

scended from a family which assumed its surname from the town of Vernon, in Normandy, and was established in England by one of the companions in arms of the Conqueror. Many members of the family have occupied high positions under different sovereigns. The chief commissioner was educated in England for the royal engineers, receiving a commission from Her Majesty's government in 1863, which, however, he shortly afterward resigned, and, accompanied by his brother, who had been some time in the service, went the same year to British Columbia. Col. Houghton, now deputy adjutant general of Winnipeg (then a captain in the twentieth) formed one of the party. For several years the firm carried on commercial and other pursuits in the province, with more or less success, experiencing all the difficulties peculiar to isolated and uncivilized places. In due course, Mr. Vernon purchased the interests of his partners, and now owns one of the finest and most extensive ranches in the province. In 1875, he offered himself as a candidate to represent the important district of Yale in the local legislature, and was returned by a large majority. In February, 1876, he was offered the position, by the Elliott cabinet, of commissioner of government lands, which he accepted, and was again re-

elected by an overwhelming majority. This position he retained till the general election of 1878, when he was once more elected, and represented the same district for the succeeding four years. At the next general election, Mr. Vernon did not present himself, and removed out of the political field until the general election of 1886, when he again came forward and was returned by a heavy vote. In March of this year, upon the death of the late lamented Mr. Smith, premier and chief commissioner of lands and works, he accepted the vacant post, and returning for reelection, he was once more successful, his opponent not receiving twenty-three per cent. of the vote cast. Mr. Vernon married, in 1877, Miss Branka, sister of Mrs. Col. Powell, of Victoria. Mrs. Vernon died in 1885, leaving two children. The chief commissioner's father is the owner of a large estate at Clontarf, which has been in possession of the family for generations. The castle itself was founded by the Knights Templar of the twelfth century, and rebuilt by its present owner. The battle of Clontarf, fought in 1014, is historical. Hon. Mr. Vernon has a brother residing in Victoria, and two others still in Her Majesty's service—Col. E. Vernon, of Dublin, and Maj. G. Vernon, now in India.

#### A FAVORITE RESORT.

**A**MONG the many beautiful summer resorts and sanitariums of the Pacific coast, none possesses greater attractions or offers better opportunities for the recuperation of health, than Harrison hot springs, of British Columbia. They lie on Harrison lake, in the

mountains of the Coast range, just north of the line of the Canadian Pacific. A tramway, four miles in length is being constructed from Agassiz station, which will render them easily accessible. The virtue of these waters has long been known, and people have bathed in them