growing, is well adapted for cattle, large ranches having been established in its eastern districts. From the inquiries that I was able to make, it would appear that farming in Manitoba is carried on under exceptionally severe and hazardous conditions. As may be expected, the climates of the three provinces above mentioned vary according to the elevation and latitude of each district, Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Ottawa being taken as illustrations. The same remark applies to the other provinces and territories, with regard to which no particular reference is necessary, as they are not of so much interest to the matter in hand.

## SOIL AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

### BRITISH COLUMBIA.

This is the extreme western province of Canada, and its capital, Vancouver City, is the port of arrival and departure for the Japan and Australian lines of steamships. It is of immense area, containing about 330,000 square miles, extending some 650 miles north to south, and about 500 miles west to east. The Rocky Mountains divide it from the middle and eastern portions of Canada. It is not well adapted for agriculture, the area available for this purpose being very small, and in most instances not of a very good quality, or easy of access. It is well watered, the Fraser River running almost through the centre, and emptying itself into the Gulf of Georgia, whilst the Columbia River and smaller streams, lakes, &c., are found on its eastern side. Timber exists in enormous quantities in this province, its resources in this respect being practically inexhaustible. Within recent years the development of the timber-cutting industry here has proceeded with great rapidity. The older provinces of the east have hitherto furnished almost all the export of Canadian timber, but several mills have now sprung up in British Columbia, and the trade is assuming large proportions. "Lumbering," as it is termed, constitutes one of the principal industries of Vancouver City and its district. I took the opportunity whilst being delayed there through a breakdown of communication with the east to inspect some of the sawmills, and was much struck with the extent of their operations. One feature of the trade is that whereas formerly timber was sent away in logs, it is now mostly put into a sawn or fully-manufactured condition. The principal woods are Douglas fir, spruce, cedar, &c., the trees from which they are cut being generally of large dimensions. At the wharf of one mill there were seven or eight vessels loading for Europe with assorted sizes of sawn material. The mills are got up on the latest and most approved plan, all the manipulation, from the immense logs downwards, being done by steam appliances. As with all other products, the prices are at present very low, but the readily available raw material, and its good quality, enable the industry in this district to compete with the less-favourably situated mills in the east. The forests of British Columbia are probably her best asset.

The fisheries of this province are possibly the next important natural resource. For some years the tinned salmon of the Fraser River has been a leading item of export. Commencing in 1876, the trade has now reached a yearly value of some £600,000, and is likely to go on developing at a considerable rate. Canning has been a very profitable industry, and it at present employs over four thousand men. The supply of fish appears inexhaustible, as, from what I could gather, there were, as yet, no signs of its diminution. The cod-fishing industry has, so far, not made much progress; but as it is known that a large cod-bank exists off the coast, it may fairly be expected that this branch of the fishing industry will, ere long, be commenced. Altogether, the prospects of British Columbia's future prosperity seem to be very materially connected with the success or otherwise of her fishing industry.

In minerals, perhaps, British Columbia is richer than any other Canadian province. Gold, silver, iron, and other valuable deposits are numerous, but as yet have not been extensively worked. There are large areas of coal-producing country, the best qualities being chiefly taken from the mines of Nanaimo, in Vancouver Island. This coal is very superior, being considered by far the most valuable for all purposes that is found on the Pacific side of the American Continent. It is shipped in great quantities to San Francisco and other ports in that direction.

Having been requested to make some inquiries as to the possibility of opening up a trade for our West Coast coals in Canada, I took steps to ascertain whether circumstances afforded any expectations that an outlet could be obtained. I found, however, that the satisfaction with which the local product was regarded, together with the low price at which it could be placed on the market, entirely shut out any chance of success in this direction. I am afraid that nothing can be done with our coal in British Columbia, or, as that would be the port of destination, with any other part of Canada.

Turning to the agricultural features of this province, as has before been mentioned, the character of the country is adverse to any great development of what is termed mixed-farming operations. The surface is very much broken, consisting mainly of small ranges of mountains, intersected by valleys of varying sizes; but which, as a rule, are densely wooded. Here and there a limited extent of open space permits the carrying-on of crop-raising and dairying on a small scale. In the north-east elevated plateaux are numerous, where cattle-ranching is being established.