ON A TOUR WITH PREMIER McBRIDE AND HIS COLLEAGUES THROUGH THE INTERIOR

TOURING in the company of the Premier of British Columbia is strenuous work. Only men of strong constitution and hearty appetite can stand the strain of "one-night stands" for a fortnight, and return home ready for office work on the following day. During such a trip the First Minister is always alert. Seldom does he forget a name or a face. Stretching out a hand he draws some whilom friend from his corner and with fetching smile and timely word wins the heart of that constituent. Though "Dick" to every man, he never loses his dignity.

Of the busy days spent at Nicola, Ashcroft, Kamloops, Revelstoke and Slocan, the newspapers have already given an adequate account. But that half of the journey from Field westward, has heretofore received scant notice.

It was Saturday evening, July 11, when Hon. Richard McBride accompanied by Hon. Dr. Young, Hon. F. Fulton, Thomas Taylor, M. P. P. for Revelstoke and Harry Parsons, M. P. P. for Columba, arrived in Field. After dinner at the Mount Stephen house, a chalet ably presided over by Mr and Mrs. Cancellor, the party repaired to the town hall in order to hold a meeting. Field is now a thriving settlement comprised chiefly of railway people. Here, extra crews and engines are stationed on account of the heavy grade to Laggan. At least three engines are required to haul a train to the summit. In order to reduce this grade of four and a half per cent. two spiral tunnels are being constructed in Cathedral and Wapta mountains. Macdonell & Gzowsky, contractors, have 700 to 800 men employed and expect by rushing work night and day to have the new road, with a grade of 2.2 per cent. completed in a year's time. Over this diminished grade, one engine will do the work now accomplished by three, thus effecting a saving in maintenance, coal and time.

On Sunday morning a seven mile carriage drive was taken to Emerald lake, and in the afternoon a volunteer crew made up a special train to go to Laggan, that the visitors, and also many of the people of Field might enjoy a trip to Lake Louise. As the "Great Divide" was crossed on the return journey, three lusty cheers and a tiger marked the entry into this favored province from the wilds of Alberta.

An accident farther East delayed the trains of the previous day so that on Monday, July 13, there were trains galore for Golden. The party distributed itself with the member of Columbia in advance, the Premier and Minister of Education in the next section, and the Commissioner bringing up the rear. By lunch time all were in Golden and partaking of the bounties of Mr. McFarlane's hotel. The meal over, the Ministers were conducted by motor to a steamer where while enjoying the coolness and beauty of the Kicking Horse and Columbia rivers, they met the members of the Board of Trade.

To afford a favorable opportunity for the Premier and his party to meet the people of Golden, a garden party was held at the Hospital. Here Dr. Taylor has been in charge for the past dozen years, and the appearance of the place speaks well for his good management. A new building intended as a woman's ward, is in course of construction, thus showing growth in the scope of the hospital.

In the evening a public meeting was held. Though rain fell heavily, every seat in the hall was filled. Captain Armstrong, acting as chairman, in laudatory terms introduced the sitting member, Mr. Harry Parsons, as first speaker. In a neat and forcible way Mr. Parsons addressed his constituents. Mr. Taylor, of Revelstoke followed briefly. Then each of the ministers spoke at considerable length. Dr. Young interested his hearers by telling them what he was doing and intending to do for the health and education of the people. Mr. Fulton referred particularly to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, irrigation and forestry. Mr. McBride concluded with a resume of the general policy of his government and especially its attitude in respect to Anti-Asiatic legislation. The audience was both attentive and appreciative.

Shortly after midnight we set sail on the Ptarmigan, Capt. Armstrong in command. Accompanying the ministerial party were Mr. and Mrs. Parsons and as many of the Goldenites as the sternwheeler would accommodate. Then began a trip through country, now comparatively little known but which is one of the choicest sections of the province, both from a scenic and an agricultural point of view, namely the valley lying between the Rocky and the Selkirk mountain ranges, and extending from Golden to Cranbrook.

All night long we hugged the shore almost touching the trees. Morning showed us a wide valley and a winding river with innumerable logs on its bosom—these revealed the meaning of the bumps that had puzzled us, we had been hitting logs! Our first stop excepting the wood pile, was at Spillmacheen, where a knot of people had gathered. From the deck, Mr. McBride addressed them, the subject of cheap powder creating special interest. While lunching we passed some fine farms and young orchards, at Bristol, which had been represented at the morning meeting by Mr. Mitchell. Onward we took a serpentine course due partly to the windings of the river which is remarkable for its loops and double loops, and partly to dodging logs that sometimes ran us into shore. Dinner was enjoyed at the house of Mr. Fred Foster, who has a beautiful estate of about 3,000 acres. When asked how he happened to select such a remote spot, Mr. Foster replied, "A bad investment," but like that of Lord Aberdeen at Coldstream, it has been a fortune in disguise.

To get to Windermere a seventeen mile drive lay ahead of us. This was broken at Wilmer, whose hospitable people had provided a pleasant surprise in the form of a reception. "Never saw so many people in one house in Wilmer," a person was heard to say. Delicious strawberries, later than the Coast berries, engaged our attention for a while. After Mr. McBride had made a brief address, we got into our buggies to continue our drive. It was warm—there was moonlight—the roads were good—the air sweet with clover. What wonder we failed to notice the surrounding country. All we remember is an Indian reservation that appeared to be well farmed, and three mountains so resembling the Pyramids that one immediately looked for the Sphinx.

Though past midnight when we arrived at Windermere people were waiting, and a meeting was held. After a few hours' rest we parted company with Mr. and Mrs. Parsons, Mr. Fulton and others, who returned by the Ptarmigan to Golden. The rest of us were southbound. In comfort and with great pleasure we made the trip of 92 miles, from Windermere to Cranbrook in Mr. Hyde Baker's white steam motor car. Inclusive of stops for lunch, dinner, and two calls, we completed the journey in twelve hours, the road with the exception of a few spots being capital for motoring. One call was made at Thunder Hill, where Mr. Santo has been settled for a dozen or more years. Here we saw a pathetic side to pioneering—one child, a girl of eleven, twenty-five miles from school, with no young companions. Unless a railway comes soon, her parents feel they must sell out and move where more advantages may be obtained. Another call was on Mr. French at the old home of Mr. William Fernie. We had been told that he was "a dear old man" and that we certainly found him to be. Between these two homesteads we passed through miles of fine timber. Then, too, we passed the head waters of the Columbia river, viz. Upper Columbia lake, and saw the low divide called Canal Flat that separates it from the Kootenay river. A canal has been dug to connect these two rivers, but is closed by order of the government, owing to complications of an international character that seemed likely to arise.

At Wasa, Mr. Hansen has a surprisingly good hotel for such an isolated place—electric light, well furnished house, and appetising fare. But as the best in any line of business is sure of patronage, so here the hotel we were told paid well. People from Cranbrook go to it as to a summer resort. It is a popular resort also for mosquitoes.

As dusk was coming on when we left Wasa, we did not see much more, but were pleased to lean back in the well upholstered seat and enjoy the cool breeze that fanned our much-burned faces. All too soon we reached our destination, feeling satisfied that we had passed through a valley which in a lifetime would be thickly populated and would rival the Okanagan in the excellence of its fruit, and the fertility of its farms.—Rosalind W. Young.

British Columbia, Canada's Maritime Province on the Pacific Ocean, is the largest in the Dominion, its area being variously estimated at from 372,630 to 395,610 square miles. It is a great, irregular quadrangle, about 700 miles from north to south, with an average width of about 400 miles, lying between latitudes 49 degrees and 60 degrees north. It is bounded on the south by the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the States of Washington, Idaho and Montana, on the west by the Pacific Ocean and Southern Alaska, on the north by Yukon and Mackenzie Territories, and on the east by the Province of Alberta. From the 49th degree north to the 54th degree the eastern boundary follows the axis of the Rocky Mountains, and thence north to the 120th meridian.

The Province is traversed from south to north by four principal ranges of mountains—the Rocky and Selkirk ranges on the east, and the Coast and Island ranges on the west. The Rocky Mountain range preserves its continuity, but the Selkirks are broken up into the Purcell, the Selkirk, the Gold and the Cariboo mountains. Between these ranges and the Rockies lies a valley of remarkable length and regularity, extending from the International Boundary line along the western base of the Rockies, northerly, 700 miles. West of these ranges extends a vast plateau or table land with an average elevation of 3,500 feet above sea level, but so worn away and eroded by water courses that in many parts it presents the appearance of a succession of mountains. In others it spreads out into wide plains and rolling ground, dotted with low hills, which constitute fine areas of farming and pasture lands. This interior plateau is bounded on the west by the Coast range, and on the north by a cross range which gradually merges into the Arctic slope. It is of this great interior plateau that Professor Macoun says: "The whole of British Columbia, south of 52 degrees and east of the Coast range, is a grazing country up to 3,500 feet and a farming country up to 2,500 feet, where irrigation is possible."

The Coast range is a series of massive crystalline rocks, averaging 6,000 feet in height, and a mean width of 100 miles, and descends to the Pacific ocean. The Island range, supposed to have been submerged in past ages, forms the group of islands of which Vancouver and the Queen Charlotte are the principal.

One of the most noticeable physical features of British Columbia is its position as the watershed of the North Pacific slope. All the great rivers flowing into the Pacific, with the exception of the Colorado, find their sources within its boundaries. The more important of these are: the Columbia (the principal waterway of the State of Washington), which flows through the Province for over 600 miles; the Fraser (750 miles long); the Skeena (300 miles); the Thompson, the Kootenay, the Stikine, the Liard and the Peace. These streams, with their numerous tributaries and branches, drain an area equal to about one-tenth of the North American continent. The lake system of British Columbia is extensive and important, furnishing convenient transportation facilities in the interior. The area of lake aggregates 1,560,000 acres.

Many of the smaller streams are not navigable, but these furnish driveways to the lumbermen and supply power for saw-mills, and electric plants, and water for irrigation. The water power is practically unlimited and so widely distributed that no portion of the Province need be without cheap motive power for driving all necessary machinery.

DISTRICTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia is divided into the following districts:

	Acres.
Kootenay (East and West)	15,000,000
Yale	15,500,000
Lillooet	10,000,000
Westminster	4,900,000
Cariboo	96,000,000
Cassiar	100,000,000
Comox (Mainland)	4,000,000
Vancouver Island	10,000,000