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### When the British Scientists Visited Canada 40 Years Ago

BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE  
MET IN CANADA IN 1884. INTERESTING REFERENCE TO THAT  
VISIT. OTHER ITEMS REGARDING ASSOCIATION, SOME OF  
WHOSE MEMBERS WILL VISIT TIMMINS THIS WEEK.

In connection with the visit this week to Timmins of members of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the accompanying picture will be of more than passing interest. The British Association for the Advancement of Science met in Toronto as long ago as 1884—forty years.

A picture of the delegates from the British Association for the Advancement of Science was taken in 1884 on board the Allan Liner Parisian. This unique photograph is published through the courtesy of Sir George Green Hill who forwarded it through the Cunard Steam Ship Company. Sir George arrived at Quebec on Friday, August 1st, on the Cunard Steamer Caronia with Sir Ernest Rutherford, President of the Association and most of the remaining delegates. He is seen at the top of the picture with arms folded on the rail. He is the oldest living member of the British Association today. He is 77 years of age.

Last week the daily newspapers raised a rather unnecessary excitement about Sir George Green Hill. They suggested that the scientist had "disappeared." The absent-mindedness of learned men was stressed, and all sorts of guesses made as to what had occurred to the missing man. He was on the special train to take the British scientists from Quebec on Saturday morning. He was seen when the party stopped to examine the Quebec bridge. When the train arrived at Montreal he had "disappeared," said the daily journals. The facts developed after the newspapers had had their



excitement. Sir George had simply gone on to Toronto with a friend and was staying at Hart House, unaware of the anxiety he was causing the dailies. He thought his friend had mentioned the change in plans to those in charge of the party and his friend no doubt thought that Sir George had done this himself. All the newspapers theories were astray and no doubt the incident caused the distinguished visitor here what may be termed "unpleasant amusement."

The British Association for the advancement of Science is a society first organized in 1831, mainly through the exertions of Sir David Brewster. Its object is to assist the progress of discovery and to disseminate the latest results of scientific research, by bringing together men eminent in all the several departments of science. The society is divided into sections, which, after the President's address, meet separately for the reading of papers and for conference. These sessions have been in progress in Toronto for several days past. This week-end a party from the Geological Section of the Association will visit Timmins on a tour of the mining fields of the North Land.

In its early days the Association met with considerable opposition and ridicule. The London Times (the famous "Thunderer") was for years an active opponent of the Association and showered ridicule upon its plans and purposes. The Association, however, triumphed over all opposition and criticism, and is recognized today as one of the most powerful and useful organizations. Its membership has included the names of practically all the great men of science in the British Empire during the past eighty or ninety years. The Association meets once a year at some selected city in the Empire. This year at Toronto the Association has broken all previous records for attendance. The total attendance this year is announced as 2,435, of which number there are 573 delegates from overseas.

As an interesting sidelight, the following paragraphs from The Toronto Globe one day last week may be noted:—

"At least one arrival on the British Association special last evening came prepared to shake hands with "Our Lady of the Snows." His name is Professor Victor Cofman, and, though a Rumanian by birth, he is from the Department of Physical Chemistry in University College, London. Over his military uniform he wore knee-high shoe-packs, with thick woollen stockings rolled down over the tops. From his shoulder was slung a bulging pack-sack, from his belt dangled a water bottle, on the other side hung a pair of field glasses. A thick scarf kept his neck reasonably warm, but, apparently in desperation, he had thrown away his hat, for it was nowhere visible. In addition to his heavy suitcase, he carried a smart military cane.

"On being questioned, Prof. Cofman stated that he was planning to visit Northern Ontario on several months' prospecting tour, following the convention."

In reply to this (if the case be correctly reported), Prof. Cofman may be assured that he will not feel the cold in this country. The air is so dry—oh, so dry. It will be dry for a while, even after October 23rd. And when the country goes wet again, there will be convenient ways of guarding against the weather. So, no one need now or ever bundle up against the North Land weather until winter comes. But, on the other hand, the story of Prof. Cofman's clothing may be on a par with the other scientist's "disappearance."

References in district newspapers to samples of strawberries brought in from the farm of Mr. Thos. Stillwell, near Brower, would suggest that the small fruits can be successfully grown in this district. In appearance and flavour the samples are said to be beyond criticism. They were grown from plants imported from Michigan three years ago. You get bigger dividends from thinking safety every day than from any other investment in the world.

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