

971133
 9722vw

office, as they did, with not a dollar in the treasury, and no present means of raising money, much needed public works to be done at once, and with no municipal experience to guide them, would it have been any wonder, even if the year had passed without any calamity or set-backs, if these pioneers in civic government and control had been unable to cope with all the needs of a new place growing faster, and with more rapid strides than any city on this continent had grown? But these men were not made of the material that weakens at difficulties such as these. Having abiding faith in the future of the city they set to work with a will, and with the assistance of some of the public-spirited citizens of the place, soon had work on streets and roads going on; opening up the different portions of the city where new buildings were erected, and generally doing all in their power to forward the city's interests at home and abroad. This first Council was composed of Mayor M. A. Macleay; Aldermen Mannion, Griffiths, Northcott, Cordiner, Balfour, Humphries, E. P. Hamilton, L. A. Hamilton, C. A. Coldwell and Thos. Dunn, and just as they had fairly out-lined a plan of public improvement, and fiscal policy, fitted to the urgent requirements of the city, all their high hopes and fond aspirations were blasted by

THE GREAT FIRE

which occurred on Sunday, June 13th, 1886, in which inside of one hour the city was literally wiped out of existence, the inhabitants bereft of all they owned, with nothing left save smouldering embers, and the blackened, begrimed site, of what had been the nucleus of a fair city. Three hundred and fifty buildings were, as if in a flash, destroyed; 2,500 people were rendered destitute and homeless, and about \$3,500,000 of property destroyed. This catastrophe occurred at about 2 p. m., of Sunday, and at 4 a. m., of the Monday following, before the ground had fairly cooled off, the hum of the hand saw and ring of the hammer were heard in various parts of the town, and it stands recorded as a literal fact, fitly demonstrating the mettle of the pioneers of this city, that at least in one instance the tables were spread and a meal partaken of in what is now known as the Northern Hotel, on Hastings street, the evening of the day following the great fire. So rapid was the

BUILDING OF THE CITY

after the fire, that on December 31st, 1886, there were estimated to be 350 buildings on the townsite and a resident population of at least 2,600 souls, with an assessed valuation of \$2,639,877.

From the date of the fire improvement and progress were the order of the day. Buildings went up in all directions, some of large proportions and costly materials. Brick and stone became of general use, owing to the setting a part of ample fire limits in the more central portions of the city. School houses and other public buildings in keeping with its growth and growing importance were erected so that at the end of 1887, 900 buildings were in the city with an assessed value of \$3,650,975, and a population estimated at 10,000. The Canadian Pacific Railway, connecting with the coast, with the erection of suitable wharves and warehouses for the accommodation of the China and Japan trade and a line of steamers were placed on this route, thus adding another channel of trade to those already

instituted by way of Portland, Oregon and California. The effect of this was immediately felt by the impetus given to building in the vicinity of the docks and by the influx of tourists brought hither by the knowledge that a new, expeditions, short, cheap and all-British rail and steamer route had been opened up between the Occident and Orient. These causes, together with the establishment during this year of a number of other manufacturing establishments, principally in iron and wood, and the large expenditure made by the corporation in the opening up of streets, and building of sidewalks, erection of public buildings, permanent system of sewerage, combined to cause the year 1888 to be a continuance of

THE ERA OF PROSPERITY

that had dawned upon the city after the great fire, and this prosperity is amply evidenced by the increase in the number of buildings and population. The buildings in December 1888, numbered 1150, the population 9,500, with an assessed valuation of \$6,255,857.00.

The year 1889 witnessed a repetition of the former marvellous and unprecedented growth of the city. Buildings of greater beauty and value were erected than in former years, in fact some of these erected during this period would rival many of those in older and more pretentious cities. Gas and electric lighting were introduced and used for both public and private use; new lines of steamships were inaugurated and placed in successful operation. An agreement was entered into with responsible parties for the inauguration of an efficient electric tramway on the principal streets of the city and a system of waterworks put in operation capable of supplying a city of 50,000 inhabitants with pure water and ample pressure for fire and manufacturing purposes. With these additional advantages is it any wonder that we find the year 1889 closing with the number of buildings increased to 1556, the population increased to 13,000 and the assessed value of property to \$9,517,480.

The year 1890 found the City of Vancouver in possession of a population of 15,000, with buildings numbering 2646 and an assessed valuation in round numbers of \$10,000,000 and containing within its limits about 45 miles of sidewalks 30 miles of graded streets, 7½ miles of permanent sewers, of the most modern design, 11 churches, 5 public schoolhouses, City hall, jail, 2 fire halls; a well organized paid fire department, 2 large iron foundries, 7 lumber mills, sugar refinery, 1 smelter, Provincial Government buildings and County court house, 3 chartered banks, 55 hotels, a complete and efficient telephone service, an electric tramway on six streets, a rate of taxation of only one per cent. and a future before it such as no city has ever yet had, standing as it does midway on the shortest route between Great Britain on the one hand and her most remote colonies of Hong Kong and Australia on the other—a route admitted to be the shortest, accessible at all times of the year on British soil its entire length—and in a manner making the whole north-western hemisphere tributary to it by standing as it does at the

GATEWAY OF THE PACIFIC

through which in time must come not only the Japan and China trade for Canada and Britain, but also for the United States as

well as the trade of Australia, the Sandwich and South Sea Islands, Borneo, the Philippine Islands and Malay Archipelago. This is no fancy sketch of the future, but is based on the ordinary laws of commerce and trade, which must of necessity seek the shorter, and consequently the cheaper, route for its commodities to hope to compete in the markets of the world. It is no more than just to expect a repetition of by-gone history, which in the case of this, the City of Vancouver, would warrant the prediction that in the year 1910 where to-day stands a city of 18,000 inhabitants there will be a city unequalled in size, importance and wealth on the shores of the Pacific, with lines of ocean steamers plying to all ports of the trans-Pacific, with railroads centering here from all parts of the Pacific Coast and the North-west, extending from the United States northwards to Alaska—a city second to none in the Dominion of Canada—a veritable modern shipping and commercial Tyne.

LOCATION OF VANCOUVER.

Everyone visiting Vancouver will admit that it is difficult to conceive of a site more admirably adapted for the situation of a great commercial city than the peninsula upon which this city is located. Nature and the development of commerce in the greater part of this hemisphere both point to Vancouver as the inevitable site of one of the great commercial centers of the world. It is the gateway through which must pass a large share of the enormous traffic of the globe. Upon one side rolls the vast Pacific, bearing from the distant shores of Japan and China, of Australia and New Zealand, of the hundreds of isles of the southern seas, the huge cargoes that go to swell the commerce of nations. Their destination is to the uttermost parts of the world, but they come first to Vancouver. On the other side of this city is the great continent of North America with its mines, forests, agricultural lands, manufactures, growing cities and unlimited wealth. The location of this city is one of the most beautiful that could be imagined and its surroundings are a source of never-fading delight to inhabitants and visitors. In this respect no other city of the Pacific coast of North America can compare with it. Gently rising from the south shore of Burrard Inlet on the north side, and from the waters of False Creek on the south, these of the two inlets being only separated by a narrow neck of land almost in the centre of the city, the site presents every feature that is desirable, whether regarded from the immense importance of a seaport, which its miles of water front make it; from the convenience to the residents which the shape of the peninsula affords as regards business, or from the advantage—from a sanitary point of view, the land rising with a graceful incline from the water's edge, it enjoys of a foreshore clearly defined and allowing a facility in draining that makes it one of the cleanest and most beautiful cities on the continent. The scenery that surrounds the city is magnificent. Across the harbor towers the grand range of the Cascades, stretching far as the eye can reach, snow covered in winter, and on the loftier summits wearing its snowy mantle far into the summer. At all seasons these mountains are a beautiful object for the eye to rest upon, especially upon a clear day, when their splendid panorama is fully un-