

Bank, the Empress Hotel, Government House, and the Parliament Buildings, which are pronounced by experts to have no equal in any province in the Dominion, and to which there is now in course of erection an addition of grey granite which will cost over \$1,000,000.

Five denominations are taking steps to build magnificent churches, and the public schools and colleges are well equipped and abreast of the times.

The commercial trade of Victoria, both wholesale and retail, is very extensive, and the bank clearings last year exceeded that of any other city of its population in Great Britain, Canada or the United States.

The climate of Victoria is considered to be the finest in the world, exceeding that of any part of California; no extreme of either heat or cold, and moderate rainfall. The Japan current circling around the southern portion of Vancouver Island tempers the climate, as the Gulf Stream does that of England. Snow is almost unknown, frost is seldom experienced, and flowers bloom in the gardens all the year round. The winter rain is not unpleasant, and the geographical arrangement of the mountains to the east, west and south is such that the winds are stripped of their moisture before reaching Victoria, with the result that the rainfall here, according to meteorological statistics, is about half that on the lower mainland, the average for ten years being only 28 inches per year.

Victoria as a place of residence has attractions which no other city in the west possesses. She is the undisputed commercial, political and social capital. Her society is of the highest order, and is equal to that of any city in America.

As to trade and commerce, Victoria is coming into her own. She has two fine harbors, the outer for large ocean-going vessels, and the inner for smaller ones. Both harbors are at all times easy of access, and practically free from fog. Over 2,500 vessels berthed at the outer harbor last year, and over 3,000 at the inner harbor, with an aggregate tonnage of four and a half millions. The vessels, freight and passengers have doubled in three years. The city now has two railways, and when the Seymour Narrows is bridged, will become the terminal of at least three trans-continental railways. Victoria is the only Canadian seaport on the direct route between Europe and the Orient by the Panama Canal, and is thus the natural gateway of the Pacific Coast; and being nearer the grain-growing centres of Alberta and Saskatchewan than any port on the Atlantic Coast, this city is sure to become the greatest wheat storehouse in the world, the distributing centre of the whole of Western Canada. The wheat of the prairie provinces must come to the Pacific Coast. This is the opinion of no less authorities than Sir William White of the C. P. R. and Mr. Hugh Paterson of Winnipeg.

The bridging of Seymour Narrows, the extension of the outer harbor, and the erection of immense grain elevators here are being vigorously agitated, and these projects are being favorably entertained by the Dominion Government.

I have thus endeavored to give as correctly as possible the past, the present, and the certain future of one of the most beautiful cities in the world, a city that is becoming daily more beautiful and more important.