

VICTORIA THE BEAUTIFUL

THE PALATIAL "EMPRESS"

Handsome Hotel Structure of C. P. R. Now Practically Completed

Palatial C.P.R. Empress Hotel Rapidly Approaching Completion— A Visitor's Views of the Attractions of the Queen City of the West

Herewith is reproduced an excellent photograph of the Empress Hotel, just approaching completion by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. It was taken specially for the Colonist by Messrs. Fleming Bros., and is the very latest view of the imposing structure which will be formally opened for business in a few months' time. To one who remembers the site as a former mere mudhole formed by the waters of James Bay, the change which has been wrought by the architect and builder is nothing short of marvellous. It was long the popular impression that the area which has been covered by the handsome structure which now rears its lofty head there, was absolutely worthless as a civic asset. Certain it is that but for the circumstance that a company possessed of the immense financial resources of the C. P. R. was interested in the site, it would have remained unused. It is doubtful if in the next hundred years the area would have been put to any practical use by private enterprise. The cost of the huge expenditure necessary to make it of any value.

After repeated memorials from the Board of Trade and the city, the C. P. R. was induced to open negotiations with the city looking to the acquisition of the site for the purpose of erecting a hotel. A bylaw providing for the grant of land, freedom from taxation and free water received the almost unanimous endorsement of the ratepayers, and on October 14th, 1904, Inspector W. W. Northcott issued the building permit.

Shortly afterwards the big railway company let a contract for the excavation of the site. This was a huge job, demanding an exhibition of the best engineering skill. A retaining wall was built, and the water pumped out. This laid bare a soggy mass of silt—the accumulation of centuries—which extended in some places to a depth of 25 feet. A special clam-shell dredge was put to work, and for months it labored day and night at the apparently interminable task of "getting down to bed-rock."

At last, this which proved the most difficult portion of the entire job, was accomplished, and the work of putting in the foundations commenced. Piles were driven over the entire area of the site, in some instances to a depth of 25 feet, and on this flooring was laid down the solid concrete foundation. With an eye to the future, provision was made for an ultimate enlargement of the hotel, foundation being made for an additional wing. And right here it may be mentioned that already the company has decided to proceed at an early date with the contemplated enlargement.

After long and vexatious delays, the Dominion government was induced to allow the King Edward dredge to come to Victoria and pump the mud which had accumulated in James Bay over the retaining wall to cover the area around the foundation which has been excavated. This work was interrupted on several occasions owing to the necessity of the dredge putting in an appearance at New Westminster, but finally it was accomplished, the corporation meanwhile assisting in the filling-in process by hauling earth from Spring Ridge and elsewhere.

The contract for the superstructure was awarded to Messrs. Gribble, Skene & Co. the plans being drawn by E. M. Rattenbury, the architect. Pressed brick was the chief material, with stone facings and copings from the Haddington Island quarries. The building is seven stories in height, with 300 rooms.

Messrs. Lemon, Gonnason & Co. were awarded the contract for the main interior fittings—this including the major portion of the mill work. That this firm has executed its task in a highly satisfactory manner is shown not only by the beautiful aspect of the interior, but by the praise bestowed upon it by the contractors.

dreamy summer atmosphere. And he could have driven the bark of Ulysses into many a shallow bay whose wooded shores exhaled a lumbrous perfume. I have been here two weeks and watched for a rough sea, and then a vexing mist hiding the Olympics on the horizon. Victoria has its own to find only sparkling waves, with now and then a lull luring to permanent residence, if not to indolence. No city in all Canada has so large an independent population who live here because they choose it, while the native-born Victorian has his passionate love of his city and of his Island. Many of them would fain be a crown colony, trading only with the great seaports of western Asia. With the dividing mountains, it looks as if nature would have it so, and Victoria is nearer these ports than San Francisco. I know one can readily reply that the railway has made an easy path through the mountains, but that would only be the beginning of an argument I would better leave alone.

This Beautiful Capital

of British Columbia, which looks to the Orient for its commerce, has an interesting history. It was in March,

sustaining government out of the material to his hand, and ruled the land with wisdom and grace, like the fabled king who judged sitting in the sun. Like him, too, his "city" was among the rocks, with forests of fir added. This standard fir of British Columbia did not receive its name from the famous blunder about the altitude of Mrs. Brown about Hooker. Herein was the wisdom of James Douglas. He paid no working heed to despatches from Downing street, and it had been well for Britain if many a colonial ruler had done likewise. One of these official documents, as read and remembered by Agnes Deans Cameron, was as follows: "You will immediately proceed to gather all the Indians of Caledonia (note the imperial notions of B. C. geography) into reservations, where law and the gospel may conveniently be presented to them. Sir Bartle Frere has recently pursued this plan with marked success among the Kafirs at the Cape." At this moment I fancy I hear, down the years, the echo of a hoarse laugh as the sturdy governor laid down the document. To quote Miss Cameron: "B-

ing such an age to set a valuation on the northwest coast. Gordon failed to secure one deer, and broke into cursing when told that here, where there were no park enclosures, men could average six a day without fatigue.

Fort Victoria

was the chief human feature of the place. In 1849, a small dairy was the only building standing outside the fort pickets. Douglas and a later chief factor each built a house, and a village grew slowly. In 1857, there was but one wharf on the harbor, although the town had been laid out in streets five years before when Douglas became governor. For long the Hudson's Bay fort was the most imposing building of the town, and there was also a fort on the northeast side of the harbor. There are pleasant and romantic records of social life in those days; it was riding parties and high tea or tea-dinner with dance and song till midnight. In 1858 the great gold rush from California came, and 30,000 miners wintered in Victoria; and in 1862 the city was incorporated.

Loveliness of Lawn

and glade and rich luxuriance of bloom within the stone enclosure; and in a year or two the stone wall itself will seem a living thing, throbbing under lacy wraps of English ivy. The house has seaward a spacious colonnade with thirty-three Gothic columns and under this is a bowing alley over sixty feet long. Separated from the drawingroom by doric columns, is the music room with an immense recess for a pipe organ. Beyond this, with folding doors, is the conservatory with tiled floor. The dining room has two Tudor arches and the library and billiard room are on the same grand scale. The ceiling is of native Douglas fir, treated with red and fly, a fish weighing six pounds above all earthly joys, scoring any catch below a twenty-pound weight. Yesterday he left for his pet fishing waters near the mouth of the Campbell river, where he once caught, with rod and fly, a fish weighing 60 1-4 pounds. Dr. X. has this in common with the meek and heavenly-

son, winter or summer, the materialistic significance of wheat, let him come to Avontour. Within doors there is much to interest the guest, such as an old library with first editions to his hand, even to Salvin's Bible, and portraits looking wistfully from the past, and a wonderful hunting scene in tapestry, done by an ancestor in France, for the garden is owned by an old French name, Leneveu. Among the guests are English people belonging to the army or navy, who, after service in India or Africa or other outposts of the Empire, have drifted this way and made the

Island Their Home

And very gentle people they are, with a fund of interesting reminiscences. One of them, a retired surgeon, is an old sportsman who loves to hark back to big fish and game in India. He is seventy years old and still loves fishing above all earthly joys, scoring any catch below a twenty-pound weight. Yesterday he left for his pet fishing waters near the mouth of the Campbell river, where he once caught, with rod and fly, a fish weighing 60 1-4 pounds. Dr. X. has this in common with the meek and heavenly-

to come. It is estimated that if an acre of holly were planted on the day of her birth and cultivated as a standard for her twenty-first birthday any Victorian girl would possess an independence of fortune, and the expense of cultivation is only a trifle. But we are in the park by the ponds, and we see their narrow places with quaint bridges, one of which is an almond-shaped arch of native granite. It was built by Chinamen, who it seems could not have made no other. All day long dozens of white swans, proud and graceful, swim the shallow water as if motion were symmetry and unheard melody rolled into one. It is wonderful how these haughty birds, with their heads with the smoothest dignity while they forage for vulgar grub at the bottom of

The Baby Lake

Stand a mere human gentleman on his head for any purpose whatever and you are a rascal. He is covered with sham and rickety, grace in spite of his snowy whiteness, grace in spite of his fishy, ugly temper in his face. One of the swans is a disgraceful, miserably concealed bird, and shows his sharp beak, ugly temper in his face. One of the swans is a disgraceful, miserably concealed bird, and shows his sharp beak, ugly temper in his face.

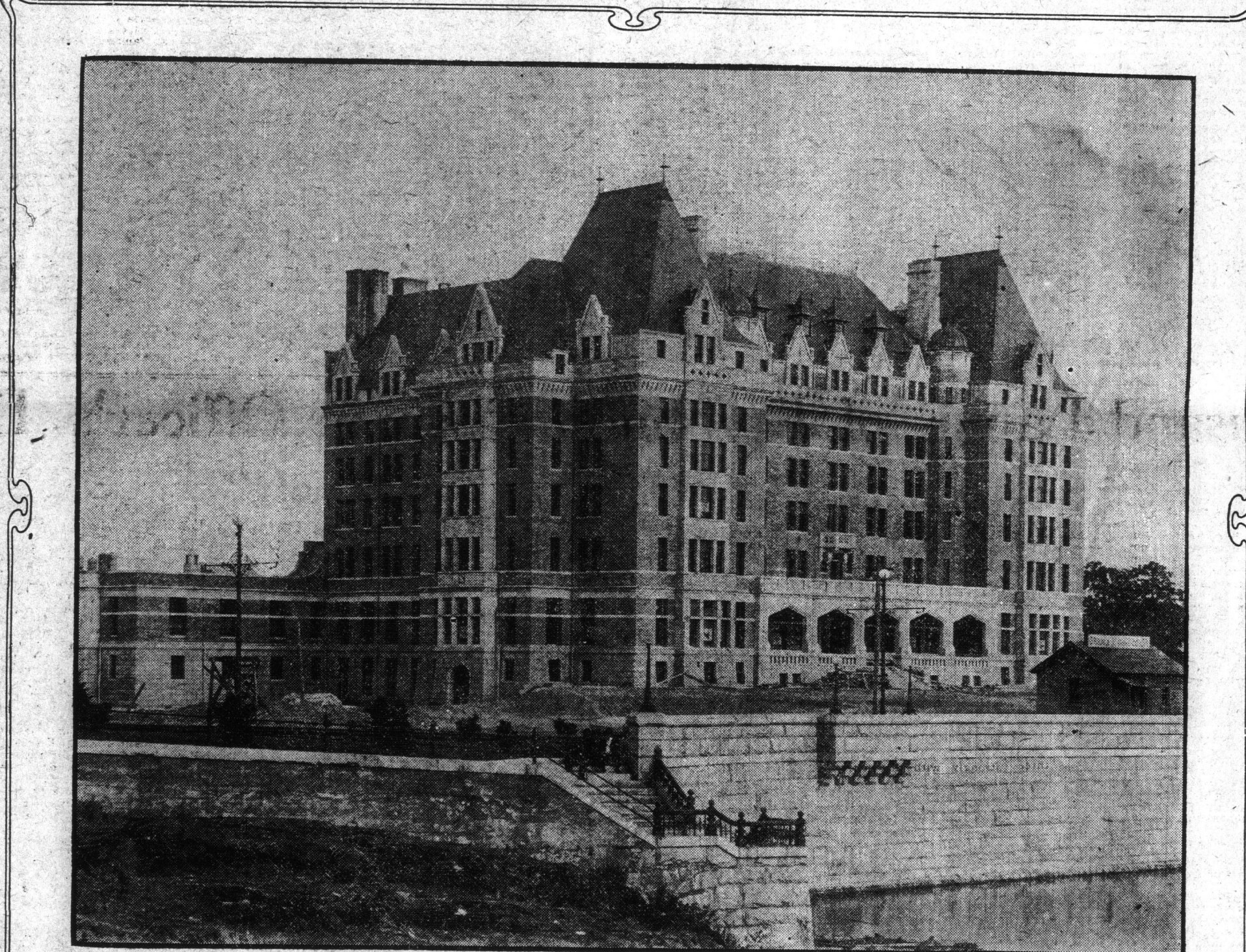
whipped out her little Victorian weaver and nipped that in the bud. She did not do me so herself. Near the monument hangs a huge rusty Chinese bell, taken during the Boxer rebellion by a lieutenant in the navy, who exhibited it presented it to his called, and finally presented it to his native port. It is worth noting that English daisies bloom under your feet in the park twelve months in the year, and that in one corner is a native oak tree. Not far away in the open, where only Scotch broom grows, on a granite pedestal stand Burns and his friend Mary in bronze; the first monument to the poet erected on the continent. I believe Toronto thought herself happy in claiming the precedence, when the alert

Agnes Deans Cameron

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From the Outer Sea
The upper water, with an oily ripple on its surface, slips smoothly down till it reaches the gorge, to be suddenly lashed into a raging, reversible cascade. But the stronger waters from the sea conquer, and ere long the channel is again a placid inlet. You can reach the Gorge by boat and canoe up the Arm, or by carriage and car along the roadway. Going by the road you pass the Indian reserve almost in the heart of the city, and see growing sweet peas and white washing hanging to dry. No white man's money can lure them to sell so much as a foot of soil. The Indian reserve, hence the difficulty. Speculation is in the air here, and if real estate keeps climbing up the Songhees may one day be very wealthy.

Victoria is the seat of government and the capital of British Columbia. It is charmingly situated on the southeast of Vancouver Island, and for climate and surroundings has no rival in Canada. Victoria is the oldest town in the province, dating back to 1846. It leaped into prominence during the gold excitement and grew rapidly in trade and population. The city is substantially built of stone, with many fine stone and brick blocks in the business portion, while the private houses, surrounded by beautiful lawns, gardens and shrubberies, are picturesque and cozy. The Parliament buildings, overlooking James Bay, is one of the finest examples of architecture in America. We were conducted over it, and I was interested to hear that the architect was the son of the Rev. H. O. Rattenbury, of Bradford, and the stonemasons for the building were also Yorkshiresmen. Parliament buildings includes one of the finest museums in the province. It contains fine collections of natural history, mineral, agricultural and horticultural specimens, and is a centre of great interest to visitors. Beacon Hill park, a natural island ground, facing the strait of Juan de Fuca, affords one of the most magnificent views in the world, as we saw from our motor run, the snow-clad heights of the Olympian range and the noble dome-like Mount Baker forming the background of an entrancing picture. Victoria Arm and the Gorge form one of the most beautiful stretches of inland water imaginable, and there are many other delightful bays and inlets which lend peculiar attraction and variety to the scene. With such a wealth of natural beauty Victoria is fast becoming the Mecca of the tourists, many thousands from all parts of the world visiting Victoria every year. The Canadian Pacific railway is building a magnificent hotel, "The Empress," near the parliament buildings.—J. G. in Sheffield Independent.



Very Latest View of the Palatial C.P.R. Empress Hotel Structure, James Bay Embankment. Photo by Fleming Bros.

1843, that a small black steamer called the Beaver, built ten years before by order of that famous "company of adventurers trading into Hudson's bay," and launched under the patronage of the Sailor King, anchored in Camosin harbor, with Chief Trader Douglas and fifteen men on board. The Indians of the Songhees village, curious and angry, paddled out to examine and learn the meaning of "the big canoe that smokes and thunders." This was the first steamer to plough these Pacific waters, and for more than half a century she faithfully served her "honorable company," going to her doom one summer night in 1888, on the rocks off the harbor across the strait. Douglas cleared ground and built a fort, naming it Camosin. The landmark is preserved by a tablet on a building opposite the Bank of Montreal. The first name was changed to Albert for the prince consort, and finally to Victoria. From 1839 the company had, by crown grant, the sole right of trading for twenty-one years with the Indians west of the Rockies. In 1849 it acquired by charter the whole of Vancouver Island. In the same year Richard Blanchard was sent out as the first colonial governor, without salary. In two years he returned home, and

Douglas, the Real Founder, and father of the colony, was appointed in his place. He immediately constructed a representative and self-

C. is big enough to place in it, side by side, at the same time, two Englands, three Irelands, four Scotlands and still leave 5,000 square miles uncovered." Among the

Lasting Achievements

Douglas wrought for the province are the splendid roads over which the unthinking tourist howls. He sowed the seed of the Scotch broom, which grows everywhere so abundantly. He would carry it in his pocket and scatter it when driving. Victorians have done honor to his memory in different ways. — Here is a bit of an incident in early B. C. history. When Captain Gordon, brother of Prime Minister Aberdeen, visited Vancouver Island, he was treated to a dish of smoking hot salmon. "What is that?" he asked. "Salmon; we have plenty here." "Have you flies and rods?" "No; we use lines and bait; the Indians catch them in nets." "No flies and rods! then indeed you have turned savages." Fishing therefore being out of the question for the captain and his party, of sportsmen, the swiftest horses were ordered and the noble visitors rode to a deer hunt. Finlayson, the Hudson's Bay factor, asked Gordon: "Is not this beautiful?" and received for an answer: "I would not give one of the blakest knolls of all the bleak hills of Scotland for twenty feet, was built of stone taken off the site. The outlook from every side of the house includes seven beautiful bays. From the drawingroom window

place. There are fire-places everywhere, and the house has many other points (notably seven bathrooms) which spurn forbids chronicling. Altogether it will be a "homey" place for a "house party." The whole construction is homey in a patriotic sense, all the materials used being native to the island. The contract price of house and stable is only \$30,000.

A Country Home

Yesterday we had afternoon tea in one of these mansions, whose chief interior feature was its magnificent hall, which was all in a bloom with masses of cut flowers. To descend its stairway and walk to the drawingroom was to breathe a spirit of noblesse oblige. I thought of what a well-influenced of stately old houses. He felt bound to the best within him when he must walk a great distance from his bed-window to his bed. . . . early all of these residences are built of wood, many of them shingled with cedar. In my wanderings I strayed into a place owned by an early Victorian family on Rockland heights, where a modern wooden residence in colonial style is nearing completion. The stone fence surrounding the six acres and the foundation wall, which varies in height from four to thirteen feet, was built of stone taken off the site. The outlook from every side of the house includes seven beautiful bays. From the drawingroom window

Rich and Redolent Bloom

and crowded, sheltering trees and shrubbery are everywhere. There are tall, straight, shivering poplars, high branching oak and radiant green locust trees; there are cedar and juniper and rowan, walnut and elm; there are holly and laurel and elder and various other sorts. And the name of this home in the old garden is Avontour, a sweet Dutch word meaning literally evening hour. I wish there were words compact of perfume to tell the accents of the garden when the loosening evening breeze, faintly salt, comes through the trees. We sit in their close shade on the edge of a vignette of lawn while the sun is high, all the city shut out. It is the gentle Elia's sweet security with its difference. If any weary denizen of Winnipeg wishes to escape for a sea-

Stately Proportions

It begins to branch out at the ground and ascends to a point at the summit. Of cultivated trees the holly has the greatest commercial value, and wise people with opportunity are now planting them with an eye to the future. At ten years, a healthy holly will yield \$5 and then should be left a year to rest. I was told of a persistent one that took \$75 worth of holly from a tree one Christmas, but it ruined the tree. Holly thrives better here than anywhere on the coast, and Seattle itself would furnish a market for all that can be produced for years

It is rather little attention recently to the illuminations that it has for different degrees of light so not been a to them. It is a from the the thods energy or into light. tificial lights are many of exceed half even more omical success the numerous. The the desired his display, importance played for the propo

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