

EAST AND WEST

By E. B. Thompson in the University Magazine

Two months I had stayed on the British Columbian Coast and my eyes were wearied with immensity, my imagination strained with ever looking to the dazzling future, conjured by a dauntless people's faith. Perhaps when Eastern conventions once more had fettered me I should long for the boundless hope of an unshackled land, but not now. The name of a dreamy city had sounded the charm of a yet further West, and a steamer was bearing me out of the long, land-hidden Vancouver harbor into the half circle of English Bay.

Behind me and across the narrow, northern inlet, the mountains still slept in their grey strength, unconscious of the June morning's awaking, but though a damp dullness hung over all the peninsular city's shore, across the blue Seymour Straits the mists were clearing, and the gold of the sun was drawing up the silver of the sea to spray distant islands with a haze of translucent brightness. There is nothing more full of luring beauty than islands lying low and gold-rimmed on a western sea; as the boat glided out of the Bay the old Greek dreams of Atlantis lived again, and the tales of the ancient Irish who carried their dead heroes over a sunlit ocean to Moy Mell:

"Incomparable in its haze
Where the sea washes against the land
and hairs of crystal drop from its mane."

Here on the outermost edge of the last land left for man to conquer, with only an ocean between us and the old, old East, the race left behind so long ago, it seemed as if indeed that lustroous shimmer must be the veil hiding a new found haven of rest and peace. We were sailing West into the Orient; and I was west of the West at last.

Unfortunately a southern course of a few hours brought the boat to where the lands, losing their mystic haze, became clear realities of green woods, and a short narrow led it into Plumper's Pass. To some this pass which winds, a sea river, in and out among varied sized islands, is the prettiest part of the sail, but I loved better when we brushed the islands aside and entered the broader Straits of San Juan de Fuca. There, across a sunny sea rose a high wall of opaque mist, surmounted by white, whipped clouds through which gleamed spires like clouds of pearly sheen. What charm had islands and water then, when in a little while an unseen hand rolled back the drape, and the pearly spires shone not as clouds but as the radiant snow peaks of the Olympic Range? Clearer and clearer grew their outline till, the steamer giving a swerve to the west, a giant range of mountains ran straight along the left, high above sea and mist and cloud.

We were approaching the southern part of Vancouver Island, and as Victoria itself became near, the words of Kipling's disputed eulogy of the city rang in my mind: "If you take the beauties of Bournemouth and Torquay, and Honolulu, and place them on the Bay of Naples with the Himalayas behind," it begins,—and at that minute it was easy to understand why the poet had culled comparisons from so many different zones. Something reminiscent of a Japanese painting was in the clear blue and white of those sharp-cut glittering peaks and bright blue sky; the lazy languor of the South slept on the waters of the Strait, and on the nearer shore memories of the old land leapt from those true salt water cliffs unmarred by any lake-like vegetation.

Victoria itself was half hidden, but the land rolled back to where, perched on a height, half a dozen houses looked over a cliff whose red brown contour, basking in sunny freedom from woods, swelled not with Northern ruggedness, but with the softened bareness and wind-swept curves of a south England shore. As we drew nearer the foliage of a formal park made a patch of vivid green on a shoulder of land, of which the elbow formed the east side of a scooped out basin harbor, guarded by islets, one a lighthouse rock. Bare wave-splashed rocks they were, with never a tree to spoil their lonely outline, rocks where the winds and storms might play and wailing seagulls cry, rocks responding to every mood of sky and sea. Not since the day I sailed up Lough Foyle, where new scenes came to me with a sense of remembering things forgotten long ago, had beauty touched me with the same poignant content, and as we entered the harbor with its dull roofed compact city lying around, a sensation strange enough for a Canadian born, came over me. I felt that somehow, after wandering in unfamiliar lands, I had come home, and when we passed the unrigged fishing smacks to come alongside the docks, even the white retaining wall, and long line of dingy deserted warehouses behind, filled me with a happy pleasure. Instead of pitying Victoria's lack of vim and bustle I felt sorry for the rushing, new activity of Vancouver.

How that self made Westerner had ridiculed his little English neighbor, and in all the pride of his planned city and undoubted progress warned me that her sleepy satisfied disregard of "up-to-date methods" would soon become tiresome. I had willingly admitted his wonderful industry, pluck and ambition, but his bragging conceit had grown wearisome and the prospect of meeting her whom his contempt had only made me long the more to see, was agreeably full of delight.

To find that gentle exclusive lady it was necessary to go away from the more commercial

centre and drive through quiet, proper town streets with sober shops, two or three stories high, on either side, between which could be caught glimpses of the white snow of the Olympics. Dollars and cents felt out of place in my purse, as sauntering, grey-capped young Englishmen brushed sleeves with pig-tailed Orientals or a bright-turbaned Hindu, and the impression deepened as the cab turned up a green, shaded street where the upper windows of houses winked lazily at me through branches of trees, over ivied walls or hedges of privet and holly. Before one of these high privet hedges I alighted, and opening a little iron gate, entered the grounds of a square frame house of light grey with long purple blossoms of wisteria, now nearly drooping, falling over the porch.

There, bending over a bush of red Jacquemint roses in a carelessly luxuriant garden, I found her whom I had come so far to see, the very spirit of her fair city, who in truth she is. Holding in her arms the sweet crimson roses, and with a bunch of red ripe strawberries in her hand, she rose to greet me, her quaint air and composure making her seem older than she really was. Little and lovable she looked, but her head was held with too much dignity to warrant any misplaced enthusiasm, and her reserve made me wait till with a low English voice she spoke: "You are very welcome," she said, "as are all who come to me from friends in the old East," only you will find me very quiet after my neighbor Vancouver. You like that better? Ah, that is very sweet of you, my

dear, for though I naturally love my life, the spirit of each place must be different and even in my own domain many changes have come to pass. And now, as you are to be here but for one short week, which will you prefer to do—visit the few sights the tourists see or stay in my garden and live the time with me?"

"O," I said impulsively, "let me stay here with you and the clambering roses, and eat strawberries in yonder shady nook of lilac bushes. Let me pick the wee white English daisies peeping through the green grass under those spreading oaks, or watch the birds tasting the unripe cherries on the other side the shiny ivy creeper. Then may I wander up and down this irregular winding road, for through the gate I see a stately house and garden, and next an old wooden fence which only half hides a low roofed, tumbled cottage and green tangle of bushes. It is all so old, and happy and unplanned."

"Yes," she answered, quietly pleased, "No one has ever laid out my city, for each man has built where he will and can. We have just grown, and if our streets make little display we live inside our hedges. The gardens are my joy, and soon you will see the gentleness returning early from business to have a cup of tea and dig in their flowerbeds a little while before dinner. They take great pride in their roses, and as many do not go to their offices till ten, they have an hour's work in the morning, with very successful results."

A short week it was, spent with that quiet-voiced woman, and the days that followed were

filled with a sweet content. June was queening it over them in her fairest, loveliest mood, and the gardens ran riot with roses, the country afire with broom. Outside the city, rolling farm land tempted us across to northern forests and a rocky western coast, and at night a long narrow gorge, running like a fresh water stream from the harbor, would lure me in a canoe along its dusky wooded banks to watch the bright, silver moonlight dive behind a cloud, and appear in the salt water, a gleaming phosphorescent streak. Sometimes at sunset a strong sea-hunger would lead me through the warm, quiet garden streets to where on the eastern and southern shore the waves were lapping softly on the cool, gray stones. Far across the straits, the pearl spires would change to minarets of glowing opal, and the mountain portals opening to an ocean of unknown wonder, show the golden West joining hands with the brooding East. At such moments the Orient felt strangely, quiveringly near, and a sense of far off remoteness would turn me to an earthy country road, edged with yellow, ragged broom. There, by some homely brown house an unexpected whiff of honeysuckle or late blossoming thorn would startle my loneliness, and send me homeward pondering why we cross the haunting prairie plains, and marvel at the untold wonders of the Rockies only to have the glad tears come at the loved, familiar smell of flowers belonging to a land where we have never lived.

But pleasantest of all perhaps was to loiter up and down the winding hedge-lined roads

with Victoria herself, and hear her relate idle gossip of those who lived behind some holly wall. "Whose is that new, bare mansion of red brick?" I would ask and smile as her head drew up in dignified remembrance. "Some rich northwestern tradesman," would be her answer. "They did not bring any introductions and I do not know them, though unfortunately some of my young people go there oftener than I like. As dear Colonel Bridgeway says, who is a retired English officer, my dear, they entirely forget what is due to their family by mingling with such purely commercial people." For the first time her old world narrowness and "shade of gentle bigotries" grated on me, and I was glad when she passed to a small house with only a square plot of yellow laburnum trees in front and a red rambling climbing up the side.

"There," she said, "lives an old navy family though they have very little wealth. If you went into their dining room you would find Chippendale chairs with a table of British Columbia pine and very soon the chairs will have to go, to be bought by these nouveaux riches neighbors. As for that place," pointing to a large, comfortable, rambling house hidden by clustering trees, "it belongs to an old Hudson Bay family, and in the old times not even the navy and army held their heads higher than those descendants of a Red River squaw."

She was very proud of these early settlers, and as she spoke of her younger sons taking up their work in the far inland, a glow came to her face which taught me that in spite of her English customs and manners she was in truth sealed to the New World, and would never more go back. Different as she was from all her neighbors she was at heart a westerner.

We were walking toward Rockland avenue as she was thus speaking, and on reaching the curved line of houses which I had seen perched on a height, from the ship, even her proud repugnance to American boasting had to give way to a natural pride, as she whispered: "The most beautiful residential street in Canada." I was willing to agree with her. Spreading grounds surrounding large houses of brick and frame on the left side looked over others equally beautiful on the downward slope to the right, and though some had conventional plots and smoothed lawns of patted grass, in many cases their owners had bided larger than they could afford, and the gardens rejoiced in half-cared-for neglect. Others loved their flowers too well to hamper them, and parts of their grounds were left in green rusticity, while a wise grant of liberty allowed strawberry plants to hide under currant bushes and roses, pink and yellow and white to clamber up and down the gravel walks in guarded waywardness. At the upper end of the avenue a cross road opened a noble vista across the Eastern straits and islands, for shouldered by grey-blue foothills rising straight from a sea of sparkling sapphires, Mount Baker towered one mass of pure, hard white, startlingly nakedly near. Miles to the inland of the distant American coast, that peak usually swathed itself in mist and cloud, and though my guide promised me a clearer view from Oak Bay, never afterwards did it appear so supremely close.

Oak Bay was the last spot to which my kindly hostess took me on the morning of the day I had to leave. It lies on the far end of the shoulder of land, a half hour's run by the tram from town, and the whole place consists only of a quaint inn-hotel close to a stony beach, a few gardens larger and more heterogeneous than those of the city, and a golf course on the heights. Yet to me, all the charm of Victoria was summed up in that one visit to Oak Bay. I liked the gardens hidden by the rampant trees and guarded at the gates by pink hollyhock sentinels whose heads nodded in gentle denial to my plea to enter the rambling tangle of green and golden glow. I loved the bare, wrinkled links all brown green with the sun, now deserted for the summer months, but patched with white and orange marguerites, and nearer the shore, pale blue and pink forget-me-nots; but above all my heart went out to the fresh, salt wind and grey rocky moss-covered cliffs. The rapturous joy that had been hurled to me from the land on the first day now changed to lingering regret as I turned to bid the gracious spirit farewell. "Come soon again," she said, "and you will find me then as now sitting on these cliffs and gazing over seaweed and rocks like those on which as a child I wandered barefoot on the far Atlantic coast."

And it is there that I now love best to think of her. All the sweet, luring hope which those shimmering islands had promised me a week before had been fulfilled, and my haven of rest was found. In a few hours the steamer was bearing me back to the rushing West, but passing again that shore where the new gods of a new Olympus look down on her from their glistening thrones I breathed to them a prayer: "Keep her in quiet and growing beauty; guard her from commercial progress and swift wealth, that house by house, and garden by garden she may extend her borders, and with a broader charity and stronger culture retain her romance and old-world peace." North and South have met beside her, East and West join hands before her, and every westerling sun brings weary men to kiss her hand in re-awakened homage. Canada in her heart of hearts is glad. Two at least of her guardians are nobly born, one a stately French Madame at her Eastern River's gate, and the other an English gentlewoman off the shores of the farthest West.

E. B. THOMPSON.

Lieut.-Col. Haggard's Latest Book

When Lieut.-Col. Andrew C. Haggard was living on Vancouver Island, he devoted himself to writing a work, which has recently been issued and been received very favorably by the critics. Its title is "Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette." Following is the review of the book by the London Evening Standard:

"Englishmen are almost as familiar with the story of Louis XVI as with that of Charles I, yet neither of them, however often read, seem to lose their interest. No one, therefore, will wish to quarrel with Lieut.-Col. Haggard for going over old ground. Every time, too, that we read the history of these volcanic years, we experience the same emotions, of which, however, we never weary—first, contempt or indignation for the attitude of the court and sympathy with the discontented middle classes; then, pity for the sufferings of the royal family and horror of the violence of its destroyers.

"This book is no exception. The author, who devotes a good part of the first volume to the earlier, happier days, gives several instances of these viciously aristocratic habits, such as the inexplicably unjust rules which placed the coveted positions in the army and navy forever out of reach of bourgeois soldiers and sailors—a needless irritation, emphasized by the effeminate indolence of the well-born. It all happened little more than a hundred years ago, yet we learn that, when the King went shooting, 'the pages, each of whom had to prove at least two hundred years of direct descent before being received, were too noble to recharge the King's guns themselves. The fired weapons were passed back from one to the other, until they reached the King's armorer, who reloaded them.' This kind of behaviour and the mode of thought it implied were out-of-date, but a much severer criticism should be levelled at some of the other customs. What words can we find harsh enough for the 'Lettres de Cachet' by means of which any one might be imprisoned indefinitely, untried, unaccused? The unfortunate Latude, whose only offence was anonymously to inform the Marquise de Pompadour of an imaginary plot against her, lay for thirty years in prison, and might have remained there but for the inexhaustible Madame Legros. And there are many others who stir our sympathy and anger by sufferings as cruel as those of any victim of the Reign of Terror. For it is impossible not to resent the criminal incapacity of Louis and his ministers. Difficulties, of course, there were, and France has not yet recovered from the financial fallacies of the fourteenth century Philippe le Bel. If that monarch's grasp of economics had been equal to his other capabilities, a Bourbon might yet be on the throne of France. But, with the exception of Turgot, all Louis's ministers only succeeded in making things worse, and much of the blood shed in the coming years is on their hands. It is, presumably, up to this point that most readers are Revolutionists. Few stand the strain of subsequent reprisals.

"For the plot begins to thicken, and we have to decide how much of Louis's inactivity can be put down to indecision, how much to a gentle patriotism, a sublime love of his people. His conduct, by its very unexpectedness, provokes more curiosity than that of the English Charles, and the inevitability, after the first few weeks, of his fate, the pathetic helplessness of this locksmith called upon to hold down the most inhuman revolution of modern Europe, paradoxically reveal (in Lamb's phrase) 'the pangs of abdicating royalty' more than the Stuart's more manlike, more kinglike resistance. But it is as difficult in one case as in the other wholeheartedly to admire. Both these kings, so admirably at the last, had their moments of dishonor, and

the desertion of Strafford is more glaring but not more underhand and craven than that of the Swiss Guards left to defend, in their ignorance, a masterless Tuileries. Their first knowledge of his flight was the message ordering them not to defend themselves!

"As we have hinted, Louis found his natural indecision greatly increased at such a crisis by his genuine love of his people. Time after time he could have escaped before he left Versailles for Paris, but he never could make up his mind to desert his subjects. Time after time he could have stamped down the revolution whilst it was only smouldering, but he could not make up his mind to spill French blood. As events fell out, it is hard to believe that he acted rightly, for he might have saved the lives of his family and hundreds of aristocrats, and he could hardly have rendered the struggle more embittered than it afterwards became. But it was not in his nature, and the best man France had had for king since the sixteenth century paid for the sins of his fathers to the third and fourth generations. Only at the end, alone and insulted, the king behind the locksmith appeared. Never was there a better example of De Musset's famous line, 'Rein ne nous rend plus grands qu'une grande douleur.' We have followed the author in contenting ourselves with commenting upon a few aspects of Louis XVI, since it is to the king and his immediate surroundings that Lieut.-Col. Haggard almost exclusively confines himself. He knows the period well. He has written several books on seventeenth and eighteenth-century France, and amid obscurities of construction and grammatical errors, he emerges triumphant by his vigor, his evident love of his subject, and his remarkably vivid powers of description, which will carry away the most pedantic reader in spite of himself. He has, of course, an intensely dramatic story to tell, but some historians would have found no difficulty in making it dull. His ardent partisanship of Louis and Marie Antoinette blinds him, perhaps, not to their faults, but to the difficulties of their opponents. Once overthrown, Louis had to be executed. To exile him would have provided as constant a danger as the Pretenders were for England. Merely to reduce him to the rank of citizen was impossible while the Royalist party existed. To imprison him, as was evidenced, was tantamount to death—for, as an old writer has said, 'Experience has shown that from the prisons of princes to their graves is but a little step.' Yet, since a more dispassionate biographer would probably have written a more lifeless account, we would not have Lieut.-Col. Haggard otherwise; for he has given us a delightful book, full of anecdotes and pen-pictures of all the leading personalities of that remarkable period—Naker and his more famous daughter, La Fayette, Robespierre, Madame Roland, De Lamotte, Rohan, Marat, and numberless others, whilst the enigmatical Marie Antoinette is treated in detail, side by side with Louis. No one could desire a more picturesque representation of the period, or read the book without finding his interest in history quickened, his enthusiasm renewed."

Col. Haggard's many friends on Vancouver Island will be interested in the following extract from M. A. P.:

It seems likely that Lieut.-Col. Andrew Haggard, whose new book is receiving so much attention, is becoming as prolific an author as his distinguished brother, the difference being that Col. Haggard writes true stories while the other deals in fiction. As a traveler and explorer, Col. Andrew Haggard has had many stirring experiences. Once he was very near a lion which might have given points to even the subtlest philosopher among us. It was in Bogos, an outlying province of Abyssinia, his companions consisting of a na-

tive and a camel. Col. Haggard, when night came and they had pitched their camp, wished to make a fire, but neither prayers nor persuasion could induce the native to oblige him. "No," said the latter, "if we make a fire and a lion comes we shall be killed. He will see there are only two men and a camel by the fire, and he will certainly kill one or both of us. But if we do not make a fire, if the lion comes, although he will still see only two men and one camel, he will say, 'There is no fire! Why do they not make a fire? There is some trap.' And he will be afraid to touch us." Curiously enough, the lion did come that night, and reared all round the little camp. And, what was still more strange, he must have used the same arguments about the trap that the native had expounded previously, for he disappeared at dawn without molesting them. That he had approached very close on several occasions was evidenced by the marks his paws made in the sand.

Little Bits of Wit and Humor

The name of "John Bull" as applied to the English nation was first made use of in a poem dated 1712.

It's easier to fall in love than to get out of debt.

How large a dollar looks to the man who has but thirty cents!

A woman who has a nose for news usually has a chin for telling it.

Unfortunately, a man's obituary notice always comes too late to get him a job.

Wonder if the June bridegroom is already beginning to feel small?

Antique: Boarding house butter is often in the heirloom class.

Plenty of it: Kicking is about all the exercise some people take.

The White Woman's Burden: Lady Speaker—What holds woman down? Voice from the Gallery—Her hat.

Amor Vincit Omnia: Mother—And when he proposed, did you tell him to see me? Daughter—Yes, mamma; and he said he'd seen you several times, but he wanted to marry me just the same.

HUMAN HEART AS A POWER ENGINE

A great physician once remarked that, despite its complexity, there was no organ of the body readier to adapt itself to circumstances or more capable of repaying ordinary care than the heart. This is very true, and an appreciation of that fact should cause us all the more carefully to follow the Wise Man's advice and to keep our heart with all diligence. When we have regard to the tremendous work the heart accomplishes, we might well with Wesley say: "Strange that a harp of thousand strings should keep in tune so long."

Estimated in scientific fashion, a man's heart in twenty-four hours performs an amount of work which, if represented by the energy demanded for a big lift, would raise 120 tons weight one foot high. Such a calculation can be accurately determined by measuring the force expended in one beat or cycle of movement of the heart and multiplying the short work into that of the day. Thus in no small degree does the heart's labor contribute to swell the big total of the energy the human engine expends each day it lives.

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YOUNG

VICTORIA, B. C.

HE "UNPAID HANDMAID" OF GERMANY—FRANCE

St. Petersburg, May 28.—The Novoye Vremya remarks on the efforts being made to bring about a rapprochement between France and Germany, and declares that though Russia values the alliance with France and regards it as an instrument for securing the general peace, she can do without it. So far it is only through her alliance with Russia and her friendship with England that France has been able to secure her interests against German aggression. If she abandons the Triple Entente, the journal adds, she will be in the position of "unpaid handmaid" to Germany.

ASK YEARLY HOLIDAY OF SIX WHOLE DAYS

To obtain for British Columbia travelers an annual holiday of six days a petition is being circulated in Vancouver, Victoria and other provincial cities by the United Commercial Travelers' Association. Already it has been largely signed by the business establishments of the Terminal City and, as the disposition among merchants here appears to be favorable, no difficulty is anticipated.

This year the U. C. T. want the business houses to allow their Knights of the Grip off duty between the 6th and 12th of June, the object being to give them all an opportunity to enjoy an excursion to the Alaska-Yukon exposition at Seattle by the steamer Makura, of the Canadian-Australian line, which has been chartered.

Advertise in THE COLONIST