

sea-board were secured by the purchase of lines leading eastward to Montreal and Quebec ; branch lines to the chief centres of trade in Eastern Canada were provided by purchase and construction, to collect and distribute the traffic of the main line ; and other branch lines were built in the Northwest for the development of the great prairies.

The close of 1885 found the company, not yet five years old, in possession of no less than 4,315 miles of railway, including the longest continuous line in the world, extending from Quebec and Montreal all the way across the continent to the Pacific Ocean, a distance of three thousand and fifty miles ; and by the midsummer of 1886 all this vast system was fully equipped and fairly working throughout. Villages and towns and even cities followed close upon the heels of the line-builders ; the forests were cleared away, the prairie's soil was turned over, mires were opened, and even before the last rail was in place the completed sections were carrying a large and profitable traffic. The touch of this young giant of the North was felt upon the world's commerce almost before his existence was known ; and, not content with the trade of the golden shores of the Pacific from California to Alaska, his arms at once reached out across that broad ocean and grasped the teas and silks of China and Japan to exchange them for the fabrics of Europe and North America.

The following years were marked by an enormous development of traffic and by the addition of many lines of railway to the company's system, and by the establishment of the company's magnificent steamship service to Japan and China. One line of railway was extended eastward from Montreal across the State of Maine to a connection with the railway system of the Maritime Provinces of Canada, affording connections with the seaports of Halifax and St. John ; another was completed from Sudbury, on the company's main line, to Sault Ste. Marie, at the outlet of Lake Superior, where a long steel bridge carries the railway across to a connection with its two important American lines leading westward—one to St. Paul and Minneapolis and thence continuing across Dakota, the other through the numberless iron mines of the Marquette and Gogebic districts to Duluth, at the western extremity of Lake Superior ; still another, the latest built, continues the company's lines westward from Toronto to Detroit, connecting there with lines to Chicago, St. Louis, and all of the great Mississippi Valley. And now, the company's lines embrace 5766 miles of railway and spread out towards the West like the fingers of a gigantic hand, and the question "Will it pay?" is answered with earnings for the past year of twenty million dollars, and profits of eight millions.

Canada's iron girdle has given a magnetic impulse to her fields, her mines, and her manufactories, and the modest colony of yesterday is to-day an energetic nation with great plans and hopes and aspirations.

