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TORONTO.

During the past year Toronto has increased proportionately faster than in any previous year, even not excepting the era of the Russian War when bountiful harvests and war prices gave her the command of enormous capital which she invested in making additions to her built area. It is estimated that in the year just past no less than 700 new buildings were erected, at an estimated cost of \$3,000,000, and that the population received an increase of 6,000 souls, bringing the aggregate up to 74,000 at least. According to the census of 1871, the population was considerably less than 60,000, so that the city can boast of an average increase of nearly 5,000 souls during the past three years, or an increase of over nine per cent *per annum*, equal to nearly 100 per cent in a decade.

To the enterprise of her citizens and the rapid development of the Province, Toronto attributes this wonderful rapidity of growth. The new railways with their connections which are piercing and opening up the vast territory to the north; the rise of inland towns; the annual anabasis of immigrants to back settlements and the general prosperity with which Ontario has been blessed—these are the powers which are moving the city like magic. Yet in some respects 1874 was an exceptionally bad year. The financial crisis which fell upon the United States in the fall of 1873, and left them paralysed so far as trade and commerce were concerned for months afterwards, deprived Ontario of no inconsiderable portion of the bulk of her foreign trade. At one time it was feared that the panic would cross the lines and make havoc among the Canadian firms which had dealings with American establishments, but this country fortunately escaped. The only trade in which Toronto is heavily interested which suffered severely was the lumber trade. Owing to oversupply and the scarcity of money, the great lumbering combinations in Albany virtually suspended operations, and the result was seen in the comparatively small lumber import and export of the city.

The principal civic work of the year was the new Waterworks system. The pipe from the Island, two miles and a half in length was successfully laid in October. Hundreds of men were employed in laying nearly 15 miles of piping through the city, and hundreds more in constructing an enormous reservoir in the northern outskirts. It is believed that the works when completed will be capable of supplying a city of 120,000 souls with water necessary for house and fire purposes. Arrangements have been made by which, supposing the pumping machinery to collapse or get out of gear, the usual maximum can be kept up for days, so that the citizens may rest secure in the belief that they are protected from the calamities which have fallen upon other cities by reason of the temporary derangement of their water supply.

An absentee who should pay a flying visit to the city now would be astonished at the extraordinary progress which has been made on the two main streets running immediately parallel with the lake. On Front and Wellington streets warehouses have been erected which are second to none on this continent in capacity and architectural beauty. The Phoenix Block, after undergoing two severe trials by fire, seems to have obtained a long lease of immunity, and the wholesale stores which it contains are among the wealthiest in the city. McMaster's Block, the new Custom House, the new Printing Office of Messrs Hunter & Rose, the batch of splendid hotels which have lately sprung up in proximity to the Union Station, and the long range of new stores extending from Yonge street present an appearance to the stranger on landing infinitely more inviting and promising than the dreary sight which struck his gaze three years ago, when the Esplanade and a wide margin on the rear were dotted with here and there a good building, while the gaps between them were occupied by old fashioned stores and tenements which made their modern comrades look ridiculous in their company.

The neighbourhoods round about the Grand Trunk and Northern workshops are being filled with stores and dwellings for the accommodation of the large additional force of men employed there and in the foundries, machine shops and factories dotting the whole western area. Fifty years ago the site of St. Andrew's Market was an apparently hopeless swamp which the denizens of Little York regarded pretty much as we regard the great Gum Swamp in North York. In a short time, new life will be given to a neighbourhood already of exceeding vitality by the completion of the Credit Valley Railway, which will make the flourishing towns of Galt, St. Thomas and the wealthy section of country intervening, tributary to Toronto, furnishing us at the same time with the most direct route to Chicago and the North West. The importance and value of the benefits which this great undertaking will confer on the city are incalculable. Hard upon the Garrison Commons, which soon must doff whatever of faded military garb they now wear, stands the Central Prison, a magnificent pile of buildings, costing nearly half a million of dollars. This institution was built for the accommodation of prisoners undergoing sentences varying