

VICTORIA CITY VANCOUVER ISLAND

CANADA'S GATEWAY TO THE ORIENT



VICTORIANS who have recently returned from world-girdling tours say that they have been amazed to find how well the fame of this city as a beautiful place of residence has spread. In the most unexpected places they have come across people who have been here, and the latter invariably express a desire to return. It is probably correct to say that amongst the thousands who annually visit Victoria there are few who do not hope to repeat the visit on a future occasion. The Colonist is enabled to present today extracts from a letter from a gentleman living in England who paid a brief visit to the city a short time ago, and was much impressed with its attractions. The letter reads, in part, as follows:

143 Louisville Road, Upper Tooting,
London, S. W.
12th June, 1908.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Rolston:

I looked today at a note book that I kept while away from home last year, and find that it is just a year ago that my wife and I were at Victoria. Since then I have several times made up my mind to write to you, but somehow or other I have always deferred the writing, with the result that twelve months have slipped by, and you must feel, I am sure, that we had but a passing thought for Victoria. Before we reached your beautiful district we had seen many very interesting places, but none made so great an impression on us as Vancouver Island. Just now here at home spring is fully with us—I am writing this in the garden—and I have never seen the country more delightful. We are in this way reminded of your charming land—Britain on the Pacific—and we have not forgotten nor are we ever likely to forget the glorious broom which this time last year we saw at its best. We are very proud of our gorse, and on the common, only a few yards from our house, it is very fine, but I must let it give way to your broom. I am always sorry that I did not take the trouble when on that still remembered drive with Mrs. Rolston and your daughter to walk the few steps necessary to pay a pilgrimage to the sample—the only one in the neighborhood, I believe your daughter said—of our gorse. We often talk of Victoria and of the pleasant time we spent there—we were very loath to come away—due in so great a measure to your kindness to two wanderers. Speaking of our trip to you at Colwood, I recollect your daughter mentioning gravel while we were going along. I failed to understand her, and she equally failed to understand me when I spoke of gravel as red. I wish that I could send you over one of our red gravel paths—better far than the dirty old stuff she called gravel. I hope that she will forgive my writing in this fashion about our gravel, but tell her it is because I am so jealous of your lovely broom. Her lesson to me on snake fences—that the dogwood tree will not blossom away from your island—the Princess' trail—all are still in mind. . . .

Yours very truly,
C. T. DRUMGOLD.

An aggressive advertising campaign has been embarked upon by the reorganized Victoria Tourist and Development Association, and the plans for this season's efforts call for the issuing of no less than 10,000 copies of the booklet, "Outpost of Empire," besides advertising in all the principal newspapers of the country.

The booklet, which will shortly be issued from the Colonist presses, has been brought up to date by the introduction of new pictures and letterpress, and it will be found in every way a creditable and worthy production. Some extracts read:

Victoria has a climate devoid of extremes of heat or cold, and much similar to that of the south of England. There are practically but two seasons, spring and fall; zero weather, sunstrokes and prostrations from the heat are afflictions only known to Victorians through newspaper reports from other parts of the world.

The moderate temperature of the summer season makes Victoria the ideal place for holiday seekers. Her proximity to the Pacific Ocean, and the Japan current flowing past her shores, keep the temperature of the winter usually mild. During the summer months the prevailing winds are from the southwest, which, passing over the snow-capped Olympic Mountains and the Straits of Juan de Fuca, are comfortably tempered before reaching the city of Victoria.

The winter climate is the most moderate in Canada, the average winter temperature being 38 degrees (above).

No day is so hot as to be uncomfortable, and no night so warm as to warrant discarding the blanket.

The ideal summer temperature is one where the mean maximum for the month of July during a long period of years is not in excess of 65 degrees Fahr.

The ideal winter temperature is one where the mean minimum for the month of January

over a long period of years is as high as 35 degrees Fahr.

The ideal all-the-year climate is the one where both of these conditions obtain.

There is only one such spot in the world, and that is at Victoria, B. C.

The United States weather bureau compiles the averages, and has issued reports showing them for the last 30 years. These figures are geographically presented in what are known as Isotherm Charts. The word "isotherm" means equal, and indicates that the places through which line passes have similar temperatures at the same time of year.

The winter isotherm of 35 degrees, starting on the east coast of the continent at Norfolk, Virginia, passes through Oklahoma, Phoenix, Arizona, then angles north in the neighborhood of San Francisco, and passes almost due north to Victoria.

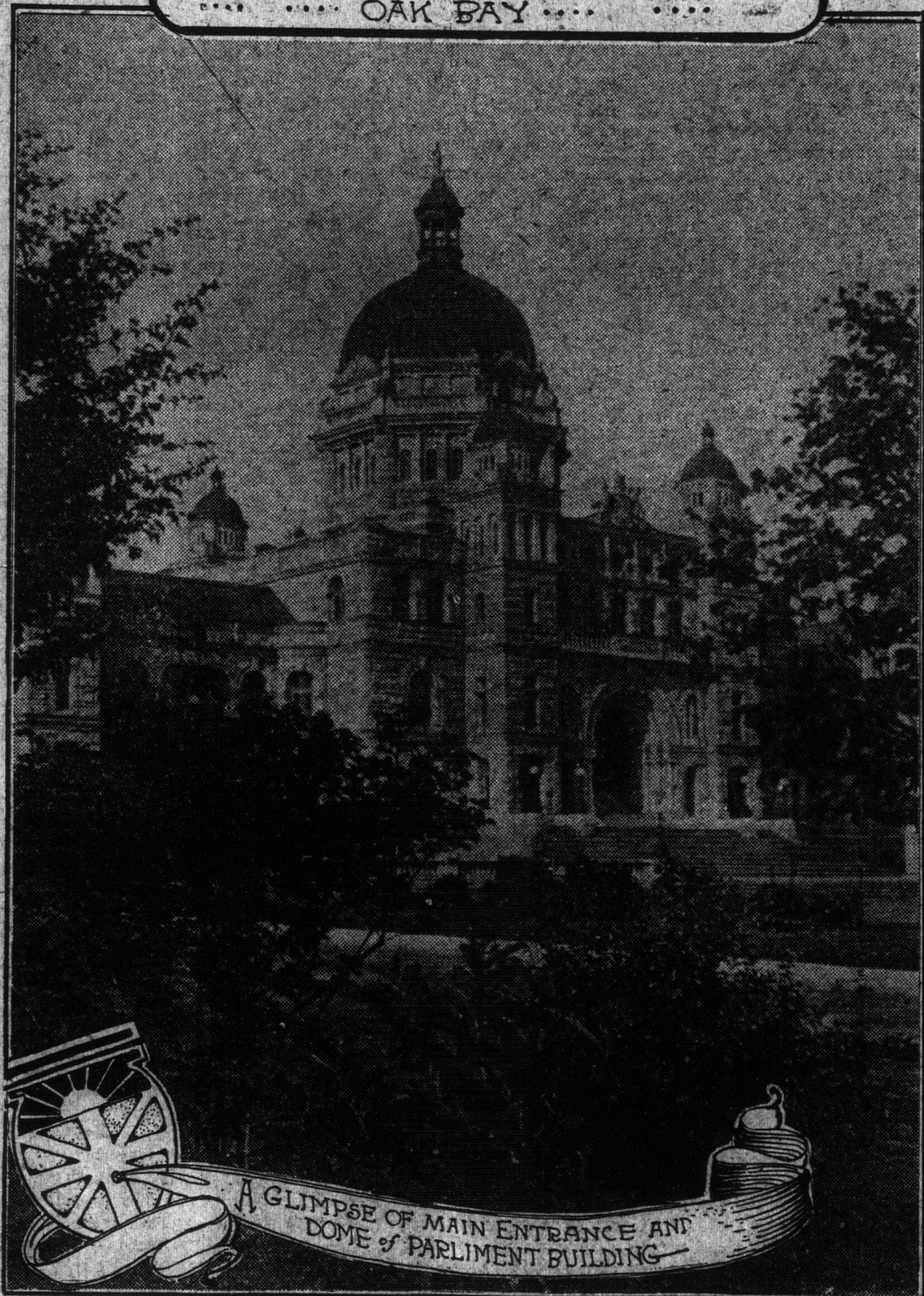
The summer isotherm, starting at Sydney, Nova Scotia, passes northwest to the Hudson Bay, through York Factory, and then further north to Yukon Territory, and then curving south culminates in Victoria, where it intersects the winter isotherm.

This is certainly Victoria's growing time, and she grows in a most peculiar way. Her people do not believe in living in a cramped condition. Her houses are not built upon half-lots, and her people are not existing in flats. They require room to breathe and to enjoy her bountiful supply of fresh air. They must live in homes built upon not less than sixty-foot lots and very often two or three such lots, and so beautiful are its environs that the people are very particular that their homes command

FIRST GLIMPSE OF



AUTOMOBILING ALONG THE OCEAN DRIVE
OAK BAY



A GLIMPSE OF MAIN ENTRANCE AND DOME OF PARLIAMENT BUILDING

commercial and manufacturing centre; therefore they have bought some very large tracts of land in magnificent locations on the outskirts of the city. Expert landscape gardeners, surveyors and engineers are being employed in laying out one or two more "little Victorias," that undoubtedly will attract large numbers of wealthy people from other places as permanent residents.

Victoria has been described as "a bit of England on the shores of the Pacific," which certainly conveys a very excellent idea of what the city actually is, its institutions, buildings, clubs, homes, manners and customs being essentially of English character, and one with any knowledge of England would imagine as he walked its streets, or conversed with its people that he was indeed in a bit of England, and it is these characteristics that make the city extremely interesting to all visitors from the United States.

There is, however, one respect in which Victoria excels England, and that is in the matter of sunshine. There is in this city a much larger average of sunshine than in any country of England or any other part of the United Kingdom.

Sir Edgar Vincent, speaking on this subject before the Victoria Canadian Club, said:

"It has been said that it is like the climate of England. I would not insist too much upon the likeness, for it is like it only as a second edition of a book is like the original—largely revised and augmented. You have revised the fogs and augmented the sunshine." (Laughter and applause.)

An Important Horse Training Centre

The city has now invested nearly \$100,000 in exhibition buildings, race track and athletic

grounds about two miles from the post office. The annual Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition is held on September 22nd to 26th, inclusive, and is one of the best shows of its kind in the West. The parade of stock is exceptionally good and cannot be equalled in any city twice its size. A day or two before the close of last year the old buildings were swept away by fire, but that could hardly be considered a disaster to the institution, for the old buildings have been replaced by more spacious and modern ones, such as are needed to accommodate the increasing number of entries in all lines. There is a large increase in the number of horse boxes and stalls on account of the great reputation this city has got as a centre for the training of thoroughbred horses for running, and trotting. This is undoubtedly owing to the mildness of our winter, which enables horses to be worked at all seasons of the year. Breeders and trainers in other parts of Canada who have not thought of Victoria in this respect should investigate the advantages to be derived from having their horses trained here. There is scarcely a day in the year when it is not a pleasure to drive a horse in Victoria.

As a tourist and residential city, Victoria is now well established, but somehow the fact has been lost sight of that it is the centre of one of the most beautiful stretches of country in the West, possesses unsurpassed facilities for mixed farming, poultry raising, dairying and especially for fruit growing and the cultivation of flowering bulbs. No organized or systematic effort has been made until recently to thoroughly develop fruit culture; but there is no reason why the districts around Victoria should not develop a business in certain lines equal to any, surpassing that of California.

The Victoria Development and Tourist Association is often asked by people who have a desire to make their permanent home in or near Victoria, what business they can embark in with moderate capital, particularly by people who have some income from other sources. In answer to those enquiries, fruit culture can be recommended as one which offers pleasant occupation with the delights of a residence in the country and a sure and steady income if ordinary care and intelligence is exercised.

The very large average of daily sunshine, the small yearly average rainfall and the almost total absence of frost have made Victoria an ideal location for the cultivation of bulbs and flowers. During the past few years this business has grown very rapidly, although it is undoubtedly true that even these successes can only be looked upon as preliminary experiments, so large and important will the future achievements be in this delightful industry.

The same success has been met with in the cultivation and sale of cut flowers under glass. Last year almost all florists in the city, notwithstanding that they have been steadily enlarging their premises in every way, were sold out entirely, and found it impossible to keep up with their orders that poured in from all parts of the Pacific Coast and Western Canada. Tomatoes and lettuce grown under glass for winter consumption are also important factors in the success achieved in this business. Tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuce are sent from Victoria as far north as Fairbanks, in Alaska, and Dawson, in the Yukon. The prairies also provide a market as far east as Winnipeg.

Although several of the growers measure their glass houses by the acre, it is true that this year all the local lettuce was sold out by the beginning of May, and that the Southern product had to be imported at prohibitive prices.

There is no question that the phenomenal success of this industry is due to the fact that so much more sunshine is experienced in Victoria than in any other part of the North Pacific Coast.

The forest wealth tributary to Victoria is greater than that tributary to any other city in the world. On this island there are at least eight million acres of splendid timber, with an estimated cut of at least twenty thousand feet per acre, although it is not unusual to run up to forty or fifty thousand feet per acre. There are several important mills in the city; while at Chemainus, a short distance from Victoria, there is one of the largest mills on the coast. Alberni, too, the terminus of the new branch line of the E. & N. Railway, will in the near future have a number of large lumber mills, from which the product will go to the Orient and to the South. The development of these neighboring points will all help Victoria, which is the centre of the wholesale and retail business of the Island. The manufacture of pulp and paper will, before long, be a great industry in the neighborhood of Victoria.

The fishing industry is also an important factor in the development of Victoria. There are several salmon canneries established in and around the city, and many traps are located along the shores of the Island near to the city. This salmon industry has always been a great asset of the Province, and British Columbia salmon has always commanded the highest prices in the world, being recognized as being put up in the most cleanly and best condition of all salmon in America.