The year 1898 is opening for Menasha in a way that fills the optimistic citizen's heart with joy unbounded. After four years of widespread depression, the winter of our discontent is giving way to the glorious summer of returning industrial activity, and Menasha is coming in for more than its share of the resultant benefits. Not for a decade, or several decades for that matter, has advancement taken on so rapid strides as during the past six or eight months, nor has the future ever been so rosy with promise as at present.

The last half of 1897 witnessed the making of the magnificent E. D. Smith public park and library bequest, amounting to $50,000. This alone would have made the years '97 and '98 notable ones in the city's history; but subsequent developments along the line of industrial improvement bid fair to minimize even these splendid acquisitions and render them but two among many. Up to the date of the writing of this article five new industrial plants have been established or placed in process of establishment, while three manufactories, idle for months by reason of the hard times, have resumed operations with increased forces. There is today not an idle mill or factory in Menasha, nor a vacant factory building of any description in the city. Within the past six months the

S. A. COOK MANUFACTURING CO., with Hon. S. A. Cook at the head, has started the manufacture of paper, and also put in a large shingle mill in the old Webster plant, and now employs a force of 100 or more hands.

THE HOWARD MILL.

In February of this year the well-known paper manufacturer, Chas. W. Howard, bought back the paper mill erected by him ten years ago, but which for two years past has been idle. At the same time he let the contract for the erection of

A 20-TON SULPHITE MILL immediately west of the paper mill, and a few weeks later signed another contract for the building of an extensive brick

TISSUE PAPER MILL immediately south of the old mill. These three mills, when completed, will require a force of between 100 and 150 operatives, and will add largely to Menasha's world-wide reputation as a paper manufacturing center.

Another notable event in Menasha manufacturing circles was the purchase in February of the

BANNER ROLLER MILLS by the enterprising department store firm of Tuchscherer & Schlegel. The new owners will not only greatly increase the capacity of the mills, and put in the latest improved machinery, but will also build

A GRAIN ELEVATOR and buy extensively from the farmers. The firm is one of the most energetic in the vicinity and will spare neither capital nor effort to make Menasha an inviting market to the farmers of the surrounding agricultural regions.

During the past winter Mr. Richard Yungmann, formerly of Appleton, and an expert tanner, built a SHEEPSKIN TANNERY on Broad street in the Fourth ward, and is working up a prosperous business in his line.

The extensive plant of the Menasha Wooden Ware company has also been materially added to and improved. Recently the company moved its

STAVE AND HEADING MILL machinery to this city from Carney, Mich., and
will hereafter manufacture all of its staves and headings here.

THE INTERURBAN ELECTRIC LINE

is another important improvement that may be credited to 1898. It gives Menasha, Neenah and Appleton—and eventually Oshkosh, Fond du Lac, Kaukauna, Depere and Green Bay—a through system of electric street railway service equal to any in the United States.

Besides these greater improvements, scores of smaller ones are under way at present, embracing municipal improvements, which include the macadamizing of Racine street and the construction of the Second street sewer.

Altogether Menasha's semi-centennial year gives every promise of being one of the most notable in the city's history. Hundreds of thousands of dollars will be expended in building operations within the limits of the city before the year draws to a close, while close to 500 more hands will be given permanent employment.

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**Menasha Churches.**

There are a total of nine church buildings in the city of Menasha—all of attractive appearance and design. Most of them are of brick, with beautiful interiors and furnishings representing large expenditures of money, care and labor.

St. Mary's Catholic church, located on the corner of Second and Appleton streets, is probably the most imposing and costly house of worship in the twin cities. It is supported by a very large congregation, and has a seating capacity of not less than 1,000. Rev. Andrew Seibert has been rector for the past twenty years or more, and as such has made a record of which any man might well be proud. Through his untiring energy and zeal St. Mary's congregation has accumulated the largest and finest church property in this vicinity, consisting of a magnificent church building, whose spire towers to a height of nearly 200 feet; a three-story brick school house; a fine brick rectory, and a residence for the sisters in charge of the school. But not more as a priest than as a citizen and a man is Father Seibert worthy the unqualified esteem of his fellow townsmen. His splendid public spirit; his absolute integrity; his broad Christian citizenship; his patriotism and usefulness as a citizen all endear him to the hearts of those who know him, and their name is legion.

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St. Patrick's Catholic church on The Avenue, Island, is another magnificent structure built by a congregation composed of many of Menasha's and Neenah's best citizens. Rev. Wm. DeKeiver is the rector in charge of this large parish, and like his co-worker, Father Seibert, he is one of nature's true noblemen. In his broad spirit of philanthropy, patriotism, Christian charity and respect for the opinions of others he is a citizen in whose possession Menasha rejoices. St. Patrick's church, interior and exterior, is a beautiful edifice in which the work of the best talent in church embellishment is exemplified. Besides the church building there is a commodious brick school house, in charge of sisters of Notre Dame, and a rectory. It is the intention of the congregation in the not far distant future to build a new rectory that will be an architectural ornament to The Avenue.

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St. Stephen's Episcopal church is one of the oldest in the city. For many years it occupied a site on First street in the Fourth ward, but a decade or more back it was removed to its present cutting location on Broad street, between Racine and Milwaukee streets. Rev. H. S. Webster is the rector, succeeding Rev. Geo. W. Lamb a few months since. Although not so strong numerically as some of the other churches, it is excelled by no local church in the zeal and faithfulness of its members, nor in the good influence that it exerts upon the religious and social life of the community. Menasha is under deep obligations to St. Stephen's church for many things, and the "little brown church" holds a warm place in the hearts of many of our people. Father Webster, the rector, is still a young man, but one of indomitable energy and perseverance, and withal a preacher of exceptional eloquence and forcefulness whose sermons are at once a delight and a spiritual stimulus to his auditors. Through the efforts of Father Lamb, and the beneficence of Bishop Grafton, a rectory and chapel was last year built to the church, and a guild hall is one of the things planned for the future. Rev. Webster takes an active interest in the affairs of life about him, and in short is one of those clergyman who make the religion of the Master cheerful and beautiful and real rather than forbidding and doubtful in the eyes of the world.

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The First Congregational church is another of Menasha's pioneer religious organizations. Many of Menasha's earliest settlers are numbered among its members, and the impress it has made on Menasha life is something beyond estimate. It has ever been a power for good in the community, and has always been what may be termed a strong
church. Its pastor, Dr. Samuel T. Kidder, is a man of exceptional mental breadth and grasp, a profound scholar, a tireless student, and a man of splendid Christian virtues. Besides the large brick church building on the corner of Broad and Milwaukee streets the society owns the fine parsonage at 132 Broad street occupied by Mr. Kidder and his family.

The Methodist Episcopal church of Menasha has a history dating back to the early '50s. Some ten years ago the old building was entirely rebuilt and today an attractive modern edifice stands on the church property on Broad street between Milwaukee and Tayco streets. The present pastor, Rev. Samuel Lugg, is a veteran in his chosen calling, but possesses a vigor and an energy that would put that of many a younger man to shame. He is recognized by all as a preacher of power and ability, and a pastor whose faithfulness is unremitting. The members of this church are an earnest, loyal body of Christians who never weary in well doing. Mr. Lugg and family occupy the handy parsonage west of the church, built a few years ago while Rev. W. W. Warner was pastor of the church.

The German Evangelical Lutheran church is another strong religious body, numbering several hundred members and worshipping in a substantial brick church building on Chute street erected a few years ago. The present pastor is Rev. Helms, who recently succeeded Rev. Carl Appler. The members of this church are all substantial citizens who contribute much to Menasha's stability, and the handsome church erected by them is a credit not only to themselves but to the city. Rev. Helms, their pastor, is a man whom to know is to love and esteem for his many sterling virtues. He is a young man, imbued with progressive ideas, and under his splendid leadership the church has a most promising future before it.

The Church of the Good Shepherd is located on Commercial street, Island, almost on the boundary line between Menasha and Neenah. At present it is without a pastor, but only temporarily, services being held bi-weekly conducted by Rev. Olympia Brown-Willis, of Racine. Some of the best people in the two cities are identified with this church, and its members are of the progressive, up-to-date class which gives life and sparkle to any community. A young men's Sunday evening club is connected with the church which until recently took charge of the evening services, presenting programs of especial attractiveness. The church building was greatly improved last year and is now one of the most attractive in the twin cities.

The Island Baptist church is another organization whose membership is made up of people from both cities. The building is a decidedly artistic structure, located on Commercial street, and the interior is fully as inviting as the exterior. Rev. A. S. Beeman, lately of Menominee, Mich., is the pastor of this earnest Christian body which has accomplished so much good during the many years that have elapsed since its foundation in pio-
neer days. Mr. Beeman is a gentleman of scholarly attainments; an able preacher and a man who deservedly enjoys the esteem of all who know him.

St. John the Baptist Catholic church (Polish) is located in the Fourth ward on the corner of Sixth and Depere streets. This organization has a large membership composed of our Polish citizens, and is now in a flourishing condition. Rev. Wierzinski is the present rector, and fills his responsible post in a most acceptable manner. The congregation is growing under his faithful labors both in numbers and devotion. Some years ago the members built a very fine rectory on Depere street just north of the church, which is indeed an ornament to that section of the city.

Menasha’s Population.

In 1895 the state census showed a population of 6,156, an increase of nearly 40 per cent. over 1890. Only two other cities in Wisconsin showed a larger percentage of increase. Since 1895 the steady healthy growth which added nearly 1,700 to the population in five years has continued, and today there is every reason to believe that not less than 7,000 people live within the limits of the city. And if present indications do not prove misleading, the next government census in 1900 will show a population of 10,000, if not more. With the opening of the new interurban electric line it is expected that the Fourth or eastern ward of the city will almost double its population in a few years, as many acres of land now unoccupied will be platted into lots and adorned with cozy homes.

Menasha Socially.

The fact that the social spirit abounds in Menasha is evidenced by the multitude of organizations, fraternal, patriotic and otherwise, but all social in their general character. There are twenty-five or more of these organizations, all with healthy and enthusiastic memberships. There are also numerous card and dancing clubs, and during the season when society dissipates scarcely an evening passes unmarked by some exemplification of the fact that man is gregarious by instinct and habit. Menasha has no "400," but it has what is infinitely better: A class of citizens who are refined in their tastes and pastimes, keenly alive to the passing events of the day and ever ready to extend the hand of welcome and good fellowship to the stranger who proves himself worthy.

Some Facts About Menasha.

The mayor and aldermen serve without salary. The assessed valuation of Menasha is about $1,200,000. Menasha has about three miles of electric street railway within its limits. Menasha is the second city of Winnebago county in point of population. Property is assessed at less than 33 1/3 per cent. of its value on an average.

The Wisconsin Telephone company has about 100 subscribers in the city.

The city is lighted at night by seventy-five arc lamps, costing about $5,000 per year.

The tax levy in Menasha has never been above 3 1/2 per cent. This year it was under that figure. Menasha’s healthfulness may be judged from the fact that with a population of 7,000 it supports only four doctors.

The first white child born in Menasha was Lydia Hunt, born in 1848. She is now Mrs. Geo. Wells and lives at Stedman, Ga.

Menasha has two daily papers—The Evening Press and The Evening Breeze; and three weeklies—The Press, The Breeze and The Anzeiger (German.)

The police force of the city consists of four—a chief and three patrolmen, besides several special policemen who serve at depots and factories without pay.

The total bonded indebtedness of the city at present is about $60,000—all representing money expended for needed public improvements, such as schools and bridges.

Although containing a population of 7,000, the city limits embrace only four sections of land. If Menasha should appropriate as much outlying territory as many towns of 2,000 and 3,000 have its population would not fall much short of 10,000.

There are few cities in Wisconsin whose principal residence streets are so beautifully wooded and shaded as those of Menasha. "Forest City" would be a proper name for the place to adopt were it not already appropriated by a half dozen Wisconsin cities whose shade trees do not compare with those of Menasha.