

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE CITY.

BY REV. T. E. MORDEN, B.A.

THE session of the General Conference in Winnipeg in September will turn the thoughts and inquiries of many readers throughout the Dominion to that western capital. All Canadians are familiar with the name of Winnipeg, but those who see the city for the first time, or after intervals of some years, invariably express surprise. They find a better class of buildings, better streets, more public improvements of various kinds, and greater business activity than they expected to see. Former residents, who have a lively recollection of streets of tenacious mud, in which numerous vehicles used to have wheels and axles broken, can scarcely realize the change to asphalt, macadam and cedar block pavements, which now cover many miles of roadway. Those who have carried

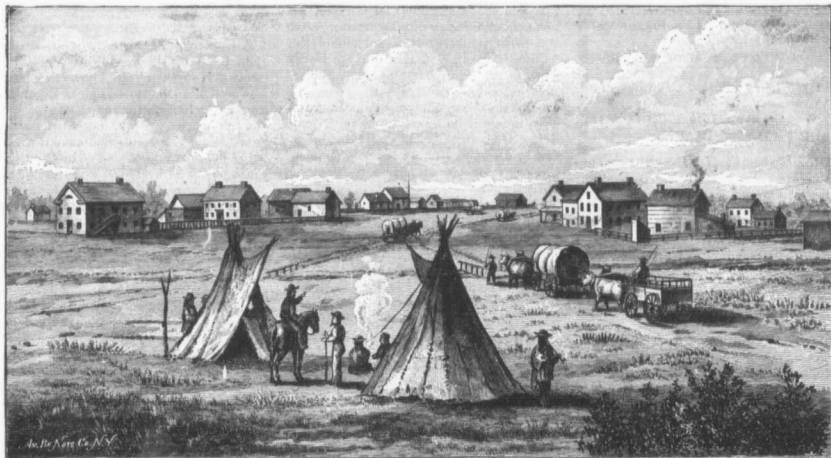
Institute, besides those of the public edifices belonging to the city, and the Provincial and Dominion Governments. Then to the list of the parks may be added the grounds of the Winnipeg Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition, to which the growth of trees planted in an open prairie tract a few years ago, is rapidly giving a park-like appearance, while its numerous buildings lend a peculiarity to the effect, adding to its interest as a place of resort at other times than during Exhibition week in July.

The Public School buildings of Winnipeg are not among the least of its attractions. One or two of these ten-roomed solid brick buildings on stone foundations, costing some \$30,000 each, are being erected every year, though scarcely keeping pace with the rapidly multiplying requirements; and there are now about a dozen, having the latest improvements in school architecture and equipment, besides those which have been doing service

Lutherans and other Protestants, as well as of the Roman Catholics.

Each of the three largest Protestant denominations has, in affiliation with the University of Manitoba, a college which has sent its share of the six hundred students to write in the recent annual examinations, while the Catholics have their institution in St. Boniface, their cathedral town, which is separated from Winnipeg by only the Red River.

An interesting feature of church life in Winnipeg is the number of congregations of various foreign nationalities. Among the Icelanders, numbering perhaps four thousand of the population, the Lutherans have two churches; among the Germans, two; among the Swedes, one. The Reformed Church has one, the Baptists have one, and the Evangelical Association has one among the Germans. The Mission Friends have one, and the Baptists one among the Scandinavians. Besides these the Roman Catholics have a



WINNIPEG IN 1868, WHEN REV. GEORGE YOUNG FIRST ENTERED IT.

away mental pictures of a flat and treeless prairie district fail to recognize the old streets in the present avenues with their lines of trees, whose foliage shades the sidewalks, and wide green boulevards on each side between the walks and the curbing, with rows of young trees in the centre, the planting of nine miles of which this season has just been completed by the Parks' Board.

Pleasure seekers, who used to lament that there were no summer resorts around this city, can now choose between trips to parks, to the north, south, east and west, and in the centre. There are groves in which they may camp for their holidays in the immediate suburbs, and places of interest which they can reach by street cars, bicycles or carriages; and there are two rivers with facilities for rowing or steam boating. In addition to the parks there are spacious grounds around the dozen and a half large educational buildings of the Public schools, colleges, the University and the Collegiate

for some years, but have not been replaced by more modern structures.

Many former visitors and citizens who have not forgotten the old complaint that the drinking water of Winnipeg was bad, generally making new comers sick, will find it difficult to believe that this city now excels most other cities in the quality of its water, obtaining its supply from a large covered artesian well, free from all impurities and subjected to a softening process which renders it admirable for all purposes.

Winnipeg has now a population of not far from fifty thousand, but it has citizens who would hardly be called old, who were in business there when it was a village of log houses. Then there were no churches; to-day the Methodists have nine churches and missions, the largest of them with an audience room accommodating over two thousand worshippers; and the Presbyterians and Anglicans each about the same number, besides those of the Baptists, Congregationalists,

large church for foreigners of the German, Polish and Ruthenian nationalities, with a staff of priests speaking their various languages.

Winnipeg's newspapers have always been remarkable for enterprise, expenditure to secure the latest news from all the world, extent of advertising business and other features. For years there have been three dailies, of which the *Manitoba Free Press*, the oldest established, has been published without interruption for some twenty-eight years. This city takes the lead of all the cities in Canada as a publishing centre of newspapers and general literature in the several foreign languages, the Icelanders having two weeklies, the Germans one, and the Swedes one, all of them of respectable size and appearance.

As a gateway city, Winnipeg is interesting to students of ethnology from the opportunities afforded by the constant arrival of immigrants from many lands, giving illustrations of the customs, modes of dress, physical characteristics and men-