

Island is admittedly the only good coal yet found on the Pacific coast of North America. Even if deposits of an equally good character are not discovered on the Canadian mainland along the line of the railway—which is not improbable—the terminus at Vancouver (Coal Harbour) on Burrard Inlet will be immediately opposite to the coal mines of Nanaimo, and ships sailing from thence to Australia, Japan, or India will obtain excellent coal at a very low rate.

It is satisfactory to find that the Imperial authorities are alive to the extreme importance of this route, as the Postmaster-General has (October, 1885) advertised for tenders for a Fortnightly Mail Service between Coal Harbour and Hong Kong, calling both ways at Yokohama, Japan. It remains for the Imperial Government not only to avail itself of the benefits which Canada, by the construction of this road, has conferred on the Mother Country, but to secure them permanently by recognising the necessity of protecting the Pacific terminus of the railway. The dock at Esquimalt, the coal mines at Nanaimo, the terminus at the new city of Vancouver, are *places d'armes* of the utmost strategic importance to the Empire.\*

"The golden age of peace," says a writer of a recent article in a London paper, "has not yet dawned. These positions, all lying close together, should be strongly protected. When this has been done—and no time should be lost—when our Pacific squadron can with despatch and certainty draw men and supplies from Halifax or England, and when regular lines of English steamers ply between Vancouver and the East, the power and influence of Great Britain in the North Pacific will be enormously increased, whether it is to be exercised against aggressive Russia, to maintain her friendly ascendancy in Japan or China, or to hold her own in India."

---

\* See a paper on "The Protection of our Naval Base in the North Pacific," read at the United Service Institution, by Major-General Laurie, on April 6th, 1883, and the interesting discussion that followed the reading, which elicited an apparently unanimous consensus of opinion on the advisability of fortifying Burrard Inlet without delay.