

TORONTO:

The Provincial Metropolis and the Home of Conventions.

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COUPLE of centuries ago, the site whereon the City of Toronto now stands was "a place of meeting" (as the name implies), where Indians and fur traders transacted their business. About a century later, when Canada passed into the hands of the British, it contained a British fort on the site where the old French Fort Rouillé stood, and where now stands the imposing Toronto Industrial Exhibition buildings, than which there are no finer in Canada.

In 1788 the place was called Fort Toronto, but about 1793 the name was altered to that of York, presumably in honor of the Duke of York, son of the then reigning sovereign, George III. At this time (*i. e.* 1793) Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe, for obvious reasons, selected it instead of Niagara as the capital of the Province, removed the seat of government here, and made it the headquarters of the military as well.

At the time of its incorporation as a city, in 1834, the name of York was changed back to that of Toronto, which then boasted a population of about 9,000. But the growth of the City from that time, both numerically and commercially, has been remarkable. While in 1847 it contained 21,000 inhabitants, in 1871 it claimed 56,000, in 1881 over 86,000, to day the Queen City of the West takes pride in the fact that 200,000 sturdy and stalwart citizens, both native born and those of other climes, find comfortable and contented homes within her hospitable borders.

"Industry, Intelligence, Integrity," finds its place beneath the Coat of Arms of Toronto, "a not unpretentious motto," but one admirably well fitted for this British-American community. "This handsome, thriving, half-way American city of Toronto," is the way a New York writer speaks of the City in 1886; still there are a great number among our visitors who find Toronto an excessively English place.

Both views are in part correct. With an English love of what is solid and steady-going, there is yet among the inhabitants an infusion of American dash, originality and love of novelty, which makes a good and happy combination. Without debating at length which spirit predominates, Torontonians still consider themselves Canadians, and love to sing with Roberts,

"I see, to every wind unfurled,
The flag that bears the maple-wreath,"

and desire no higher praise than to have their home called a characteristically Canadian city.

Here is what is said of the City's rapid growth by a distinguished writer: "It has become," he says, "a vast commercial emporium, a great railway and shipping centre, the literary 'hub' of the Dominion, the Mecca of tourists, an Archbishopal and Episcopal See, and the ecclesiastical headquarters of numerous denominations, the chief seat of the Provincial law courts, and of the Provincial Legislature, universities, colleges and great schools of learning."

Toronto has been named the "City of Churches," and fittingly so, for in any quarter of the City, turn where one will, some tall, stately church spire, or perchance some sacred edifice of humbler pretension, alike "erected to the greater glory of God," strikes one's gaze. Among the more inspiring may be mentioned the following: St. James Cathedral, of the Anglican denomination, with its costly and world-renowned peal of bells, its tall and stately spire, which is conceded to be the highest on the American continent; it is of early English gothic style, of which it is an excellent example, and one of which any city may justly feel proud.

A short distance to the north, on a slightly raised eminence, stands St. Michael's Cathedral, the principal edifice of the Roman Catholic body, also constructed after the early English gothic style, with a tall and stately spire, the whole being a model of architectural beauty and design throughout. The Metropolitan Methodist Church is a handsome edifice, considered to be one of the finest of that