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PRINCE RUPERT

Part of the Second Prize Essay on this city in connection with a contest among the High School pupils, by John Fotos, aged 14.

(About one-third of the essay is omitted through lack of space.)

Before the white man had set foot on Prince Rupert, the Indians that live now across the harbor on their reservation known as Metlakatla had a little village here, but when the officials of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway were looking for a suitable Pacific terminus for the transcontinental railway that was then being built, they chose Prince Rupert.

Prince Rupert is situated in latitude 54 degrees 18 min. north, being on the same latitude as Edinburgh, Christiania and Petrograd, three capitals of Europe, and only forty miles from the Alaskan boundary. The longitude of Prince Rupert is 130 d. 20 m. west, or about three hundred miles due north of Vancouver. The city is built upon the west side of a little island known as Kaien Island.

Suitable Position.

Before the railway officials had decided that Prince Rupert was to be the Pacific terminus of the G. T. P. Railway, Prince Rupert's proximity to the Orient, to the vast timber lands of Northern and Central British Columbia, its proximity to the mines, to the fishing grounds of the North Pacific were all carefully considered and before the first tree that covered the site was cut down the city was planned. Dynamite, the steam shovel and the woodman's axe had soon cleared and levelled the site and before the first train pulled into Rupert, it was a city with a population of over 6,000 and equipped with light, heat, power, telephone and sewerage systems installed as well as banks, restaurants, trust companies and all kinds of business houses to accommodate the people and to facilitate the commerce of the connecting steel.

Japanese Current.

The climate of Prince Rupert is very mild. The Japanese current blowing across the Pacific ocean has its effect upon the whole coast of British Columbia and especially the northern portion of the province. The difference in climate is very small. In winter the temperature rarely falls below zero and flowers and vegetables, if left in the gardens, will live throughout the winter. In summer the climate is genial, the hottest weather ranging between 80 and 85 degrees. The westerly winds blowing over this district produce a heavy rainfall, making the annual rainfall of Prince Rupert range between 70 and 80 inches. Reports exaggerate the rainfall of Prince Rupert but these must be stopped at any cost for this is one of the reasons why people who would like to come here avoid coming. If the annual rainfall of Prince Rupert is compared with that of Vancouver, Seattle and Tacoma, it will be found that Prince Rupert compares favorably with the other cities.

Cosmopolitan City.

The population of Prince Rupert comprises nearly all the nationalities in the world, in fact a more cosmopolitan city of its size cannot be found in any part of the world. Ninety-five per cent of the residents are British born—chiefly Scotch. The people of Prince Rupert are very enterprising as far as the meaning of the word goes, but a little bit more unanimity might be helpful on a few subjects.

The industries of Prince Rupert are yet few; perhaps if the great war did not come Prince Rupert might have been now a city with many industries and a population of over 25,000 people. It is a well known fact that Amsterdam and Copenhagen were said to be "built on herring bones." They formerly were fishing villages. The same thing applies to Prince Rupert for the railway and halibut have made the place. The few industries that we have are fishing, lumbering, canning, mining and shipbuilding.

Fishing.

The common halibut (hipoglossus vulgaris) is found in huge quantities on the waters of the north Pacific. This fish is the largest among the teleost fishes. The male halibut weighs under fifty pounds and the female several hundred. The halibut grounds extend from off the Coquille river, Oregon, to the Bering Straits, but the best fishing grounds are found from the Hecate Straits to the Shennagin Islands, Alaska, and Prince Rupert is, therefore, the

Advantage of Position.

By a recent order-in-council American fishermen are allowed to sell their catches to Canadian Ports. To avoid a 500 mile sail to Seattle most of the American owned vessels sell their catches in Prince Rupert and from here they are sent east by the G. T. P. Railway.

Present facilities to accommodate the fishing industry in Prince Rupert consist of a large modern concrete six-story cold storage plant at Seal Cove, which can handle over 7,000 tons of fish. Besides this there are several American and Canadian agencies for buying fish established here.

Salmon.

The salmon which habitates the fjords and inlets is also found in abundant quantities in the Skeena and Naas Rivers a few miles north and south of Prince Rupert. There are in all about twenty canneries and six cold storage plants on these two rivers which handle the fish; there is also a cannery across the Prince Rupert harbor owned by the Canadian Fish and Cold Storage Company which has a pack of 40,000 cases of salmon per season. All the fish pass through Prince Rupert on their way to the different destinations.

The heads of the fish which are cut off when brought into port are used in making a fertilizer. This is one of the newest industries that has sprung into life in Prince Rupert. There is a plant at Tucks Inlet six miles from the cold storage plant known as the Fish Fertilizing plant, which uses the heads and makes them into fertilizer.

Lumber.

The lumber industry is just in its infancy. Now that the war is over and reconstruction will take place all the millions of feet of lumber that cover northern and central British Columbia will surely be needed. During the war there was need for aeroplane spruce to make aeroplanes, but now that the war is over this industry which had flourished on the Queen Charlotte Islands has died out. Prince Rupert will, of course, become the central point of exportation when this lumber industry is started. There is only one saw mill at Seal Cove known as the Prince Rupert Lumber Co. This saw mill can turn out about 100,000 feet of lumber a day when it is working to full capacity. There are about 150 men employed there.

Mining.

The country north and adjacent to Prince Rupert is also rich in mineral deposits. At Hazelton, 185 miles from Prince Rupert, there is a mine known as the Rocher de Boule. At Telkwa, 290 miles from Prince Rupert, there are rich coal mines and at Granby Bay there are rich copper mines. There are so many mineral deposits that the Marquis of (Continued on Page 5.)

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