

laws for the district by order in council and to establish a legislature; such legislature to be in the first instance the governor alone, but with power to the Crown by itself, or through the Governor, to establish a nominated council and a representative assembly. We do not exaggerate in the least when we say that the recent debate in the House of Commons on this bill shows the present crisis to be regarded as one of great interest.

The gold of Australia was the magnet that drew surplus thousands from England and peopled her largest colony. The gold in California drew an emigration thither which has created our Pacific States. The gold of Fraser River, be it much or little, has drawn the attention of the world to the unexampled richness of the north-western areas of this continent, and given already a stupendous impulse to their settlement.

Vancouver's Island, from a hitherto insignificant existence upon maps, looms up in a not distant future to the proportions of a British naval station, whose arms may stretch across the seas yet, and grasp a portion of the swelling trade with China and Japan, the Indian Archipelago and Australia. British Columbia, hitherto considered an inaccessible and remote region of wild territory, given over to the Hudson's Bay Company's trade, selfish and exclusive, and to Canadian jurisdiction, which was no jurisdiction at all, feels the same impulse, and grows into the last link of a chain of British States, or perhaps of another united confederation like our own, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific seas.

These will not be the results of a year, perhaps not of a decade, perhaps not of scores of years. But if we consider that the population of the United States has grown in fifty years, from five and a half to thirty millions, and the population of the Canadas from much less than two hundred thousand to over two millions, it requires less than the foresight of these British statesmen to see that on events which now seem local and confined, imperial issues wait, though they are now but dimly foreshadowed.

Here is the great fact of the north-western areas of this continent. An area not inferior in size to the whole United States east of the Mississippi, which is perfectly adapted to the fullest occupation by cultivated nations, yet is almost wholly unoccupied, lies west of the ninety-eighth meridian and above the forty-third parallel, that is, north of the latitude of Milwaukee, and west of the longitude of Red River, Fort Kearney, and Corpus Christi. Or, to state the fact in another way, east of the Rocky Mountains and west of the ninety-eighth meridian, and between the fortieth and sixtieth parallels, there is a productive, cultivable area of five hundred thousand square miles. West of the Rocky Mountains, and between the same parallels, there is an area of three hundred thousand square miles.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the temperature of the Atlantic coast is carried straight across the continent to the Pacific. The isothermals deflect greatly to the north, and the