

"The dwellings of the earliest settlers, the rude pioneers of civilization, were in true patriarchal style—they abode in the field, sheltered by tabernacles that (as the legend runs) had made the circuit of the globe with the illustrious Cook. Rude indeed were those primitive days; Macadam was a name unknown—plank roads and gas-lights were fictions of lying travellers. Yet steadily though slowly the good town grew, and peace and plenty (with one brief interval) were the characteristics of its quiet life. Some few of those who bore the heat and burden of the day, and saw the first roof-tree rise from the marshes of 'Little York,' have lived to see themselves, their children and grandchildren, citizens of a large and prosperous city; but the green turf wraps the graves of the greater part of those who knew it in its infant days.

"The tourist who would visit Toronto to indulge a taste for antiquarian research, will find but little to reward his labour. The red men have left their forests—they have sought other hunting grounds, and, true to their native habits, have left no trail; but if her history be brief, it is not wholly devoid of interest. In the last ten years of her life, she has acquired most of the substantial advantages of a European city.

"To the traveller, who looks with greater pleasure on evidences of health and vigor—on the busy wrestling of civilization with the wilderness, than on ruin and decay, and the ivy creeping over the fallen remains of man's past energy, there are few places capable of exciting a livelier interest than Toronto. The present and the future occupy her thoughts far more than the past:—

"Be the Greek's eyes anals poring,
Let the Roman mourn the past—
Like the Persian, morn adoring,
Her glance is onward cast!"

"Viewed from the noble highway of Ontario, the city, with her rectangular streets, presents a pleasing aspect. Gradually rising from the water's edge, her ranges of buildings are at length bounded by the green outline of pine forest, that seems to enclose her in its embrace. The prominent points are the tall spires of St. James's Cathedral [since destroyed by fire] and St. Andrew's Church. At the eastern extremity of the bay, the fortress-like walls of a dark Prison look black in the bright sunshine: that unusual feature in the Canadian landscape, a wind-mill, stands near, and the heights of Scarborough bound the vision on that side. Towards the centre, a strange pile of brick, designed, it is said, after some Italian model [the City Hall and buildings] accommodates the collective wisdom of the city in its corporate character. Westward, a not very fierce-looking Garrison affects to protect the entrance of the harbour, and above it the 'meteor flag' dallies with the light breeze. * * * The garrison having been passed, as we approach from the west, we are just entering the bay; and there lies Toronto, stretched along the northern margin of that glorious sheet of water. As we draw near the busy quarter of the city, we observe villa residences scattered along that bank on our left, which rises abruptly from the water's edge. The long ranges of red brick, facing the bay, were once tuneful with the eloquence of our legislators, but are now the peaceful retreat of learning. In the main structure and west wing are the temporary hall and lecture rooms of our noble University, whilst the building on the east is at present occupied as the Lunatic Asylum—a playful illustration of the poetic adage—

"Great wit to madness nearly is allied."

A little in the rear, above a thick plantation, may still be seen the staff, which in days gone by was wont to bear the flag that indicated to the lieges of Toronto the presence of the Lieutenant-Governor, in the official residence (old Government House), embosomed by those dark trees. To the north is the handsome pile of Osgoode Hall—the Canadian inns of Court, with its columns and dome glistening in the clear atmosphere. Further on beyond, the clusters of houses, in the centre of its picturesque grounds, laid out with judicious attention to landscape gardening, and approached by a stately avenue of chestnut and other graceful trees, rise the white and massive walls of King's College (now Toronto University).

"We will not trouble the reader with any lengthened description of the internal appearance of the city, with its busy population of nearly 23,000 (now over 25,000). Splendid warehouses and shops, worthy of any American or European city, greet the eye—gas lights enliven the darkness—the forest supplies agreeable trotters—MacAdam smooths the roadway—and beneath the level surface of the streets—

"The prison'd water fills its iron cell."

We may not stop to describe the various public edifices—the pleasant grounds and neat buildings of that admirable establishment Upper Canada College—the various institutes and associations—literary, philharmonic, national and mechanical—the extent of commercial dealings—the noble prospects that projected improvements seem to open. Suffice it to say, that there are few more striking results of British Canadian vigor than this city, carved as it has been by stout arms and loyal hearts out of the wild bosom of a transatlantic forest; nor will the stranger who visits it, we trust, fail to discover the appropriateness of its chosen motto—'Industry, Integrity, Intelligence.' "