

# BRITISH COLUMBIA'S COAST SECURE

## Views of a Correspondent of The Province on Condi- tion of Ports.

Concerning British Columbia ports as regards defence, a correspondent writes:

The fortifications were placed around Victoria by the Imperial war department, no doubt, after consideration of the best plans of defence. If you will consult a map of this coast you will see the wisdom of this. At Macauley Point at the entrance to Victoria Harbor is a fort with large coast defence guns, above Esquimalt on Signal Hill there is another battery and at Rod Hill, on the west of Esquimalt Harbor is another fort of heavy coast artillery. These forts are so placed that a hostile vessel poking its nose around Race Rocks would have a warm time.

In the Royal Roads and further out in the Straits of Juan de Fuca are fine gardens for planting mines, and there are Royal Canadian engineers at Victoria to do the gardening. To man the forts we have a company of Royal Canadian garrison artillery and the Fifth Regiment Canadian Garrison Artillery (militia), and both the regulars and militia are old friends of the Long Tom.

The Juan de Fuca Straits are amply fortified for the protection of Victoria and Vancouver. The only other sea entrance to the Gulf of Georgia is through Seymour Narrows with their dangerous navigation. They are not bordered by fortifications, but their extreme narrowness makes a defence by field batteries possible. Here again mine planting would make it safe.

Should the enemy land a force on the West Coast of Vancouver Island the settlements there would of course have no defence. A knowledge of the interior of the island is necessary to appreciate the difficulties such a force would have to make its way across to the east coast. Our regiments of infantry, of which we have six on the lower mainland and in Victoria, under the guidance of men knowing the country could cut such an invading force to shreds.

Between Vancouver Island and Prince Rupert the wildness of the country is its own protection, because after landing the invaders could get no where. Prince Rupert, without fortifications, would come under the sway of the enemy, but no doubt the Ruperts could be depended to do some damage to them.

I have said nothing about the part H. M. C. S. Rainbow would play in the defence, but we know she is manned by hearts of oak who are equal to any occasion.