

station of Esquimalt, the most westerly fortress of the British Empire, and thence, a few years later, after the Oregon arrangement which restricted the boundary of Canada to the forty-ninth parallel, she carried the builders of Fort Victoria, the embryo of the present picturesque city of Victoria, the capital of British Columbia. In 1838 reports of the presence of coal were brought by the Indians. The "Beaver" was sent to investigate, and it was in her furnaces that were tested the first specimens from the present enormous coal fields of Vancouver's Island. She carried large numbers of miners up the mighty river Fraser in the memorable rush to the Cariboo Goldfields; and she protected the British interests in the dispute with the United States over the ownership of the San Juan Islands at the entrance to Puget Sound; and lastly, after the Hudson's Bay Co. had surrendered its gubernatorial powers to the British Government, she carried hither and thither the imperial hydrographers who prepared the first charts of the British Columbian Coast.

But now, alas, her star was in the wane, and her destined hour drew near. Her feeble paddles were no longer able to keep pace with her younger screw-propelled sisters, and man, in his ingratitude, had relegated her honorable old bones to the wrecker's yard. Awhile she lay in idleness, but not for long, for this hoary little "watermark," the one-time pride of Britannia, was sold to a commercial company, to end her days as a common tug—as a "hewer of wood, and a drawer of

water." And then, at last, after fifty-three long years of active and distinguished service, her meritorious career was brought rudely to a close on one summer night (July 26th, 1888), while attempting to make Burrard Inlet, the port of Vancouver, B.C., with a boom of logs in tow. The ebbing tide, swirling and rushing with terrific force through the "Narrows" from the great basin within, and the heavy, dragging boom, made a task beyond her strength. She hesitated, quivered, and was forced back, still nobly striving, on to the rugged rocks which were to form her sepulchre. Day dawned to find that little Empire-builder lying 'neath the towering cliffs of Prospect Point, wrapped in a sheet of troubled waters, her head resting on a pillow of huge barnacle-clad boulders—a hopeless wreck. There in the gateway of her adopted land that she had served so long and well, the stern-visaged minister of fate had ruled that she should fall. The graceful "Empresses" from China, the fleeting Antipodean mail-boats, and many a homely, unpretentious tug pass by, but never a one too poor to do her homage, and call her mother. A few years longer she clung to that ledge of rock, slowly sinking lower and lower into the silt, until her worn and tired old frame could hold together no longer. She burst in twain, her rust encrusted boilers rolled out and sank, the icy waters closed in, and the dear old "Beaver," launched by a king, christened by a duchess, the first to double the Horn, and the pioneer of the Pacific, had passed forever into history.

