

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA MONTHLY

The Magazine of The Canadian West

Publishing Office, 1100 Bute Street, Vancouver, B. C.

D. A. CHALMERS
Managing Editor and Publisher.

With an Advisory Editorial Committee
of
Literary Men and Women.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY SPECTATOR

of
BRITAIN'S FARTHEST WEST.

For Community Service—Social, Educational, Literary
and Religious; but
Independent of Party, Sect or Faction.

"BE BRITISH," COLUMBIANS!

Vol. XVI

MAY, 1920.

No. 2.

Ode

"To The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading Into Hudson's Bay"

ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMPANY'S 250th ANNIVERSARY

Builders of Empire, your servants have carried
Bravely your banner to regions far-flung;
On lone lake and river their birch-bark has tarried.
Still echo the songs that the coureurs have sung;
The wild Indian warrior has grown to revere you,
Trust to your honour and yield to your sway;
The cheat and the rogue have been taught how to fear
you—
A gospel you cherished of truth and fair play.

Builders of Empire, you grew and you flourished
From far Labrador to our own Farthest West;
And ever full nobly your weal has been nourished
By the leal hearts devoted who gave you their best.
Prince Rupert, your founder came out with his charter
And anchored the "Nonsuch" in lone Hudson's
Bay;
And taught 'the poor Indian' the science of barter,
With fox skin and marten his tribute to pay.

'Tis centuries past since that figure romantic,
Set foot for the first time on Canada's shore;
And now his successor has crossed the Atlantic,
To help us recall all that happened before;
And lo, 'the poor Indian' wears trousers and collar,
Gone, gone is the Red Man so lordly of yore—
And naught will he take for his pelt but the dollar—
The era of barter is past evermore!

The plow and the axe on the forest encroaching
Have narrowed the haunt of the beaver and bear;
E'en the feathery tribe find the aeroplane poaching
On their ancient preserve, the realm of the air.
Our age is an age that for changes is crying,
The world has awaked from its coma at last:
Yet 'twere well in the midst of experiments trying,
We turn for brief space to take rede of the Past.

It's well that we honour the Past in our story,
Play it in pageant and sing it in song;
That we cherish its mem'ries and ponder its glory,
To help us to "quit us like men and be strong".
Our task is a great one; our young growing nation
Must gird up its loins in the pride of its strength;
Now purging the follies of youth, take its station
In the vanguard of freedom and progress at length!

Robert Allison Hood.