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## THE STIKINE

Ho! for Alaska, Fort Wrangell and the glaciers! the sources of the Stikine and the summit, whence the waters flow, on one side into the Arctic, on the other into the Pacific.

We left the pretty little city of Victoria, Vancouver Island, on the 15th of August, 1876, and as we rounded the entrance to the naval harbor of Esquimalt, got glimpses of the men-of-war and dockyard, and of sundry long poles sending their tapering points upwards—temporary flagstuffs—the next day to be covered with streamers and bunting in honor of the visit of the Governor-General of Canada, who was expected to arrive in H.M.S. "Amethyst." The good people of Victoria were all in commotion; arches across the bridges leading to the town—arches across the streets—Chinese lanterns and evergreens—strips of red, white, and blue—flags at every corner—flags on every house—bonfires on the hills—old carriages furbished up—fountains playing—dogs flying in terror—little boys drilling, and little girls in flocks warbling "God Save the Queen" to the sweetest of psalmody.

'Tisn't often great men visit this distant nook of Her Majesty's Dominions, a kind of "Ultima Thule" held for what it is to be in the future, not for its past history or its present importance.

When, in 1871, British Columbia merged her autonomy into the Confederation of Canada, then but lately

formed—in 1867—it was on certain stipulations, called a treaty, that a railway should be built, or commenced, across the continent, within a certain time, and carried to completion at an early day, thus connecting the eastern provinces of the Dominion with the west, and giving direct communication through British territory from ocean to ocean. At the time neither party knew much about the interior,—the undertaking was a bold and gigantic one for a young country. On one side wondrous good and magic wealth were expected to spring up at once, and eager hearts and ready hands were impatient to grasp the coming stores. On the other, as the ideal merged into the practical, difficulties were discovered and delays incurred which seemed indefinitely to postpone the event.

As with almost every great work in America, from the time of the Erie Canal down to the present day, party spirit stepped in, and political bitterness on both sides imputed each to the other every vice and fault the calendar could name—greed, extortion, Shylockism, grasping-meanness, on one side, against treachery, broken faith, dishonor, cheating, lying, on the other—an interesting episode in the family relations of one household.

Lord Dufferin's visit is expected to cure all this. Though in reality with very little power, because the doctrine of ministerial responsibility prevails