

BRITISH COLUMBIA POLITICALLY.

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We—I mean you—the people of Eastern Canada—have heard a great deal about material British Columbia. Its “sea of mountains,” big fish, immense trees; its sealers, canned salmon, mineral wealth; its “Chinese question” and the rapid growth of its cities have all been made familiar to you more or less during the past few years. It is beginning to dawn upon the Eastern mind that the “sea of mountains” can grow fruit and that there are “spots” in the valleys where immense yields of vegetables, hay, oats and wheat are possible. It is also being understood that there are great areas of pasture land in the interior capable of sustaining millions of head of stock. You have heard of a Pacific Ocean out this way, on the other side of which is China and Japan. In “picture” books and illustrated works of travel you have seen and read about the caribou, the Rocky mountain goat, the big horned sheep which leaps down precipices to escape the hunter or the grizzly bear, and lights on its head and is unhurt—a very harmless fiction—the antelope, the fur seal, the 75lbs. tyhee salmon of the Fraser river and the 1200lbs. sturgeon. You have an impression, too, that the Indians of the Pacific Coast are in some way different from those of the plains or the Micmacs and Ojibways. It is generally conceded that the climate of British Columbia is mild and salubrious. Many of you,—especially in the Maritime Provinces, and in the counties of Huron and Bruce in Ontario, have relatives and friends out here. It is even becoming fashionable among members of Parliament and others in high places to take a trip to the coast in the summer over the C. P. R., and it ought to be of great advantage to us because these travellers are invariably full of good advice and kind wishes. As a country, I say, this Province is becoming pretty well known in a general way to

Eastern Canadians, as having some points of special interest to tourists, who are cautioned however, to accept *cum grano salis* the Western stories about the number of fish in the Fraser river, the size of our trees and one or two other things, which are supposed to have been created, like the fabled dragon, for a special purpose.

But politically it is conceded there is a form of government consistent with the general federal scheme, a local Parliament, some provision for educating children, administering justice, and one or two other things, and that British Columbia elects a “solid six” to go to Ottawa to support the Government there—but, politically, I say, that about limits the knowledge concerning our affairs. It is also known that in the seventies, the unreasonable people of this Province made a fuss about the terms of entering Confederation not being carried out, and there is a vague impression of something concerning a railway which was to have been built to connect British Columbia with the Canadian system, and of there being threats to secede, annex, and all that, and of Lord Dufferin being sent out to see what the matter was, and administering a dose of his celebrated diplomatic soothing syrup. I remember, for I was one of *you* easterners then—that his mission was regarded in the sense of an official jaunt to an outlying and remote corner of the Dominion to settle some squabble or another among the natives—nothing that was worth while making any special enquiries about. The incident impressed us very much in the same way that an uprising in the Sandwich Islands would impress us, news of which would occupy a small corner of the newspaper, low down and of sufficient importance to call for an editorial comment or two. The matter, we understood at the time, was, in some form or other, satisfactorily settled.