

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND HER IMPERIAL OUTLOOK.*

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A FORTNIGHT before I left Vancouver, at the beginning of the Christmas holidays, a tree was discovered in Stanley Park larger than the famous cedar on the Pacific side where it is the fashion to back your motor car into the hollow of it and get your picture taken. This park is already fifteen years old, but quite rudely shaken up is that belief we entertained that we had found the largest tree in this most wonderful park in the world. I am quite sure that there are some of the *gentlemen* present who will be able to remember as far back as thirty years, at which time the site now occupied by the city of Vancouver was itself forest primeval. I have not mentioned this incident because it makes so much difference as to whether we have a still bigger tree in Stanley Park, but that it shows not only how very new we are and how little we know of that vaster park of the Empire we call British Columbia, with its area of 395,000 square miles, with ten times the arable land of the Japanese Empire. Surely, as the ages of nations may be reckoned, we are very young, and very new and, perhaps, in some respects, somewhat raw. But I am not afraid but that in some ways we can give an account of ourselves. We have not done much as yet in science or literature or art, and perhaps what little some have done in the way of the humanities is not too deeply appreciated by the rest of us in the big first-hand struggle with elemental things. But we may content ourselves to say with Themistocles "I never learned how to tune a harp or play a lute, but I know how to raise a small and inconsiderable city to glory and greatness."

I am about to consider British Columbia, not as the remotest Province of a far-away Dominion, but as the British Empire on the North Pacific.

To paraphrase a well-known, and perhaps well-worn, aphorism: The twentieth century is the Pacific Ocean's century.

Meagre still is the comparative record of great achievement connected with that weary waste of 70,000,000 square miles of water, larger than all the land surface of the globe, with a volume of water six times as large as the cubical contents of all the land of the earth above sea level, and known as the Pacific Ocean, and thought of as a peaceful and friendly sea. But it is likely that the future epic of the planet will be written on some unpacific coast and of some unpacific hereafter, for all signs point to Armageddon, afloat or ashore, in any event identified with this last

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