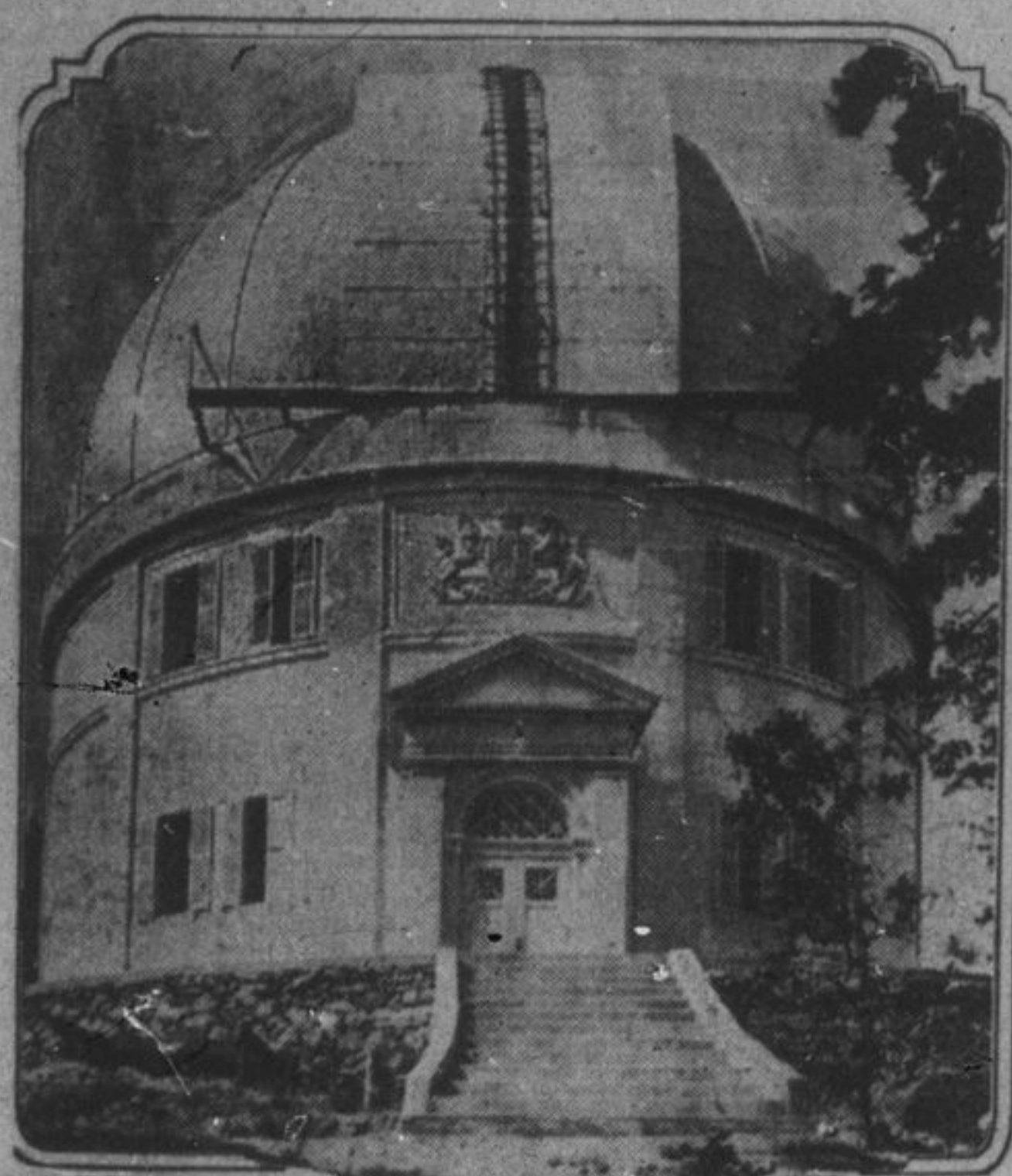
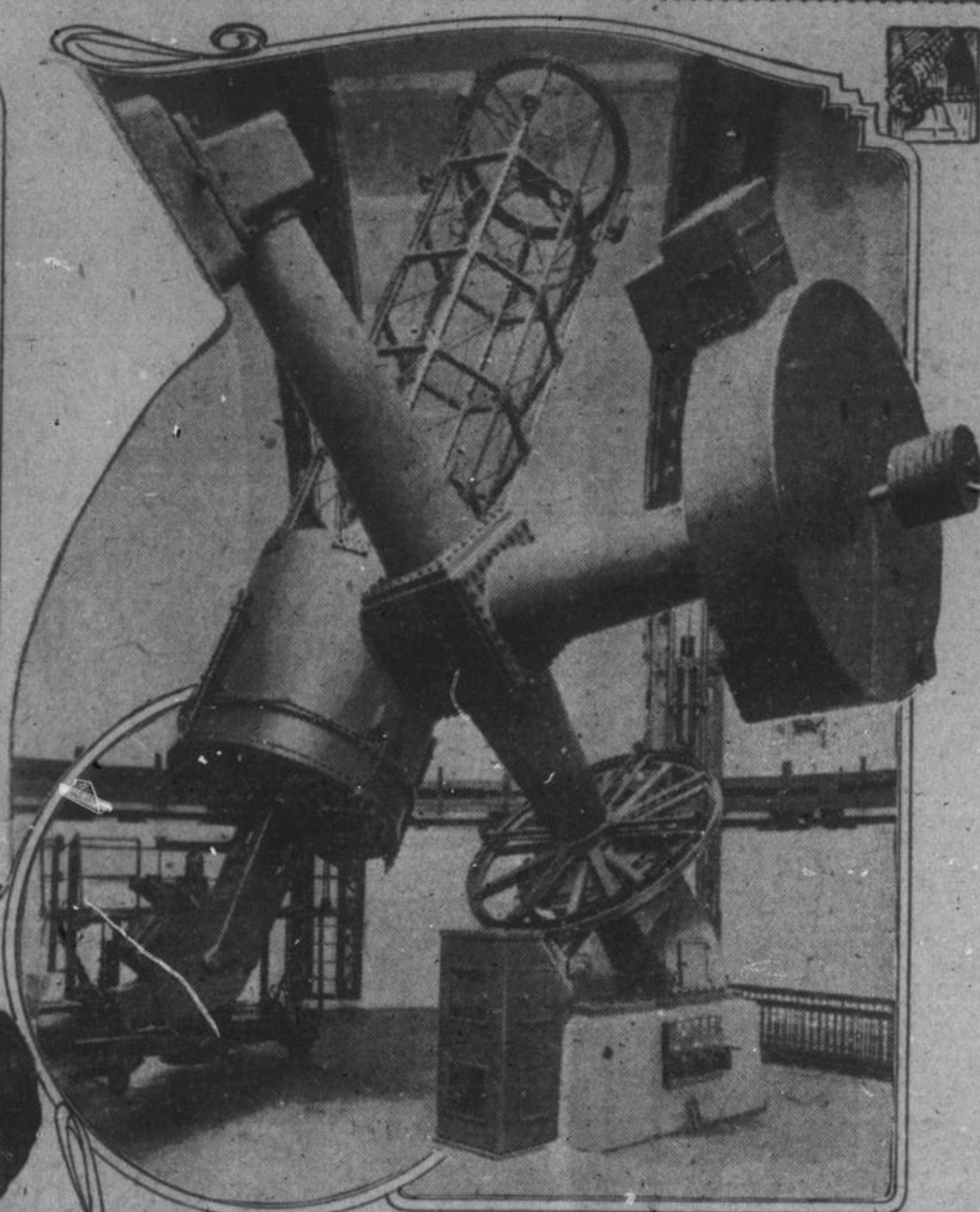


## A Wonderful Observatory on Pacific Coast



*Astrophysical Observatory as seen at top of mountain.*



*The Telescope and Its Massive Mounting Showing Spectrograph Attached.*



*DR. J. S. PLASKETT, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S., Dominion Astronomer in Charge of the Observatory.*

Victoria, the capital city of British Columbia, has once more proved her right to the title "The City of Sunshine," and the possessor of the most equable climate in the Dominion of Canada. Some time before the outbreak of the great European war, the Dominion Government determined to erect an Observatory, housing a giant telescope, for the furtherance of astrophysical research. A Commission was appointed to thoroughly investigate every section of the country, with a view to obtaining the ideal location for this work. Several localities were deemed equally suitable, until the members of the Commission reached Victoria, and then all questioning vanished. On account of the mild climate, the clearness of the atmosphere, and the low range of temperature, the Commission returned to Ottawa, and reported that Victoria was the ideal location for the proposed Observatory. Those who have visited the Lick Observatory, in California, will appreciate the asset that Victoria possesses, if only from the tourist standpoint. The construction of the building was commenced four years ago, and now it is the centre of quite a little community, composed of the residences of the Director and his staff, garages, water tower, etc., and the number of buildings will be added as required.

**The Official Staff.**  
The Dominion Government was particularly fortunate in securing the services of Dr. J. S. Plaskett as chief of the Bureau. He and his assistant, Dr. Young, are regarded among the rising men of the younger astronomers, and a number of the scientific men of the older generation who have already visited the Observatory express themselves as extremely well satisfied that the conduct of an important building of this kind should be in the hands of men of the type selected by the Dominion authorities. One of the advantages of the new Observatory is its easy accessibility,

being only nine miles from the centre of the city. A splendid road leads from the city to the door of the Observatory, the inclined approach to the top of the mountain being only about 1 1/2 miles from the public highway. To those who are not scientists, the trip is full of interest. The route is through a very charming and beautiful country, and if continued after visiting the Observatory, around the Saanich Peninsula, is one of the best short automobile tours on this island of a Thousand Miles of Wonderland. The view from the top of the mountain is exceedingly fine, giving a complete panorama of Victoria and its suburbs, with the beautiful Straits of Juan de Fuca, and the Olympic Mountains beyond;

Mount Baker, in Washington, one of the grandest mountains in America, is also to be seen, almost as if it were only a few miles distant, while as a matter of fact it is 120 miles away.

### Construction Details.

The Observatory is a double steel tower, so designed to avoid temperature change. It is painted white, which makes it easily discernible for some distance around. It is a large dome-shaped building; the whole of the massive dome revolving, so that the sliding doors, which are provided, to enable the telescope to do its work, may be placed exactly opposite the object to be observed. The dome is so built as to permit of a free circulation of air currents around a continuous passage, so that the interior temperature remains approximately constant. The motive power is electricity, and there are no less than 10 motors, and a score of clutches with which to operate the telescope in the dome. The total cost so far is in the neighborhood of \$400,000. The telescope differs from many other large telescopes in the world, in that it is of the reflector type, as compared with the refractor type, in use at most of the large observatories. The reflector is an immense lens 73" in diameter and 12" thick. It was cast in Belgium, and left that unfortunate country on the last ship before the outbreak of the great war. The lens was shipped to Pittsburgh, Pa., to be ground and polished, and was only re-

ceived in Victoria in time for installation recently. Observations are now made regularly. The tube is large enough to allow a small automobile to be driven through it. The heaviest part of the telescope, called the polar axis, weighs

more than nine tons. The movable parts of the big telescope weigh more than forty tons. The lens alone weighs 4,000 pounds, yet so evenly and perfectly is it balanced that a man can move the giant instrument with one hand.

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### Your Chance To See It.

The informal opening of the Observatory took place on Tuesday, June 11th, when Dr. Plaskett and his assistants entertained a number of the most eminent scientists of the continent, and the leading citizens of Victoria, at a delightful reception. The visitors were shown over the beautiful building, and the workings of the huge telescope carefully explained. As a final treat they were invited to look through the telescope at the new star, first reported on June 10th.

The convention of the Union of Canadian Municipalities and the Civic Improvement League takes place in Victoria on July 9th, 10th and 11th. The delegates to this convention are indeed fortunate, as Victoria makes one of the most beautiful settings imaginable for the entertainment of any gathering. With true Western spirit the reception committee is making every effort to ensure for each member of the Convention his full quota of enjoyment. By Thursday noon most of the serious business will be disposed of, and it is to be known as Observatory day. The Rotary Club is tendering the visitors a luncheon at 12.30, when several interesting addresses will be given. After the luncheon the delegates will be driven to the Observatory, at the invitation of Dr. Plaskett, and given an opportunity of viewing the telescope, which is the largest actually in operation in the world. No visitor to the coast should return home without seeing this most interesting public institution on the continent of America.

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