

PREFACE

WHEN some distinguished American visitors once inquired of the late Mr. Gladstone as to the best way of seeing the sights of London, the venerable statesman replied, "From the top of a 'bus, gentlemen." Similarly, if asked how best to see the grandeurs of an untouched corner of the Empire, such as New British Columbia, I would say, "From the back of a pack-horse." The ship of the bush may be slow, and the trail exasperating, but this method of travel has its advantages. It brings you face to face, not only with new wonders of Nature, but with enormous riches—agricultural, mineralogical, forestal, industrial—all lying dormant, and silently calling to the plucky and persevering.

I was one of a party of six which set out from the western fringe of civilisation in Alberta to make the "North-West Passage" by land, threading 1,200 miles of wonderful, practically unknown country—the interior of New Caledonia, or, as it is now officially called, New British Columbia. The party consisted of Harry R. Charlton, Montreal; Robert C. W. Lett, Winnipeg; H. D. Lowry, Washington, U.S.A.; G. Horne Russell, Montreal; a photographer, and myself. The first and third left the party at Tête Jaune Cache to return.

The object of my investigations was to form some notion of the economic and scenic value of the country traversed. This was no easy undertaking, for New British Columbia is a territory upon which Nature has