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CANADA'S EL DORADO.

BY JULIAN RALPH.



HERE is on this continent a territory of imperial extent which is one of the Canadian sisterhood of states, and yet of which small account has been taken by those who discuss either the most advantageous relations of trade or that closer intimacy so often referred to as a possibility in the future of our country and its northern neighbor. Although British Columbia is advancing in rank among the provinces of the Dominion by reason of its abundant natural resources, it is not remarkable

facts to make a sizable pamphlet of the history of British Columbia. A wandering and imaginative Greek called Juan de Fuca told his people that he had discovered a passage from ocean to ocean between this continent and a great island in the Pacific. Sent there to seize and fortify it, he disappeared—at least from history. This was about 1592. In 1778 Captain Cook roughly surveyed the coast, and in 1792 Captain Vancouver, who as a boy had been with Cook on two voyages, examined the sound between the island and the mainland with great care, hoping to find that it led to the main water system of the interior. He gave to the strait at the entrance the nickname of the Greek, and in the following year received the transfer of authority over the country from the Spanish commissioner Bodega of Quadra, then established there. The two put aside false modesty, and named the great island “the Island of Vancouver and Quadra.” At the time the English sailor was there it chanced that he met that hardy old homespun baronet Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who was the first man to cross the continent, making the astonishing journey in a canoe manned by Iroquois Indians. The mainland became known as New Caledonia. It took its present name from the Columbia River, and that, in turn, got its name from the ship *Columbia*, of Boston, Captain Gray, which entered its mouth in 1792, long after the Spaniards had known the stream and called it the Oregon. The rest is quickly told. The region passed into the hands of the fur-traders. Vancouver Island became a crown colony in 1849, and British Columbia followed in 1858.

ble that we read and hear little concerning it. The people in it are few, and the knowledge of it is even less in proportion. It is but partially explored, and for what can be learned of it one must catch up information piecemeal from blue-books, the pamphlets of scientists, from tales of adventure, and from the less trustworthy literature composed to attract travellers and settlers.

It would severely strain the slender