

lication, and need not be referred to at length here. Sufficient to say that this barren looking country, which was fifty years ago considered unfit for white settlement now contains a population of nearly 25,000, 7,000 of which is met with at the gateway to the country in the thriving towns of Port Arthur and Fort William. What the population may reach in five years more, with a period of energetic mining enterprise setting in, is hard to say. One hundred thousand may not be beyond the mark.

But we leave this rocky, timber-covered country, with all its undeveloped and largely undiscovered mineral wealth, and enter the great prairie country at the Red River Valley, and here we have a country of unbounded wealth as a food-producing land. It is estimated that, in the fertile belt stretching from the Red River Valley to the Rocky Mountains, there are not less than four hundred millions of acres of lands rich in agricultural advantages, and capable, if cultivated, of producing bread for nearly the whole universe, and yet the agricultural development of this great land only commenced about a quarter of a century ago, and until sixteen years ago, when railway communication with the outside world was secured, the progress of agriculture was necessarily very slow. This great land in 1870 contained a population, outside of Indians, of less than three thousand, and to-day it contains three hundred thousand. In 1870 it was a vast unorganized waste so far as government was concerned, with the exception of the hundred miles square around the mouth of the Red River, which was the old Province of Manitoba, before its boundaries were enlarged. Only one place worthy the name of a town then existed, namely, Fort Garry, with 250 people. Now the City of Winnipeg had a population of about 40,000, several other cities of 5,000 have sprung up, and there are altogether some twenty points where a town or city of over 1,000 people can be found. Such is the Canadian Northwest at the present date, and of the influences which have been at work in this record of progress more will be found in this publication.

The City of Winnipeg.

Although the Hudson's Bay Co. have had a post at Fort Garry, in the southern part of the city, since the year 1812, the history of Winnipeg as a town dates back only to 1870, when Sir Garnet Wolseley crushed the Reil-O'Donahue rebellion. In the spring of that year the business places in the village of Fort Garry numbered eighteen, and the total buildings outside of the fort, twenty-eight, while the census returns in the fall showed a total population of 215 outside of the military stationed in the place. The manufacturing institutions were a tannery and a harness shop. From

this year forward it became a fixed belief among the people of the place that it was going to advance to a city of some importance in a comparatively small number of years, and that Manitoba was destined to be a rich, populous and prosperous province. Faith in the place soon spread to the east, and in the fall of 1872 the Merchants' Bank established the first branch of a chartered bank, and from this onward eastern capital began to be freely invested in the town and province.

It is not necessary for us to follow minutely the additions of new industries to the city during the next few years. Sufficient to say that Winnipeg's industrial progress was steady, although not rapid, and in 1874, the year in which the city was incorporated, the number of buildings within her limits was over nine hundred, twenty-seven of which were occupied by manufacturing industries, over one hundred by mercantile concerns, and the balance as offices, hotels, boarding houses, dwellings, and so forth. The population of the city was about three thousand seven hundred, and the value of property assessed within its limits \$2,076,018.

Notwithstanding the terrible convulsions that shook the whole monetary system of America and Europe during the years 1873 and 1874, the year of 1875 opened with bright prospects for the city of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba. True it is that foreign capital did not come freely to assist in their development during that year and in 1876, but the residents of the city were now convinced that it had a great future, and showed that they had enterprise enough to give material aid in the great work. The number of new enterprises were not so numerous as during 1874, but older business men were fast adding to their trade. The most valuable addition to the machinery of business was the establishment of the Ontario Bank branch. The Red River had five passenger and three freight steamboats plying upon it, whereas only one made occasional trips five years previously. The work of city improvement had also been going on apace. That summer a new city hall had been erected, and other corporation expenditures added to the price of its construction, made a total of nearly \$90,000. The value of imports at the port of Winnipeg for the year ending June 30th, 1875, not including goods from Canada, was \$1,248,309; the exports for the same period were valued for \$588,958, and the duties collected \$171,430.76. The value of assessed property was \$2,762,414, and the population of the city numbered about 5,000.

In 1876 the city's progress in commercial and industrial affairs was steady, and that year two flouring mills were constructed, which had an aggregate capacity of nearly 400 barrels per day. The population made material gain, and the value

of property assessed that year was \$3,081,585.

In the year 1877 the first determined efforts for railway communication with the eastern world and through the province were made, and as early as February of that year the citizens offered a bonus of \$200,000 to any company that would construct a railway from the city to the western boundary of the province, but it was not until near the close of the following year that the St. Vincent branch of the C. P. R., connecting with the St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railway at that city, was completed, and through rail communication to the eastern portion of the continent secured. That year the population of the city increased to about 6,500, the value of property to a little over \$3,000,000. The tax receipts amounted to \$67,178.68, and the civic expenditure to \$55,569.07.

In 1879 progress was very rapid, owing to the impetus which railway communication gave to business, and by the close of the year the population had increased to 8,000, and the value of assessed property to \$3,415,065.

During 1880 the city's progress was unusually rapid, and her population increased with amazing rapidity, being, at least, 12,000 by mid-summer, while the valuation of assessed property was fixed at \$4,006,160. By the close of the year railway communication was complete to Rat Portage on the east and Portage la Prairie on the west.

With the year 1881 the famous Winnipeg boom set in, and the state of inflation reached before its close can be better remembered by those who were resident here, than described now that it is past. There can be no doubt, but the city and surrounding country made during that year unprecedented progress of a lasting description, and the influx of actual settlers who had come to remain in the Northwest, and grow up with it, was immeasurably greater than that of any preceding year. The boom, therefore, although carried to the most crazy excess, was not a bubble without substance. The energetic manner which the C. P. R. syndicate commenced the work of railway extension, which up to that year had been carried on in a half-hearted and irresolute manner by the Dominion Government, gave an impetus to the boom, and in a few months inflation was at its height, and penetrated every branch of business more or less. Prices of goods in mercantile lines were inflated as well as real estate, and money seemed to purchase very little of anything. Before the close of the year the city's population had reached nearly 20,000, some 5,000 of which were floating idlers attracted by the speculative mania.

An index to the enormous increase in the general business of the city is to be found in the following statistics, which we take from a work published early in 1882, entitled "Winnipeg and Her Industries."