



No. 6

The Era of Red Brick

"**M**UDDY York" became Toronto in due course of time, but the clay which gave York its reputation, though subdued, still lurked beneath the surface, despite the revival of the ancient Indian name, and the passing of the insultingly descriptive sobriquet used more or less during the interval.

Toronto clay being on the spot and very suitable, brickmaking naturally suggested itself, and the clapboard period was overlapped by the era of soft red Brick.

Now also comes the era of the Cedar Block Pavement, at a time when good, full-grown cedar must have been far more plentiful than it is to-day. Now, too, are come the days of gas-lighting, when the green-painted wooden Lamp-posts stood on all but the main business streets, where cast-iron ones gloried instead. And now, moreover, comes that strange period in the checkered history of fashion when ladies wore what were called "Bustles."

The Street Car stage had developed ere this, and the patient jog of the horses and the jangle of the bells formed the accompaniment to every journey down town. At that time the King and Church street corner considered itself the chief centre of human life and business activity. Stores had achieved a plentitude of glass front by now, and shop windows formed the attraction, which must have established the "King Street Promenade," for so long a regular institution on pleasant afternoons.

In 1882, however, Mr. Robert Simpson began business in a store on the old Jesse Ketchum property at Yonge and Queen streets, next to old Knox Church, for about 70 years a landmark of this portion of the downtown district. It survived, indeed, until quite recently, when in the march of development it was displaced by the great new Simpson Company Store and disappeared.

By Yonge street, however, the course of business takes its way. To-day the intersection of Queen and Yonge streets, throbbing with life and rich with modern buildings, may in very truth be termed "The Heart of a Great City."

