

HISTORICAL

For those whose interest in the evolution and advancement of this western province looks into the past as well as into the future the pages of its early history contain many fascinating chapters. Unlike the eastern colony—the original Canada—that was acquired by conquest from the Mother Country who founded it, the province of British Columbia has been British from the earliest days of the white man's occupation. Only the faintest suggestion of other claims were ever put forth and they were disposed of before any serious progress had been made. The capital city of Victoria, founded and built up by British subjects only, laid out and patterned after English models and with a climate very similar to that of England itself, is without exception the most ultra-English centre to be found in Canada to-day.

The long chain of events commencing when European powers blindly struck out for unknown possibilities in the Pacific ocean, leading through the race for establishment of claims to new lands in which Great Britain planted two colonies, the one on Vancouver island and the other on the main coast, and culminating in the amalgamation and final confederation of these colonies with the great westward growing Dominion of Canada, constitute a drama of colonial history second in interest to none. Separated, as it were, from the newly-found continent of America by apparently endless plains and impassable mountains, and bordering on an unknown ocean, the districts west of the Rocky mountains were to all intents and purposes in the early days a world of their own. Until finally drawn together by the process of expansion from either extreme and the elimination of the vast unknown intervening spaces, the histories of Eastern and Western Canada are those of unrelated colonies.

Following the discovery of America, Spanish navigators, Spain then being the great naval power of the world, soon found their way around the Horn and into the Pacific ocean, which they declared a "closed sea"—to all other powers. The curtain rose on English activities in these seas near the close of the sixteenth century, when their bold sea-rover Francis Drake, in his famous ship the *Golden Hind*, had the audacity to beard the lion in his den by rounding the Horn and bravely sailing north into these forbidden waters. Taking the Spanish completely by surprise he attacked, captured and looted treasure ship after treasure ship and loaded his own vessel to the gunwales with treasure. Before sailing homeward he landed at a point on the coast somewhere north of the present site of San Francisco and claimed the territory in the name of the Sovereign, calling it "New Albion." Returning to England he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth for these exploits.

Wars and other matters of state prevented Drake's discoveries from being followed up and as far as the English were concerned the curtain fell for some 200 years. Meanwhile the Spanish, reduced by the loss of their Armada to an inferior sea power, pursued with the assistance of native Mexicans a dogged policy of exploration northward along the Pacific coast. Between the year 1587 and 1592 they explored beyond Drake's "New Albion" and discovered, what they believed to be, a passage leading to the Atlantic, which they named Juan de Fuca strait, after a Greek pilot in the