

THE CITY OF MONTREAL'S STATISTICS.

**Exhibit of City's Growth in Thirty-Nine Years
from 1868, to December 31, 1906, Inclusive;
Valuation, Debt, Population and
Exemptions.**

The table printed on the opposite page, giving the financial history of the City of Montreal from 1868 to 1906 inclusive—that is, for each year since Confederation—should be of great value to all who are interested in the growth of the commercial capital of the Dominion. The following table will show at a glance the principal increases which have taken place since 1868:

	Taxable, Property	Debt.	Population.	Net Annual Revenue.	Exempted property.
1868	\$39,174,120	\$5,157,386	122,150	\$778,288	\$6,017,800
1878	71,902,391	11,508,544	140,830	1,535,078	15,657,500
1888	89,634,093	13,067,956	198,239	2,395,411	19,131,420
1898	142,223,500	27,878,001	252,830	3,978,839	36,160,845
1906	200,964,594	32,454,620	337,496	4,541,056	53,704,795

In the year 1868 the taxable valuation of property in Montreal was \$39,174,120, on the 31st of December, 1906, it was \$200,964,594. The increase in the value of property exempt from taxation is also remarkable. In 1868 it was \$6,017,800, in 1906 it was \$53,704,795. It is only right to state that in speaking of the exempt property it includes not only the buildings and lands belonging to religious institutions, but also Dominion, Provincial and Civic properties. That the amount of property exempt from taxation is altogether out of proportion, there can be only one opinion. We have always advocated that all land in this city should be taxable, except land upon which churches, hospitals, schools, and strictly religious and charitable institutions are erected. It does appear anomalous that immense tracts of land which have increased in value twenty-fold, through the general growth of the city and through fire and police protection, road construction, water supply and other civic services, should be free from taxation, especially when these lands are held practically for sale or speculative purposes.

During the period indicated the debt has naturally increased. In 1868 the total indebtedness amounted to \$5,157,386; on December 31, 1906, it was \$32,454,620. It is only fair to state, however, that the city has good assets, consisting of water-works, parks, buildings of various descriptions, etc., amounting to \$24,707,303, the water-works alone figuring at about \$10,000,000, so that the net debt of the city is not by any means large.

With regard to population there is probably no other city in the United States or Canada which occupies the same position. Montreal is surrounded by suburbs, only three or four of which have within recent years been annexed to it. These suburbs are divided from the city only by an imaginary line, which is hard to define. Some of

our principal streets are partly in Montreal and partly in the suburbs. For instance, Notre Dame, St. James, St. Lawrence Main, St. Catherine, St. Denis, and Sherbrooke streets. It is, therefore, difficult to define the exact population of Montreal. The population of the city proper is given as 337,496, but with the adjacent suburbs it is over 400,000.

The annexation of these outlying portions of the city, if they can be so-called, should receive the immediate attention of the civic government. It is unnecessary to reiterate the reasons which have been stated over and over again, why these places should be absorbed. They practically derive their sustenance from the city. Under present conditions, if it may be said without offense, they are simply parasites upon Montreal. There are eight or ten suburbs, like Westmount, Outremont, Cote des Neiges, St. Louis, Maisonneuve, Verdun, Cote St. Paul, and Montreal West, which for hygienic, geographical, protective, and every other prudential consideration, cannot be annexed too soon. There is one thing certain and that is, that annexation or absorption is bound to take place, in the natural course of events. It is, therefore, better that arrangements should be made, as soon as possible, not only for the reasons stated above, but because these municipalities will largely increase their indebtedness, which will have to be assumed by the city, although it has nothing to say about incurring the responsibility. In other words they will go in for all the improvements they can think of before becoming annexed. Indeed the writer has advocated the annexation of the whole Island of Montreal. It is quite conceivable that there are many difficulties to be straightened out in connection with a scheme of this character, such, for instance, as dealing with farm lands. But an equitable basis could be arranged for this by treating these properties as farm lands, until divided into building lots and then another scale of valuation could be assumed and so on. We look forward to this being accomplished and the whole Island consolidated into a GREATER MONTREAL. It is to be hoped that at least the adjoining municipalities will be absorbed before the next Dominion Census is taken. Montreal being the commercial capital and at the head of navigation, will naturally keep pace with the growth of the Dominion generally and it is expected that within the next decade she will have a population of at least 1,000,000.

The revenue of the city has grown from \$778,288 in 1868, to \$4,541,056 in 1906. This, however, includes the school taxes. At the same time it is a respectable revenue and even allowing for the