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A Vancouver despatch, dated Mar. 8, says the laborers on W., P. & Y. Ry. construction have struck, the Co. having reduced wages from 35c. to 30c. an hour, & added another hour to the day's work.

Grand Trunk Betterments, etc.

The Victoria Jubilee Bridge, an illustration of which is given on page 69, is being rapidly pushed forward, so as to secure its completion by May 1. Work on the roadway and sidewalk for vehicular and pedestrian traffic is now being done. On the south side of the bridge the iron lattice work on the outer edge already extends to about the centre. Large consignments of the lattice work are arriving almost daily.

This bridge, which was designed by the Co.'s Chief Engineer, J. Hobson, was commenced in Oct., 1897, by the erection of the first span on the west end, the structure being built completely around the tube of the old bridge, the latter being cleverly utilized as a roadway on which a temporary steel span was moved out to the first pier, & the new structure then erected outside the temporary span. The progress of the work was delayed for 2 months during the winter of 1897-98, owing to very severe weather, & the actual time of construction has only extended over a period of about 8 months. During that time the enormous traffic was delayed but very little, practically nothing to speak of, the longest time, on any one occasion that the line was closed to traffic, being about 2 hours, & the total length of time closed during construction being about twenty hours. This is a very remarkable result, when the following facts are taken into consideration: While the old bridge, entire, weighed 9,044 tons, the new bridge weighs 22,000 tons. The total length of bridge is 6,592 ft., number of piers, 24, number of spans,

25, length central span, 330 ft., length side spans, 242 ft. While the width of the old bridge was 16 ft., the width of the new bridge will be 65 ft. The height of the old bridge was 18 ft., the height of the new bridge over all is 28 ft. The total cost of the new bridge, which provides double track for railroad trains, drive-ways for vehicles on each side, & foot-walks on the outside of drive-ways, will be about \$2,000,000. The contract price of the old Victoria Bridge was \$6,813,000. The flooring of the present bridge will weigh 2,800 lbs. per lineal foot, & each span has been so erected that it will carry not only a train on each track, moving in opposite directions, but going at a rate of 45 miles an hour, with a total weight of 4,000 lbs. to the lineal foot, moving at the rate of 25 miles an hour, as well as drive-ways & foot-walks crowded with vehicles & pedestrians. The new bridge will rank, from an engineering standpoint, with the foremost structures of the age, as the bridge which it replaced ranked the foremost, as a monument to the skill of the engineers & bridge builders of the period in which it was built. The opening of the double track on the new bridge marks an era in the handling of traffic over the G.T.R. system, for, whereas the old bridge could accommodate a maximum of but 100 trains a day, as they were required to travel at a low rate of speed, & one train could not follow another until the preceding one was out, thus losing a considerable amount of valuable time during a day, the present bridge has almost an unlimited capacity in this respect, as trains can be moved rapidly & follow each other in rapid succession, owing to the establishment of a modern electric block system, which will permit 2 or 3 trains on the bridge at the same time. This will enable the G.T.R. to handle with facility the large freight business passing through Montreal for export to Europe, which has heretofore been more or less hampered, owing to the limited capacity of the old bridge, as well as handling in a proper manner the large passenger business which annually comes to & through Montreal during the summer tourist season.

Entrance to Montreal.—In spite of statements to the contrary, no steps have been taken to advance the project for the abolition of the level crossings in Montreal. No thought of the new elevated road has been definitely shaped in the official mind; no plan exists on paper. The initiative must be taken by the Montreal civic committee which was appointed several years ago, & which has been renewed from time to time. The Co. is prepared to deal with the question in a liberal spirit; it will not make any advances. Mr. Hays would be glad to see the level crossings abolished; the urgency lies with the city.

Montreal General Offices.—A water color sketch of the new offices has been sent to the directors in London. This gives perspective, atmospheric effects, & the sense of color harmony. The idea of Architect Waite was to produce what is called monumental color, & in this he has succeeded admirably, for so delicately has the color scheme been blent that the shadings and graduations are seen to grow naturally out of the architectural design. This is what will actually be realized in the material—a colour harmony produced in stone—the shadings following a natural growth, which will give to the completed building the sense of a perfect harmony. Sir Charles Rivers-Wilson has great taste in architecture, while the members of the board are much interested in a building which will be one of the best of its character on this continent. The sketch will, no doubt, be examined by prominent English architects. Mr. Waite has given much care to the work, which presents certain new features & details, not shown in the original drawing. The street cars are seen running in front of the building, while in the centre is seen a great clock, which will be found to be a great convenience to business men & to others. The clock was added upon the suggestion of several prominent Montrealers, & Mr. Hays was heartily in favor of this addition, which will be an ornament & a convenience. Since the plans were prepared and the cost estimated, certain materials to be employed in the building have gone up in price. Iron, for instance,

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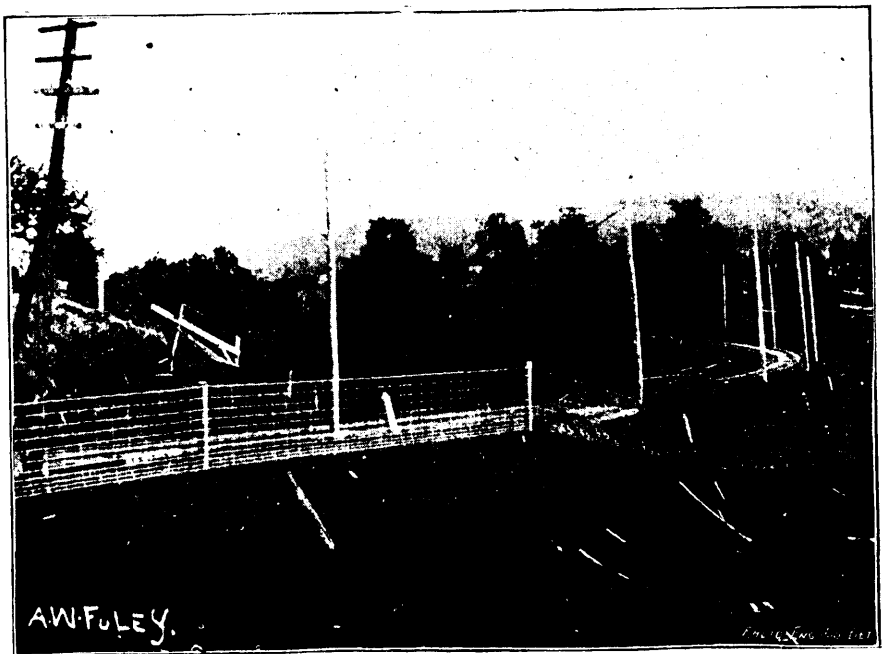
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