

The Metropolis of the Eastern Townships.

ITS SITE, NATURAL ADVANTAGES AND PICTURESQUENESS.
(Contributed by Mr. F. C. THOMPSON.)

Situated exactly one hundred miles from Montreal, in one of those beautiful valleys for which the Eastern Townships are so justly famed, and at a point where the waters of the Magog and St. Francis rivers meet and together roll to the St. Lawrence, stands the enterprising young city of Sherbrooke. That it is young when compared with the ages of some Canadian towns, is easily established by the fact that the wilderness of woods and forests which formerly covered the ground upon which it now stands first saw the then rude light of civilization about the beginning of the present century, and that it is enterprising is thoroughly established by the tremendous strides which it has made during the last twenty-five years. That it is beautifully situated, and that the claim which its inhabitants make to its being the prettiest city of its size in Canada, only requires a visit to determine. Compactly built along the valley, which is formed here by the St. Francis river, with lofty hills rising up on either side, from the tops of which magnificent views can be obtained of the surrounding country and the young city, with its villas, its business streets and business houses, its banks and public buildings, and away in the distance the St. Francis river, winding its way by graceful curves to the St. Lawrence. Viewed from one of these elevated points on a bright, clear, sunny day, one cannot help being struck by the beauty of its situation.

THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF SHERBROOKE.

The Eastern Townships, of which Sherbrooke is the commercial capital, consist, as is well known, of all that portion of the Province of Quebec which lies south of the River St. Lawrence, and which was unconquered at the Conquest. During the French occupation, and for at least ten years subsequent, it was one vast wilderness entirely covered with forest. In the year 1796 six brothers of the name of Hyatt, of the town of Arlington, Vt., owing to political causes, came to Canada and settled on part of the tract now known as the Township of Ascot. They subsequently obtained extensive grants of land for themselves and associates. These lands were organized into a township on March 5th, 1803. At this time the site of the present city of Sherbrooke was known as the "Lower, or Big Forks." The first settlers were, as far as can be ascertained, David Moe, Gilbert Hyatt and Samuel Terrill. The first named built a frame barn, the remains of which are still to be seen on the road to Lennoxville, just on the border of the present corporation limits, and on which was cut the date 1800. This is the oldest land-mark now in existence connected with the early history of Sherbrooke. The work of settling went on slowly, for in 1819 it is recorded that there were only seven log houses erected. The name Sherbrooke is said to have been given to the place on the occasion of a visit of Sir John C. Sherbrooke, then Governor of Canada, to "Belvidere," the residence of the late Hon. W. B. Felton. This gentleman, who was an officer in the Royal navy, was one of the first pioneer settlers of the district, and was afterwards appointed Government Commissioner of Crown Lands. "Belvidere," the residence of the Felton family, is situated a short distance from the present town. In 1822 the district of St. Francis was formed and Sherbrooke proclaimed the chief-lieu of the district. It was not, however, until 1852 that the Town of Sherbrooke was incorporated, with G. F. Bowen, Esq., Sheriff of the district, as its first mayor. In the same year the Grand Trunk Railway was completed through the district, and dating from that time onward the progress of Sherbrooke has been rapid. In 1871 the population was 4,450; in 1873, 5,500; in 1885, 8,400; while at the present time it is considerable over 10,000 people, with the taxable real estate as shown by the valuation rolls, amounting to nearly four millions of dollars.

SHERBROOKE AS IT IS.

Let us take a look at the Capital of the Eastern Townships, one of the youngest of the Canadian cities. Entering Sherbrooke at the Grand Trunk Railway station, after a few minutes walk, we arrive at Wellington street, the principal business thoroughfare of the city. It is well lighted, equally well paved and lined with numbers of fine stores, many of which will compare favourably with some of those to be seen in Montreal. Prominent amongst these is the large establishment, until very lately occupied by Messrs. R. D. Morkill & Co., importers, the first block built in the city. This firm was established in the year 1840, and may perhaps be called the pioneer of the dry goods trade in the Townships. The Odell block, built by the late Thomas B. Odell, is also a handsome building, and one of which any city might be proud. It is divided into a number of large and spacious stores, amongst which is the establishment of Messrs. Lucke & Mitchell, importers of hardware, wholesale and retail; Messrs. Dussault & Co., tailors and outfitters, and the extensive music store of Messrs. H. C. Wilson & Sons, the upper flats of the building being occupied by lawyers, notaries and insurance agents. Other fine buildings down the street are the wholesale and retail store of Mr. Walter Blue, the Winter block, the Tracey block, the fur establishment of Z. P. Cormier, the Central Hotel and the Banque Nationale. Continuing on further up and across the square we come to the McBain, Becket and McCarthy blocks and the Merchants Bank; on the right the offices of *Le Pionnier*. Besides these, there are on King street the warehouses of Messrs. D. McManamy & Co., J. H. Gendron, William

Murray, F. Codere, C. O. Genest, Lucke & Mitchell, and others. Crossing the Magog river by a handsome iron bridge, built by the Toronto Bridge Co., we come to the two finest buildings in the city—the Eastern Townships Bank and the new Government buildings. The present building of the Eastern Townships bank was erected in 1878, the old one which stood upon the site of the present post office, being found too small for the largely increasing business. It is built of handsome granite, brought from quarries in Stanstead, some thirty miles distant, and is a fine piece of architecture. It is splendidly finished inside, every convenience being introduced to insure the comfort of customers and employees, and it possesses one attribute, to which few Montreal offices can lay claim, namely, good ventilation and excellent light. The vaults and safe works are very fine, no expense having been spared to make them thoroughly burglar and fire-proof, the directors and general manager having no faith whatever in the not unfrequent practice of locking the stable after the horse has gone. The bank is the financial institution of the Townships. It was first established in 1859, with a small capital of \$300,000, and with an office in Sherbrooke only. It has now, mainly through the energy and push of its general manager, Mr. William Farwell, occupied all the suitable points for business in the Townships, having some nine or ten branches. The capital has been increased from the first modest beginnings to the handsome sum of \$1,500,000, with a reserve fund of \$500,000, and in point of commercial credit and financial strength, can compare "notes" with any bank in Canada. In addition to the Eastern Townships bank, Sherbrooke is still further supplied with banking capital by a branch of the Merchants Bank of Canada, and one of the Banque Nationale of Quebec, both of which are established here. The Government buildings, which are situated next to the bank, are built of the same kind of granite. Erected in 1885, after designs by Government architects, they present an exceedingly handsome appearance. The offices are remarkably well fitted up, the rooms being high and lofty, and the whole building heated by steam. Situated as it is, it forms a great addition to the architectural appearance of this part of the city.

HANDSOME PRIVATE RESIDENCES.

As we continue our quest, we come to numbers of fine streets, with handsome private residences on either side, with lawns and tastefully laid out gardens, great numbers of trees and foliage of every description, abounding on all sides. Prominent amongst the private residences in this part of the city are "Fairlawn," the residence of R. N. Hall, Esq., M.P. for Sherbrooke; "Mountfield," the residence of the Hon. Mr. Justice Brooks; "Rockmount," the residence of Andrew Paton, Esq., managing-director of the Paton Manufacturing Co. and president of the Board of Trade; the residences of Mr. William White, Q.C., Colonel Lucke, Mr. F. P. Buck, Mr. Stephen Edgell, Dr. Worthington, Colonel King, Mr. R. W. Heneker, Mr. T. J. Tuck and others; and "Prospect House," the property of Colonel Bowen, commanding a magnificent view of the Valley of the St. Francis. In East Sherbrooke there is now in process of reconstruction the residence of Mr. W. B. Ives, M.P., which, when completed, will, perhaps, be the finest private house in the Townships. There are also in East Sherbrooke a number of other private residences, amongst them those of Mr. William Murray and Mr. J. H. Gendron. In the South Ward there are many fine private houses with lawns and nicely kept grounds, notable amongst which are the residences of Mr. Z. P. Cormier, Mr. James Tracy, Mr. Archambault, Mr. Panneton, Mr. McManamy and Mr. G. G. Bryant.

SHERBROOKE'S MANUFACTURES.

Sherbrooke is essentially a manufacturing town. For such, indeed, nature intended it when it bestowed upon it the magnificent water power which is derived from the fall of the River Magog into the River St. Francis. This water power is second to none in the Province, or, in fact, in Canada, possessing the advantages implied by a descent of 120 feet within a distance of three quarters of a mile.

Amongst the principal manufacturing establishments of Sherbrooke is the Paton Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of woollen goods, principally tweeds. It is the largest woollen mill in Canada, has a paid-up capital of \$600,000, employs over 500 hands, and pays in wages annually over \$140,000. The annual output of the mills amounts to from \$600,000 to three quarters of a million dollars. They use annually 150,000 lbs. of Canadian wool, and over 100,000,000 lbs. of Australian wools, besides about as much more in fine wools from the Cape of Good Hope and South America. They have all the latest improvements in machinery made by the best makers of England and America. For several years they have been under contract with the Government of Canada for the manufacture of all the scarlet and grey cloths used by the militia. They are also the manufacturers of all the Pullman rugs for the Canadian Pacific Railway cars, as well as of those used by the Pacific Steamship lines and other steamboat companies, including the Richelieu & Ontario Navigation Company. The buildings of the company are very extensive, covering a large amount of ground, and the works are almost entirely run by the magnificent water power of the Magog River. They are under the management of Mr. Andrew Paton, a gentleman of wide experience in the woollen trade, and a man of first-class business ability. In connection with their Sherbrooke mills, the company have recently acquired the mills of the Quebec Worsted Co., at Quebec, where they manufacture all kinds of worsted for gentlemen's wear.

Not very far from the works of the Paton Co. are the woollen mills of the old established firm of Messrs. Lower & Son. They manufacture extensively flannel of all kinds, employ a large number of hands, and have the reputation of turning out flannel of an excellence unsurpassed in Canada. They also utilize the water power of the River Magog. Still further on are the mills of Messrs. A. L. Grindrod & Co., who also manufacture woollen goods of excellent quality. At the head of the water power are the extensive saw mills of the British American Land Company. They employ some 50 men, and turn out annually about 500,000,000 feet of lumber. There are several machine shops and foundries, doing a large amount of business, the principal of which are the Jenckes Machine Company, whose trade is rapidly extending over all parts of Canada. They turn out all kinds of mining and milling machinery, steam engines, boilers, etc., and have successfully filled large contracts for these kinds of machinery amongst the mining and milling companies of the Eastern Townships, as well as in other parts of Canada. The company employ a large number of men, and pay from \$50,000 to \$60,000 annually in wages. The flour mills of the Macfarlane Milling Company, situated at the foot of Wellington street, do an extensive city trade, as well as being largely patronized by the farmers of the surrounding country. They are fitted with the most modern milling machinery. The furniture factories of S. Twose and Long Bros. are extensive establishments, which further illustrate the extent to which the water power can be utilized. One of the most compact, neatly finished, well ventilated, and lighted and well managed factories in the Province, if not in Canada, is that of the Eastern Township Corset Company. The works are situated on a small rocky island in the centre of the Magog River. The business is under the management of Mr. Octave Gendron. The company employ some 150 girls in the manufacture of their goods, which are sold from Halifax to Vancouver. There are two breweries in active operation at Sherbrooke—one owned by the Messrs. Odell, the other by Messrs. Hopkin & Long. East Sherbrooke has also its share of manufacturing establishments, the principal of which is the carriage factory of Mr. Pamphile Biron. A large number of carriages, wagons, sleighs, and vehicles of all descriptions, of first-class make and workmanship, are turned out of this establishment every year and sold in all parts of Canada. In connection with this factory it may be said that there is an excellent opening in Sherbrooke and this section of the country for the establishment of a spring and axle factory. There is nothing of the kind at present in existence here, or in fact in the Eastern Townships, and a company for this special branch of manufacture might be insured a safe and profitable business. The works of the Canadian Electric Light Co. are also located at Sherbrooke, where they form a most important industry, giving employment to a large number of men. This is one of the new industries of Sherbrooke, and strong efforts are being made at the present time by the people and corporation of the town to have the Canadian works and office of the company permanently located here.

SHERBROOKE AS A RAILWAY CENTRE.

Few places in Canada have such excellent railway facilities as Sherbrooke, which is directly connected with all points north, south, east and west. In fact it is the railway centre of this section of the country. There are four main ways centring here as follows:—The Grand Trunk Railway, giving through connection to Montreal and all points west, giving through connection to the seaboard, and the Pacific, affording another route to Montreal, about the same distance as by the Grand Trunk Railway, but through a different section of the country, and connecting Sherbrooke with another section of Maine, while each of these important lines offers a through route to the seaboard, and direct connection with the Maritime Provinces; the Quebec Central Railway, which supplies direct connection with Quebec, another route to the seaboard, and runs through a country rich in natural productions, minerals, lumber, etc., and the Boston and Maine Railway, giving direct connection with Boston, New York, and all New England ports. It may, therefore, be readily seen that few places can lay claim to better advantages as regards railway connections for the shipment of manufactured goods, produce or other merchantable commodities.

MINERAL RESOURCES OF THE SHERBROOKE DISTRICT.

As is well known, the Eastern Townships are exceedingly rich in minerals, and Sherbrooke derives an immense benefit from the numerous gold, copper, phosphate and asbestos mines, which are being worked with profitable results all over the surrounding country. The asbestos mines on the line of the Quebec Central Railway are attracting a great deal of attention at the present time, with the exception of those discovered in Italy, they are the only asbestos mines in the world. The copper mines at Capelton, P.Q., some thirteen miles from Sherbrooke, are being worked more extensively than ever before in their history. Their pay rolls amount to some \$25,000 a month, which, with the large amount monthly paid by the mining companies, all finds its way into Sherbrooke. The importance of these mining industries cannot be overestimated, as they are virtually, at the present time, only in their infancy. On the occasion of a recent visit to Sherbrooke and vicinity of the American Institute of Mining Engineers, it was stated by those gentlemen that the amount of the Eastern Townships had little conception of the amount of mineral wealth awaiting development in the country.