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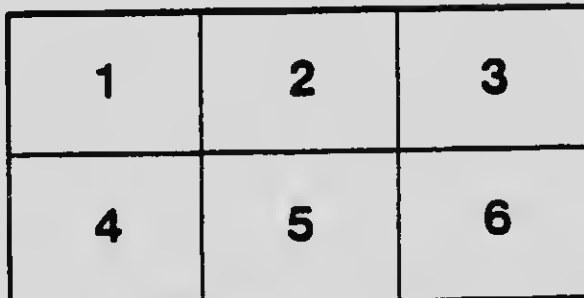
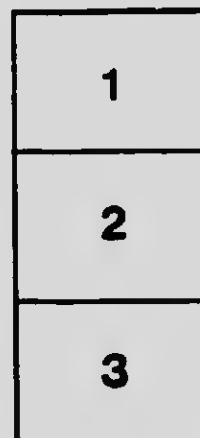
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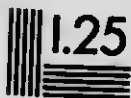
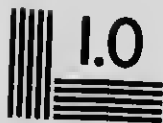
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4
A CENTURY OF HISTORIC HOTELS

MONTREAL



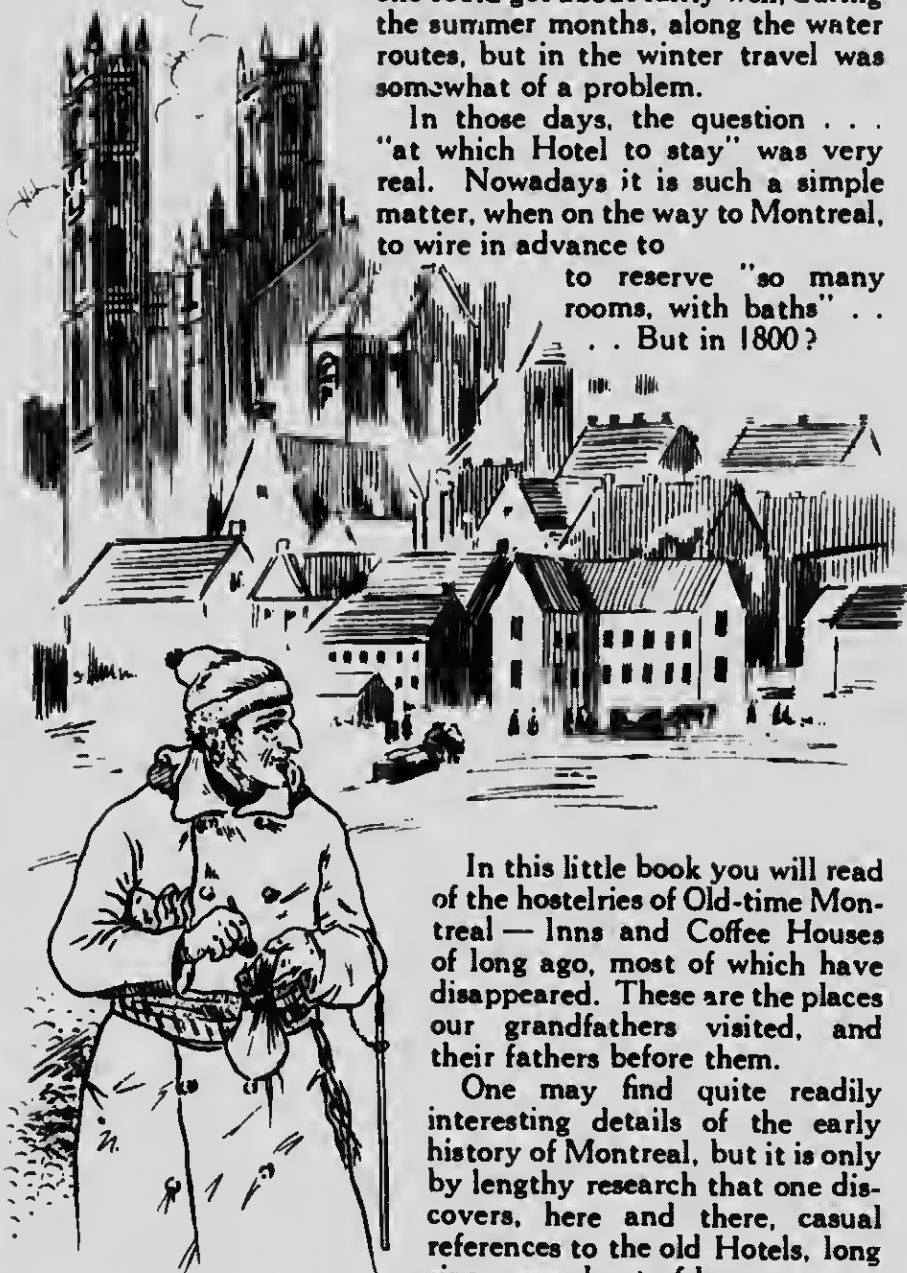
With the Compliments of The Windsor Hotel

A Hundred Years Ago

travelling on this Continent was indeed an adventure. It is true that one could get about fairly well, during the summer months, along the water routes, but in the winter travel was somewhat of a problem.

In those days, the question . . . "at which Hotel to stay" was very real. Nowadays it is such a simple matter, when on the way to Montreal, to wire in advance to

to reserve "so many rooms, with baths" . . . But in 1800?



In this little book you will read of the hostelries of Old-time Montreal — Inns and Coffee Houses of long ago, most of which have disappeared. These are the places our grandfathers visited, and their fathers before them.

One may find quite readily interesting details of the early history of Montreal, but it is only by lengthy research that one discovers, here and there, casual references to the old Hotels, long since passed out of ken.



VIEW OF MONTREAL ABOUT 1800
FROM BEAVER HALL HILL



CITY OF MONTREAL, AS IT APPEARED IN 1803
(FROM SOUTH SHORE)

MONTREAL, a hundred years ago, was a little settlement on the bank of the St. Lawrence. One famous book on old Montreal (published as late as 1839), tells us that Notre Dame Street was 1344 yards long, and that from the Champ de Mars one might enjoy the fine view of the "orchards and country homes towards the mountain". We also read that Craig Street was destined to be a wonderful place, "if ever it should be lined on both sides with houses like some few that are in it".

From this we see that the whole City of that day was between Craig Street and the River, the old historical part of Montreal.

In another volume, published in 1807, the writer gives us the following sidelight on Travelling Conditions . . . "The Canadian Calash is a very sorry vehicle, compared to the English post-chaise; nor are the Auberges quite so comfortable as English inns".



This is the only reference the author makes to the Hotel accommodation in all his travels from Kamouraska (100 miles below Quebec) up to Montreal.

Later on, however, in his journey southwards, via Lake Champlain, there are two references . . . "We found near the Lake a kind of public house, where we stopped during the night".

. . . "There are a great many islands in Lake Champlain, which are generally inhabited; you find Inns on them too, where you can get provisions, and beds, if necessary".

Under such conditions, travelling was a real adventure — and it is at that point that we take up the research in Old-Time Hotels.



Commercial
Hotel
1800

This is one of the earliest Montreal Hotels of which there is any definite record. Originally it was named "English's Belfast House", but about 1800 it became the "Commercial Hotel". The old woodcut gives some indication as to its location, as the towers of Notre Dame Church are shown. To-day no trace of this Hotel can be found. In a quaint old announcement

we read that . . . "the Hotel stands opposite the Quebec and Laprairie Steamboat Wharves" . . . hence, no doubt, the river steamer in the picture.

Dillon's Hotel

There are some interesting and historical references made to Dillon's Hotel (1807) which stood on Place d'Armes Square. This Hotel was for some years the meeting place of the Beaver Club —



DILLON'S HOTEL

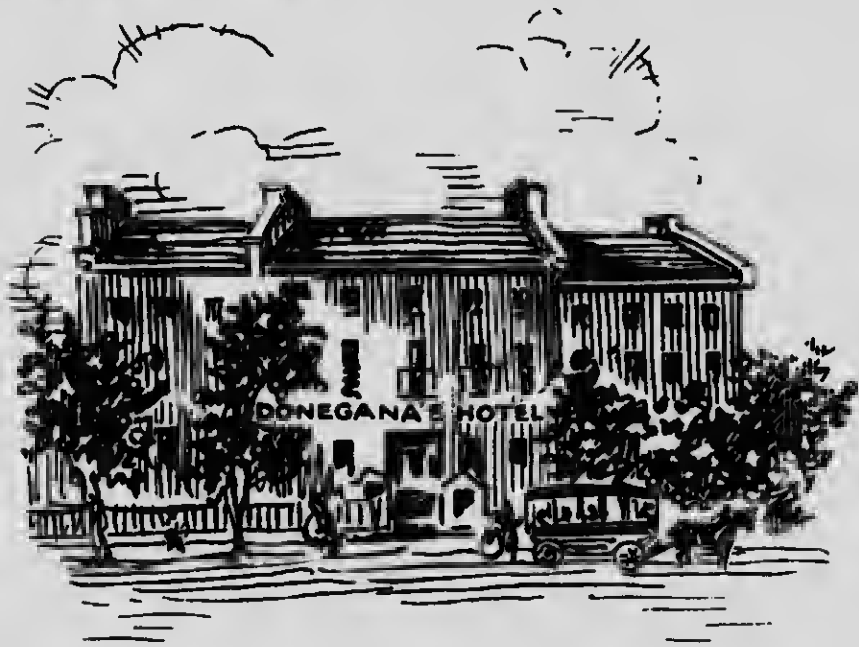
the members of which were all North West Company men who had passed at least one winter "dans le pays d'en haut" (i.e. up-country). Many men famous in the development of Canada in the early days were members of the Beaver Club. This old Hotel was still standing in 1850 but was demolished about that time to make room for office buildings.

There was another Hotel of some importance, "The Exchange", on St. Paul Street, which was one of the fine streets in those early days.



A little later on (1820-5), a leading hostelry was The Donegana Hotel, located in Notre Dame Street, not far from where the Notre Dame Hospital stood. This Hotel boasted of . . .

Donegana "fifty sleeping apartments, all arranged
Hotel to receive the finest ventilation". In
the announcements, great stress is laid
on the fine view over the Champ de Mars, and "the country
towards the Mountain".



Rasco's Hotel
1836

On its site formerly stood the palace of the Marquis de Vaudreuil, Governor of Montreal and it is interesting to note that to-day parts of the original walls of the palace are still standing. Rasco's was opened on May 1st, 1836. Its enterprising conductor formerly occupied the splendid building next to the Theater



Royal, known as the Masonic Hall, which was destroyed by fire on the 24th of April, 1833.

Many famous visitors to Montreal were guests at this Hotel. Charles Dickens, in connection with his visit, during which both the Author and his wife took part in Private Theatricals, mentions the Hotel in one of his works . . . "But only think of Kate playing! and playing devilish well, I assure you!" Rasco's was the only Hotel in Canada referred to by Charles Dickens. Captain G. Black, the noted explorer of the Arctic regions, made this Hotel his Montreal headquarters.

In 1850 we find reference to "Mack's Hotel" (formerly Rasco's) but in the intervening years the City had spread out, and at that time the St. Lawrence Hall, on Great St. James Street, was the leading Hotel.



FORTIFIED SCHOOLHOUSES - OLDEST BUILDINGS
IN MONTREAL SHERBROOKE STREET

The Ottawa Hotel, situated on McGill and St. Maurice Streets, was no doubt so named because the Stage line for Bytown (Ottawa) left from this Hostelry. We note that the . . . "usual fare to Bytown was 20 to 25 shillings". This building later became the Western Hotel, and the name "Ottawa" was bestowed on another Hotel on Great St. James' Street. We find noted as "central and convenient", Ryan's Hotel at 231 St. Paul Street. This was the Eastern Townships Stage Office, and the stage fare to Chambly was 3s. 9d., to Granby 11s. 3d., to Sherbrooke, 23s. 9d.

It is interesting to note that, during the winter months only, the Quebec stage left from Giroux's, in St. Vincent Street, the fare to Quebec being 50s, but intermediate distances were charged at the rate of 10d. per league. The Ottawa Stage, during the winter months, left from the Ottawa Hotel, 48-50 Great St. James Street,

The growth of the City is well marked about this time, as we find reference to a number of new Hotels: The Arcade, the City Hotel, Grant's Hotel, Orr's Hotel at Monklands, advertised as a favourite resort for driving parties. There was also Sword's Hotel, and the Victoria, on the west side of Place d'Armes. All these have long since disappeared.



MAISONNEUVE MONUMENT ON
PLACE D'ARMES

FRENCH'S HOTEL,



Corner of Frankfort St. & City Hall Square,
 (OPPOSITE THE CITY HALL AND PARK FOUNTAIN.),
NEW YORK CITY,

Was built and opened by the Subscriber, May 1, 1849, who trusts that for **CONVENIENCE, ELEGANCE, COMFORT and ECONOMY** it cannot be surpassed in the world. It contains more rooms than any other Hotel on this Continent save one only, all of which are warmed gratis. They are all fitted up with marble top wash stands which are supplied with Croton water through silver plated cocks. There is but one bed in a room; the halls and water closets on every floor will be lit with gas during the night. This Hotel is in the

IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF MERCANTILE BUSINESS

AND THE PRINCIPAL PLACES OF AMUSEMENT, and offers every inducement to those who consult **CONVENIENCE, ELEGANCE and ECONOMY**, as the prices will be sufficiently moderate to suit any portion of the travelling public. There is a **BARBER'S SHOP** and an extensive range of **BATH ROOMS** connected therewith. The Hotel will be conducted on the European plan of lodging rooms, and meals as they may be ordered in the spacious and splendid **Refectory**.

Porters will be up during the night to admit Lodgers, and also to call them at any hour they may desire, and in no case will servants be permitted to exact or receive perquisites.

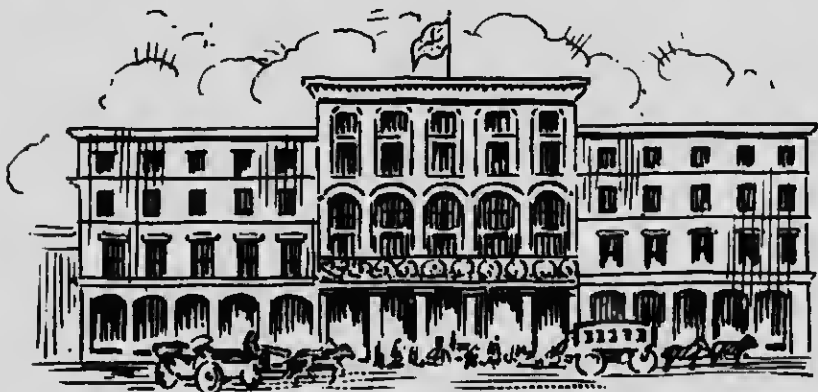
R. FRENCH.

This announcement is from the "Directory of the Province of Canada, 1851". It is reproduced exactly as it appears in this unique volume, and should be particularly interesting to those visitors who stop over in New York City—they will be able to appreciate travel conditions in the early days.

*The St. Lawrence
Hall - 1850*

About 1850, we find an announcement: ". . . recently opened, this Commodious and Elegant House, situated in the most salubrious part of the City, The St. Lawrence Hall, on Gt. St. James St."

So numerous are the items of historical interest associated with this old Hotel that only a few can be mentioned. They range from Royalty down to renegades, and include the names of the notables and notorious of the day.



ST. LAWRENCE HALL

King Edward, when Prince of Wales, slept beneath its roof, at the time of his visit to Montreal in 1860. It was on this visit that H. R. Highness opened, officially, the Victoria Bridge.

In 1853, the seditious Gavazzi fled to this Hotel in which to hide, following the riot which he started by his fiery oratory at the old Zion Church. History tells us that the mob was met on Beaver Hall Hill by the Cameronians, and about twenty rioters were killed. When opportunity afforded, Gavazzi was hustled away in a cab to the wharf, and smuggled on board the old "Iron Duke" which carried him to Laprairie, from which place he fled from Canadian soil.

During the American Civil War, the St. Lawrence Hall was frequented by many of the supporters of the Southern Confederacy. Jeff Davis (of "Sour Apple Tree" fame), found sanctuary here both before and after the Civil War. The old Terrapin Inn, on Notre Dame St., was about this time one of the most fashionable haunts, in fact, the Prince

of Wales (later Edward VII), enjoyed its hospitality when visiting Montreal.

Freemans Hotel

1868

The original Hotel of this name was on Gt. St. James' Street, at the corner of St. Peter Street. On the Fortification Lane side of the Hotel, there was a Lunch and Grill Room, with open windows upon the street. At this place, the young bloods of the City practised an amusing' trick known as "Lobster fishing". The first move was to saunter into the Grill Room, equipped with a fish-hook to which a ball of string was attached, and examine the lobsters attractively displayed to await the orders of the patrons. Surreptitiously attaching the fish-hook to a fine specimen, the joker would toss the ball of twine through the open window nearby. Proceeding to the street, he would give the ball two or three kicks, thus propelling it to a safe distance for the final operation, which was to seize the string and thereby draw the selected lobster through the window, to the huge surprise of occupants of the Grill Room who witnessed the departure of the crustacean, supposedly under its own power.



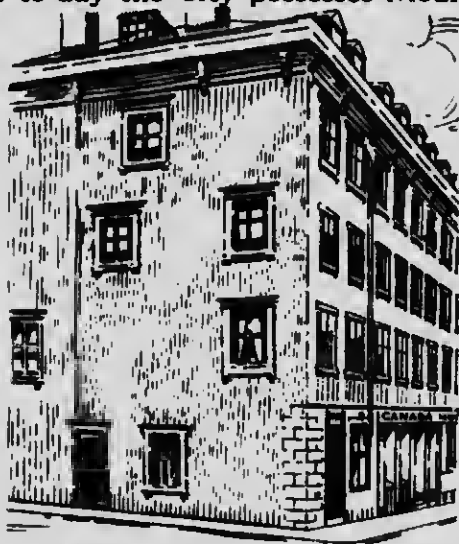
The Richelieu Hotel

1868

This Hotel was on St. Vincent Street, Nos. 41 to 47 in the numbering of those days. The Richelieu at a later date extended its premises through to Jacques Cartier Square.

The Canada Hotel

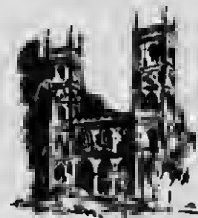
This old Hotel, which was on St. Gabriel Street, (behind the present new Court House Annex), offers an interesting link with the past, as it was directly due to the owner of this Hotel that to-day the City possesses Mount Royal Park.



THE
CANADA
HOTEL
1860

In 1869 the City found itself in the grip of an early winter, and, owing to unpreparedness and a dislocation in transportation, was faced with a serious shortage of fuel. As the condition became more acute, the Proprietor of the Canada Hotel undertook to relieve the hardship by the wholesale cutting of the wood on his farm. But the farm included part of the Mountain, and the City Fathers hurriedly bought the property, in order that the Mountain might be preserved for a Park. Until regular supplies of fuel could be secured the immediate shortage was met by the sending in of hundreds of sleigh loads of wood, from the country around St. Jerome (35 miles) north of Montreal.

We now come to the decade in which the City of Montreal changed radically. The City had outgrown its bounds, the shopping and residential districts



TWIN TOWERS OF NOTRE DAME,
PLACE D'ARMES

extending mainly towards the West. For instance, St. Antoine Street had become a very fashionable residential district.

The leading commercial Hotel about this time was the Albion, on McGill Street. This was the headquarters of the buyers on their annual trips to Montreal from Upper Canada (now the Province of Ontario). This Hotel was standing until a few years ago, when it was demolished, and a modern office building now covers the site.



The Balmoral

1872

just west of McGill Street. This imposing building is still standing, but it is scarcely known to any of the present generation as one of Montreal's old-time Hotels.

A fine new Hotel, the Balmoral, was established about 1872, on Notre Dame Street,



CHATEAU DE RAMESAY, NOW A MUSEUM

The Windsor Hotel - 1878

It was, however, towards the end of the "seventies" that the real change came. In 1878, the Windsor, a Hotel larger and finer than any in the City, and the equal of any in the whole Dominion of Canada, was opened on Dominion Square. The wiseacres of the times could see nothing but failure in this radical move *uptown*, away from the business, shopping and residential sections. But by the end of the next decade, the Windsor Hotel had become the hub of Montreal affairs.



*Windsor Hotel
1878*

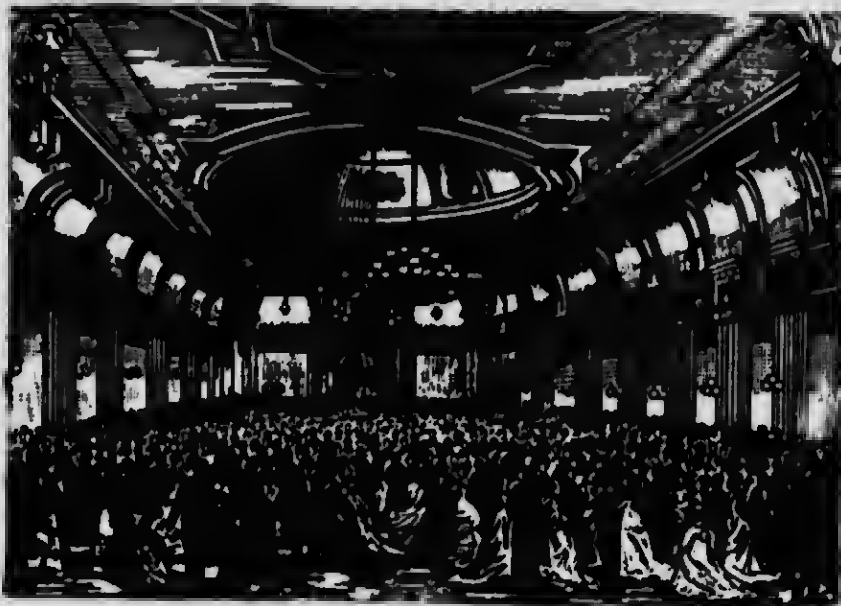
All the large stores had followed it uptown. Morgan's moved from St. James and Victoria Square; Hamilton's came uptown from Notre Dame Street West; Birks' from St. James Street (their store had been opposite Dollard Lane), and Ogilvy's moved from the corner of St. James and Mountain Streets, first to St. Antoine Street, and finally to St. Catherine Street.

The opening of the Windsor Hotel was a most auspicious event, marking a new era in the social history of Montreal, and establishing the leading position The Windsor has enjoyed ever since in the activities and the development of the City.

The opening function was graced by the presence of a daughter of Queen Victoria — Princess Louise, who, with her husband, the Marquis of Lorne, (afterwards the Duke of Argyll), had reached Montreal almost on the eve of St. Andrew's Day.

The Marquis of Lorne had arrived to assume the duties of Governor-General. The Vice-Regal suite in the New





Windsor was occupied by Their Excellencies, who opened the Grand St. Andrew's Ball held in the Hotel. The event was one of the greatest splendour, as may be readily appreciated from the reproductions, of the old wood cuts.

The first picture shows the Hotel, every window brilliantly illuminated, and Montreal's thousands thronging to catch a glimpse of the Vice-Regal couple.

In the second picture, that of the Grand March, the Marquis of Lorne, followed by the distinguished company, in passing between the lines of the Guard of Honour.

The third picture is that of the grand staircase.

The fourth picture shows the Ball at its height.

In the lists of the guests are found the names of all the Canadian celebrities of the day. Sir John Macdonald and Lady Macdonald were present, together with the leaders in every walk of life: Officers of the Militia, Consuls, Legal and Church Dignitaries.



The Lobby

Montreal's Great Hotel To-day
THE WINDSOR

That unique position which The Windsor attained at the time of its brilliant opening has been maintained ever since. Indeed, the years that have passed have so firmly linked the names of Montreal and The Windsor that the two are associated in thought as almost synonymous.

This is but natural, when one considers that under its hospitable roof famous travellers and visitors from many lands have met, while in its chambers and its rotunda Canadian statesmen and men of affairs have planned much of the marvellous development of Montreal and the Dominion itself.

While the past years are a story of achievement, there is pardonable pride in stating, with full assurance, that to-day



Windsor Hall

The Windsor truly is still the heart of the social and business life of Montreal.

The Windsor has been the headquarters of innumerable patriotic and philanthropic campaigns and public movements, and all the great musical artistes, noted lecturers and entertainers have been heard in Windsor Hall, the most commodious Auditorium available in Montreal for concerts, recitals, and lectures.

During many months of the year, The Windsor is the home of Conventions which come from all over the North American continent.

It is impossible to enumerate the endless social functions, balls and banquets which are held at The Windsor, each year.



To visitors to Montreal, The Windsor offers Hotel service modern to the last word in equipment and comfort, and a delightful home-atmosphere which lends a personality to the Hotel.

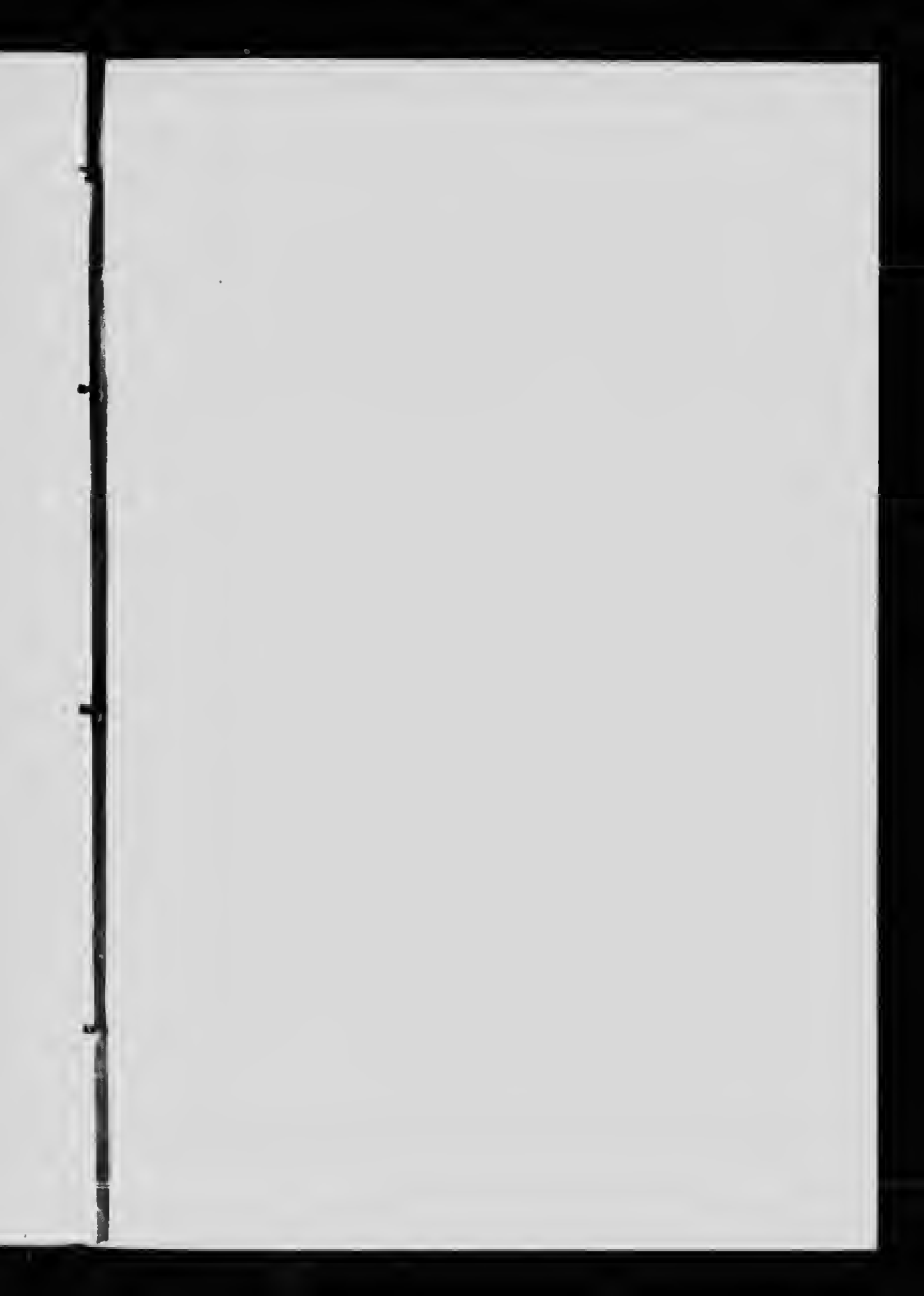
The Windsor is truly the community centre of the City. With the great expansion of Montreal (now over a million in population), The Windsor, *Montreal's own hotel*, has maintained the lead in the ever-changing conditions.

The Windsor was enlarged in the new portion more than doubling the capacity of the Hotel (750 rooms with baths). At the time, every modern convenience was adopted throughout the entire Hotel, yet all the fine architectural features of the original Windsor—the spacious staircases, hallways, and the wonderful Long Gallery — were carefully preserved.

It may be that herein lies the success of The Windsor — it's embodiment and exemplification of the spirit of Montreal's greeting: "Bienvenue".



The
Windsor
Today





THE
Windsor
ON DOMINION SQUARE

Montreal

