

Politics
and Indians

Victoria B.C.

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Dear Rankine,

Your letter written
during the Christmas holidays
arrived some time since, & now
you are no doubt gundig
away again & looking forward
with pleasure? to the Spring seas.
You have never told me whether
those express Stamps printed on
the envelope (Wells Fargo & Co) sent
last summer from San Francisco
were any use to you, that is to say
whether they were legitimately includable
(if they coin a word) in your

Collection. I can get both W.F. & Co's
& Barnard's Epus Stamps here if
you want them.

There is quite a tempest in the political
tea-pot here at present, & every body is
electioneering & canvassing & standing in
groups about the Street - corners talking &
bullying each other. The two rival
Newspapers - like those of Setauswill -
are going for each other in lively style,
one comes out one day with a statement
that the other is "the devoted organ of a
demoralized government" & the other
next day unceremoniously mentions the first
as "our low & scurrilous contemporary"
& so on. The local government were
deposed by a single vote lately, & now the
new ministers are being collected after
accepting office. Altogether the system of
government applied to this little place is
something like using the engines of the Great
Eastern to draw a Churn, as a certain

legislation is said to have remarked.

The climate being so mild here, the ducks & geese do not all go south in winter. Many of them remain, & if by chance the ponds & lakes are frozen for a few days, let them themselves to the harbours & inlets. There are many ardent sportsmen who on Saturdays & Sundays wake the whole neighbourhood round with shooting, & if perchance they bag one duck are greatly pleased. Geese & quail also frequent the Island, but all game birds are driven away for miles around Victoria by the efforts of the sportsmen aforementioned. Robins & the little black jacks sometimes called Snow-birds, & also the chickadees seem to winter here, & I think I heard a song sparrow singing a few days ago. The most revolting thing

about Victoria is the Indian
 element-. The Gloucester has a
 reserve just across the Harbour, & also
 turns & turns unoccupied lanes in the
 city into warrens. They are a most degraded
 lot, & are to be seen parading the streets
 in all their native ugliness & dirt at
 any time of day. It must give a stranger
 unaccustomed to the noble Red Man, a poor
 idea of a place to see an Indian dressed
 in a dirty white blanket with bare legs & feet,
 a head covered with shaggy hair never
 combed since he was born, & a few bristly
 hairs sticking in his chin marching about at
 mid day.



meant to represent Indian & Indians
 but not altogether a success.
 your obedient Brother
 George.