

OIL SPRINGS.

This large and rapidly improving village is situated in the Township of Enniskillen on Bear Creek, a tributary of the Sydenham. It is distant from Wyoming, a station on the Sarnia branch of the Great Western Railway, 12 miles, (daily stages run between both places,—fare 50 cts.,) from Sarnia 22 miles direct, and 28 by stage and rail, and from London 56 miles. Oil Springs owes its rise and progress to the discovery of petroleum or rock oil in the vicinity and place where the village now stands. Oil was observed here on the surface of the water a number of years previous to its nature and value being understood. The International Mining Company, formed for the purpose of ascertaining the mineral wealth of the Township of Enniskillen, was superceded in 1858 by Mr. Williams, who subsequently sold out to the Canada Rock Oil Company, of which he is at present president. When it was discovered that petroleum existed in what was then considered inexhaustible quantities, capitalists came to the field from the United States and different parts of Canada, encouraged by the extraordinary flow of oil from the first wells. From the want of adequate preparations great quantities of oil were entirely lost; the number of barrels of oil lost from one flowing well, owned by Messrs. Black & Matheson, being estimated at 30,000 barrels. The copious flow of oil from the first wells had the effect of enhancing the value of the oil territory to an almost fabulous degree, and gave an impetus to business of every description in the village, which was laid out in 1860 by J. M. Williams, James Thompson, W. E. Sanborn and Hugh M. Shaw, since which time it has attained a population of about 2,000 inhabitants. It contains eight general stores, five blacksmith shops, two shoe shops, twenty-five carpenters, one cabinet shop, two tailor shops, one carriage shop, five cooperages, five hotels, one physician, two churches, a good school, an agency of the Bank of Montreal, an office of the Oil Springs and Wyoming Telegraph Company. The Oil interests are represented and advocated by a weekly journal under the title of the Oil Springs' *Chronicle*, edited by Messrs W. W. Evans and T. J. Hudson. The number of oil wells now sunk are estimated at 300, some of which are pumped by steam, the rest by horse power. Wells, refineries and stills extend along Black Creek for three miles. The aggregate capacity of all the refineries is 1,800 barrels, of the stills 500 barrels. The 8th Division Court is held here, of which Mr. George Adamson is Clerk. Although the yield of petroleum has considerably decreased, a steady and advantageous business will undoubtedly be carried on in it for a number of years.