

abroad. One of these mills was located on the water front of the present city of Vancouver. For years this rather primitive saw mill, and a few wooden buildings occupied by lumbermen and fishermen, constituted the only settlement there, and it was known by the expressive name "Gastown." Later it assumed a more important position, and was for a number of years, during which it grew to be a town of about six hundred inhabitants, called Granville. When it had become a definitely settled fact that the Canadian Pacific railway would make that point its western terminus, the hitherto insignificant hamlet suddenly sprang into prominence. The railway company, by a grant from the government, secured control of the land upon which the city must be built, and the policy pursued by the company has resulted in establishing a foundation for a giant growth. People from the eastern provinces flocked to the prospective metropolis in great numbers, and it was resolved to entirely reorganize the town. Accordingly, this was done, and the city of Vancouver was incorporated on the date mentioned, the name being in honor of Captain George Vancouver, of the British navy, who discovered, explored and named Burrard inlet, nearly a hundred years ago.

The conditions imposed on purchasers of property in Vancouver are such that no mere speculators can buy the land and hold it, without improvement, for the rise in value which the industry of other people will be sure to bring it. This policy has tended to keep out adventurers and to secure the benefits of the city's advancement to those who have homes there, or to those who are interested in its business affairs. The building conditions accompanying transfers during the past two weeks—the last two weeks of March—bid purchasers to erect this season stone and brick structures aggregating in value \$125,000.00. These buildings will not be all in one locality, but will be scattered over a considerable area. This policy relieves the city of the appearance of being crowded, and encourages expansion in all directions, while the intervening property is, of course, augmented in value. But the city has experienced a remarkable growth to reach the stage that will enable property owners to practice this system. In a town of slow growth scattered business blocks would be unprofitable, and it would be useless to attempt to enforce such conditions as are laid down in Vancouver. But such a transformation has been wrought in a few months here, that there is unbounded confidence in its future growth, and the buildings do not increase in number faster than the business demand for them.

Business men who located in Vancouver three or four years ago well remember the uninviting appearance which the wilderness of that vicinity presented.

Nine-tenths of the present area of the city was a dense, unbroken forest of huge firs. There was but a single street cleared of timber, and a few rude roads led into the gloomy wild. To build a city there was certainly a Herculean task. The timber was removed at a cost of \$200.00 to \$300.00 per acre, and, following the retreating forest, massive structures of stone and brick sprang up, streets were graded, sidewalks built, and large business enterprises inaugurated. Some of the finest business blocks in the city stand on ground that, three years, or even two years ago, was occupied by a howling wilderness. The Canadian Pacific railway was completed to Vancouver in May, 1887, when the first through train arrived from Montreal. That year, also, the Canadian Pacific company put a line of steamships on the route between Vancouver and China and Japan. Those two important projects gave an impetus to the growth of the city, by placing its advantages entirely beyond the realm of speculation, and the advancement the city made was truly marvelous.

A great conflagration, in June, 1886, nearly wiped the young city out of existence, but before the embers died, materials for rebuilding were on their way to Vancouver, and where small wooden structures were before, there arose grand edifices of stone, brick and iron. The fire seemed to be a positive benefit, and in a few weeks all traces of it had been removed and the town presented a vastly better appearance. Under the influence of the large transportation interests which were established there the next year, the building of the city progressed rapidly, and during 1887 most of the city plat was cleared of timber, and a large amount of street work was done. Then it really began to assume the appearance of a city and its natural physical advantages were made apparent.

Since that time its progress has been unhindered by any disaster, and Vancouver now, probably, contains more handsome buildings than any other city of its size in the country. The city is laid out on a magnificent scale, and it is being built up in a style fully in accord with the plan. Its residences, business blocks, hotels and public buildings of all classes would be creditable to any city. During the year 1888, buildings aggregating in value \$1,350,000.00 were erected within the corporation limits. In January, 1888, the city assessment showed a taxable valuation of property aggregating nearly \$3,500,000.00, and the population was then, in round numbers, six thousand. In January, 1889, the total valuation of taxable property was \$6,600,000.00, and the inhabitants numbered eleven thousand. Last year \$85,000.00 were expended in street improvements, making the total mileage of graded streets in the city thirty-six, and there are twenty-five miles of sidewalks. Street