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TOPICS OF THE TIME

Canada's Progress in 1904

PROGRESS was written large across Canada in 1904. Things have been moving steadily during the past year, and the tide of prosperity—to use a phrase that has now come into general favor—reached considerably nearer to its flood. Not that there was any boom in 1904; if we have ever had a boom stage in Canada, we have long since passed it. But we made, as a nation, very decided advances in the past twelve months, and added to our national importance in several directions, a few of which may be named in brief.

The immigration for the year amounted to about 140,000 persons. Of these one-third came from the United States, the rest from Britain and the Continent. What this means in the development of the country can hardly be estimated, for a continued increase of population is the one secret of our national growth. More men to work our resources marks real progress.

Of almost equal importance was the railway progress of the past year. Transportation business has so grown that the C.P.R. has approached very close to the million-a-week mark, surely an indication of prosperity. The final settlement of terms for a second transcontinental line, and the vigorous prosecution of work on the Canadian Northern and the Temiskaming roads have been further signs of new progress. Railways will have much to do with the Canada of the future.

A plentiful wheat crop showed continued progress in the great West. A yield of 60,000,000 bushels of the finest wheat in the world was a harvest of prosperity in itself.

Other natural products, of farm, mine, forest, and sea were also abundant in all the provinces. As a consequence all the industries were active.

Aside from this general activity among the industries, the most important evidence of industrial progress was the re-opening of the immense plants at the Soo, an enterprise truly national in proportions, and whose renewed prosperity may be taken as a matter of national gratulation.

There was marked progress in building. Toronto, Montreal, and Winnipeg, the three great centres of the Dominion, were particularly busy in this direction. New buildings mean increasing business.

Financially, the year was a good one. There were a few important suspensions of financial firms, but in general, business conditions were favorable throughout the country. Wholesalers and manufacturers, with few exceptions, report a good year, both in volume of trade and in returns.

In legislation, one of the most significant steps toward future progress was the passage of an anti-dumping measure, the object of which is to prohibit the importation of manufactured goods at slaughter prices, *i.e.*, at prices lower than those ruling in their home market. As promising fuller protection, this is an advance.