



Power for the Twin Cities in Kakabeka Falls.

Twin Cities by the Inland Sea

WERE you ever in the Canadian twin cities—on the midway of Lake Superior? If so you will have noticed that for the first time in a long trip you got the feeling that you were no longer merely hitting north, but that the direction was westward. Port Arthur and Fort William are the two first western cities on the map of Canada. Nominally they adhere to Ontario; send their representatives and a good share of their deputations to Toronto; get their charters from Toronto—and incidentally a large proportion of the people in both cities come from older Ontario. But when the twin city people start to talk—you understand they belong to the west.

They realise that the two young cities which crown the inland sea of fresh water are the real gateway of the West. Moment you strike there you are infected. You have shaken the East. You feel that Ontario is almost ungodly big—when after two days on a lake steamer you discover that you have yet some hundreds of miles by rail before you get away from the province that Oliver Mowat made so huge; knowing that it reaches far north to the sea that is salty and begins to be Arctic; and that it was never so big that it got away from Fort William and Port Arthur.

So it was in the fur days. In the days of the old Northwest Company, rival to the Hudson Bay Company, it was so that the tribes of all the posts interior journeyed down to Fort William, which was the Jerusalem of fur. The pictures of people; the conglomerate, cosmopolitan jostling of the trapper and the trader from the ends of the earth, the babel of tongues both native and foreign—made that old fur post the wonder of North America. That glory has departed. Fort William has done with fur. Once in a while a hunter straggles in with a fox, and there are some deer in the stone-bound hills. But the young city that once was old is now as modern as wireless. It is a city of box cars and elevators; of bustling people and busy tradesmen; a sort of eastern Winnipeg by the water, alive, ruddy with the blood of civilisation and of the days of old when the dog trains came tingling down.

Even while you are saying it you understand that the same language applies to Port Arthur; for it's but a matter of a brief while till the two are one city. There'll be a marriage up there one of these days. Once the doges of Venice had a celebration in which they married Venice to the sea, typifying the commerce of the Latin city. When Fort William the elder marries Port Arthur, the younger there will be a union of strength. The fracas that have marked the early history of these two are no more spirited than used to characterise Edmonton and Strathcona, who but for the three-mile gorge of the Saskatchewan would probably unite to-morrow. A year or so ago I remember a Toronto paper offered a prize for a name that would apply to both cities. The name is not yet forthcoming. It will come. Ask any real live citizen of either city and he will admit furtively at least that there's nothing in geography or history or commerce to keep these two cities from uniting.

At present, however, they continue to differ, which is natural. Each intends to emphasise its own points of vantage, and that is necessary. But they are a pair of progressive places. Just now they are as alive as any two cities in America. The wheat is coming down, and most of it naturally gets out of the hopper into the spout at these places. The real jangle and jostle of the wheat really culminates at the lake ports. And as yet nine-tenths of the goods consumed in both places comes up by boat. Some buying is done in Winnipeg, but only rush orders and in small lots. Most of the buying is done in Toronto. In days to come more buying will be done in Winnipeg. There will be a period when Winnipeg by reason of its immense start in the race will dominate the twin cities. Then will come the period when these two begin to wholesale and manufacture on a large scale for themselves. There is cheap power at the twin cities; the Kakabeka Falls—which the people of Port Arthur claim to be higher than Niagara.

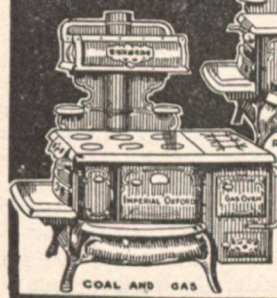
By geographical situation Winnipeg is more the Minneapolis of the West while the two lake cities are the Chicago. Once Fort William was a more celebrated fur post than Fort Garry—because of the waterway. What the Hudson's Bay route will do to make Winnipeg an effective seaport carrying wheat direct remains to be seen; as yet largely a speculation; and there must be theories. At present the twin cities are interested in all the haulage problems. They will talk to you of the Hudson's Bay route and of the route by Cape Horn. They have iron mines and blast furnaces. Their iron they expect to get to Vancouver not by rail but by water—round the southern ends of the earth. If the Tehantepec route gets carrying wheat down there is no reason why it should not carry iron up. Already the Port Arthur people are agitating to get a shipyard. They have deputationed the Ottawa government for docks. They desire to build ships. They are willing to take a hand in building the Canadian navy. They are starting waggon works. Industrialism is in the air of both Port Arthur and Fort William; the hopeful, optimistic and progressive cities by the inland sea. Good luck to them both. They are part of the large hope of Canada.

FIVE STYLES



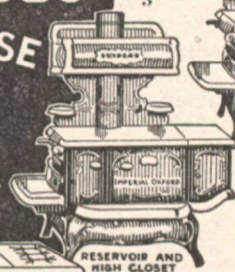
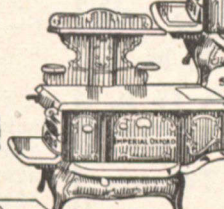
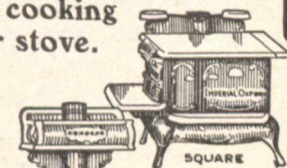
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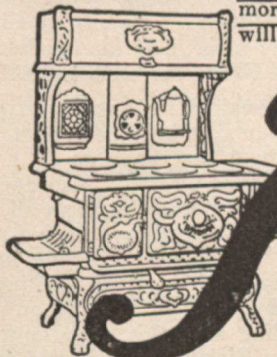
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