

A CANADIAN FARMER'S REPORT. 1

MINNESOTA AND DAKOTA

COMPARED WITH

MANITOBA

AND

CANADIAN NORTH-WEST.

THE FACTS AS PERSONALLY SEEN BY A CANADIAN FARMER.

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A FARMER, IN THE TOWNSHIP OF LANSDOWNE,
COUNTY OF LEEDS, ONTARIO.

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A CANADIAN FARMER'S REPORT.

Minnesota and Dakota Compared With Manitoba and Canadian North-West.

The Facts as Personally Seen by a Canadian Farmer.

Early in May, I started out to make a personal examination of Minnesota and Dakota on one side and Manitoba and the Canadian North-West on the other, as fields for settlers. Before arriving at Sarnia, I had discovered that American Immigration Agents were operating actively through Ontario, particularly in the western part, so I set to work to study their modes of operations.

Being myself a stranger in Sarnia, a farmer in a farmer's dress, it was quite natural, on meeting me, for these agents to conclude that they had got hold of an emigrant, on whom they could operate professionally. They are skilled in the art of making one's acquaintance. They first boomed Dakota and its wonderful wheat producing soil. When I told them "cattle growing" was *my* business, they dropped Dakota and boomed Montana as a stockman's paradise. When I complained of the cold of that State, they took me (in imagination) off to Los Angeles and San Diego, told me of the mildness and healthiness of that climate, the fruit grown, and how much better fruit growing paid than either wheat or cattle. In this way, these smooth tongued agents ply their trade and work faithfully for their employers.

I found these agents were firm believers in the usefulness of maps and pamphlets describing and setting forth the advantages of the particular localities to which they desired to attract emigrants. I found excellent maps of Dakota, Montana and other places, with concise descriptions of the advantages of the locality they were designed to represent, in railway stations, hotels, saloons, town halls, in fact in every public place in which they could be put. These maps attract the eye of the emigrant; he reads the descriptions and becomes interested, and in many cases becomes a convert to the persuasions of the agents.

I then started for Duluth, with the view, as far as the time at my disposal would permit, of examining the agricultural resources and possibilities of Minnesota and Dakota, and comparing them, as a field for emigrants, with Manitoba and the North-West.

In Minnesota, I found that the desirable Government land had all been taken up, but much land was held by speculators, syndicates, and some enormously large farms, and most of this land being held at high prices, it was not being sought after by emigrants. In fact, I found that from this cause, and a large portion of the State having suffered last year from a partial

drouth, quite an emigration from Minnesota to Dakota had set in. I, therefore, moved on to Fargo, one of the principal towns of Dakota, arriving there about the time the farmers had finished putting in their crops.

Of Dakota, I had heard and read much; some extolling it, some decrying it. I knew some of the accounts must be wrong and possibly none were right. I, therefore, made up my mind to set to work in a methodical, practical way, visiting County Towns and gathering statistics, especially those relating to assessments, taxation, values of land and rates of interest paid on farm mortgages; also, the kinds of crops grown, averages per acre, quantity and quality of live stock carried on the land; in fact, all those practical matters by which emigrant farmers are able, with some degree of certainty, to judge of the prosperity of an agricultural community. Many of the County Towns I could reach by railway, but I found that to acquaint myself with the farmers, soil, crops, mode of culture, water supply, land laws and regulations, as fully as I desired to do, I must do a good deal of travelling on foot. To a large extent I adopted the plan of walking over county after county, crossing the farms, talking with the farmers at their ploughs, seeing them and their wives at their houses, visiting their dairies, looking at their live stock, examining their farm implements, wells, stables, granaries, &c., and hearing from the farmers and their wives themselves, the story of their struggles, successes and failures; seeing for myself whatever there was to be seen, that there might be no mistake about it.

I soon discovered that the farmers and their wives did not give the same glowing account of Dakota, that I got from men who hung around towns and villages, and whose occupation seemed to be, trying to sell land, lend money on Chattel Mortgages at 22 per cent., and boom up "Old Dakota." I was astonished to find the prevalence of chattel mortgages; farmers' teams and implements, growing crops in the field, everything in fact, to use a Dakota phrase is "Chatted;" tens of thousands of those mortgages in Dakota drawing interest at the rate of 20 per cent. I had this report from the Farmers themselves, as well as from what I gathered at the County Towns. The farmers told me that in the last two dry years, wheat in several counties only averaged seven bushels to the acre; they showed me the great depth of their wells, told me of the cost of getting water, in most cases strong with alkali and unfit for use. One told me of the prevalence of hail storms, and of the enormous rate of interest he has to pay for money he was obliged to borrow to carry him through this year, on account of the short crops the last two years. I found also that a very large proportion of the land is held by speculators, and the burden of taxation very unequally distributed, so that the farmer had to pay far more than his fair share of taxes. In Grand Forks County, one of the best Counties in Dakota, the total amount raised by taxes is \$4,665,000, of which \$1,500,000 is from taxes on personal property, the land being only assessed at \$3.75 per acre, thus letting the land speculator off without paying anything like his fair share of taxes, while the poor farmer is made to pay full value for his horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, implements, furniture; in fact, nothing in or out of the house escapes the assessor. But about the rich man's personal property: there is a column in the Assessment Roll in which to assess mortgages, bonds, shares, &c. But behold! in the fifty-two Townships of Cass County there is not one dollar in this column, and Cass County is by far the richest County in Dakota. Still, Cass County has a debt of \$218,000.

I went south-west from Fargo into Richland, Laramie, and Runsom Counties. A good deal of the land is light and sandy. The Government

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land is all taken up. There is a great deal of vacant land owned by speculators, for which the price asked was from \$7 to \$12 an acre. This section is subject to fearful storms. Soon after the grain was sown this spring, the wind blew a terrible gale for twenty-four hours. In many places it blew the seed out of the ground, and the earth into heaps and windrows, obliging the farmers to work the land over and re-sow at that late season. This part is in the track of cyclones, and here I saw for the first time a "Cyclone Cellar," a deep pit beneath the kitchen with a trap door, into which the family plunge on the approach of a cyclone and remain until the danger is past.

From this point I crossed the country to Jamestown. Travelling here over the prairie, I met the following notice, in public places, and stuck up on stakes on the prairie :—

"PUBLIC NOTICE! All parties are warned not to let stock graze on our lands." Just so! The poor farmer must keep his cattle off the lands of the speculator. The same speculator wants \$8 to \$12 an acre for that land, though he manages to get it assessed for \$3 per acre. In Manitoba all this is different. There the poor farmer can let his cattle graze over any land as long as it is not fenced, and the cattle of the farmer are not assessed at all, but the taxes equalised on the land, so that the speculator is obliged to pay his full share of the taxes, while the farmer's personal property is exempt. This is a very important matter, and one which every intending emigrant should bear in mind.

I went next through Burleigh, Stanton and Kidder Counties, to the town of Bismarck. These counties are broken up with lakes, and the Government land all taken up. There is a good deal of light land here, but some very good. Prices range from \$7 to \$12 an acre.

Bismarck is a growing town on the east bank of the Missouri river. This river enters Dakota at its north-west corner, runs diagonally through it and leaves it at its south-east corner. As a rule, the banks are low and subject to periodical overflows, flooding the country on either side for many miles, and causing great loss of property and much suffering among the settlers.

While at Bismarck, I attended several public meetings called by the farmers to protest against "high and exorbitant" railway rates on wheat to St. Paul and Minneapolis. Many bitter speeches were made by the farmers denouncing the "grinding monopoly" of the railroads. The Government at Washington was also soundly abused for not allowing "glorious old Dakota" to enter the Union as a state, thereby debarring her of many political privileges. There is now in Dakota almost an *armed rebellion* with respect to the action of the Government towards the settlers on the Sioux Reservation. Here is a verbatim extract from a speech in regard to this matter, made by Capt. T. F. Comstock: "I am not the only man who has a grievance against President Cleveland and Land Commissioner Sparks. I could tell you the names of several whom I have heard say that Sparks did well not to visit the scenes of his depredations because *he would never have got away again*. "I took up a homestead in Sanborn County. There was a jog in the line called an 'excess.' I was told at the land office I could have it for \$1.25 per acre. This I agreed to and paid the money, and when I sent my papers to Washington, I was told that the Administration had changed, and I was informed by Sparks that I could not have the land by any such arrangement. *He did not return my money, though, so I have neither the money nor the land*. I know of a great many settlers here who have been treated in the same way, and when you come to take into consideration such incidents in the lot of most Dakota settlers, as the *sweeping away of their crops and*

"buildings by cyclones and prairie fires, you will understand that a Dakota settler's life is not full of ease and comfort."

The land laws here are greatly abused. To enter on land one must be a citizen 21 years old, and must reside on the land five years before he can get his patent; but the homesteader takes advantage of a clause in the Act, which allows him to commute, after six month's residence, by paying \$2.50 an acre, if, during these six months, he shall have built a habitable house and cultivated ten acres of land. Now, this is the practice: Four young men enter for their land at the land office. They go to the place where the four corners of their sections meet, and there build a sod cabin 12 feet square, as a joint house for all four. They dig four holes a few feet deep and call them wells; borrow a yoke of steers and plow a few furrows around the house, and call that forty acres; sleep a few nights in the cabin and "prove up;" mortgage their homesteads to the speculators and get money to get their patents; if they have a few dollars left they look on that as clear gain, put them in their pockets go off to some other county where they are not known and go through the same operation again and again, while the speculator gets the land and tries to sell it for \$10 an acre. One man told me that he had homesteaded nine times, and was going to do so once more. The remains of those cabins are to be met with all over the prairie, without a sign of life about them. One of those deserted cabins, with a board nailed across the door, had a notice on it, of which the following is a verbatim copy:—

"Four miles from a nayber,
 "Sixty miles from a post ofis,
 "Twenty miles from a ralerode.
 "A Hundred and Atey from timber,
 "250 feet from water. God bless our Home.
 "We have gone east to spend the winter with my wife's relations."

On June 7th a cyclone swept through this country, doing great damage to houses and crops. Hail-stones fell as large as hen's eggs. The cyclone was funnel-shaped, and it was a terrific sight to behold.

I crossed the country from Bismarck to Grand Forks; found some good land and a few fair farms, but water is scarce and bad, and grass very scarce for a new prairie country. Not much stock is kept here. I arrived at Grand Forks a good deal the worse for wear. In this town were a large number of idle men, and in talking with them I found many of them were young farmers who had finished putting in their crops on their farms and were hanging around the town waiting to see if they would grow. In conversation with them, I got their opinion of the country as a farming country, which, in few words, was, that between occasional droughts, hail storms, gophers and cyclones, wheat growing is becoming uncertain, and when I spoke to them of stock growing and dairy farming, they said that grass was short, hay very scarce and water, in most cases, hard to get, facts which I had discovered by actual observation since coming into Dakota. Many of the farmers complained bitterly of the high taxes. The first thing done on the organization of a county is to "bond" it for thirty thousand dollars to put up county buildings. This is called the "bonded debt." Then the supervisors issue a lot of "county scrip;" this is called the "floating debt." The farmers say these securities are sold to a ring of money sharks in the county town for a mere bagatelle, but they draw a good big interest on their face value, and hence high taxes without any value received.

The reason given by another lot of men for being idle at Grand Forks was that they were engaged building a railroad running west to Montana,

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and that, after they got west of Devil's Lake, the water got so poisonous with alkali, and grass so scarce that neither man nor beast could live there. Hence hundreds of them were there idle.

At Grand Forks several Canadians are living. They emigrated here previous to the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and say that at the time they came they did not expect that road would be built during their lives. They express great astonishment at its rapid construction, and the growth of Winnipeg, Manitoba and the North-West, as only a few years ago Winnipeg did its trading with Grand Forks by the slow and crooked Red River.

On the 12th of June I witnessed a genuine cyclone at Grand Forks. It was a fearful sight, as it came tearing down from the Montana Mountains, carrying with it dismay, destruction and death; injuring the fine university building, destroying the fair ground and exhibition buildings. The express train was passing at the time; the cars were hurled from the track, some of them rolling over and over. The cyclone swept through the town, cutting a clear track for itself, crossed the river and disappeared into Minnesota after destroying several lives and a vast amount of property. I mention this cyclone because I desire to report facts, and I am satisfied there will not be an account of it in the "Emigration Literature," of Dakota; though, to be fair, the people said that this was the first one that had ever visited this section.

I went west from Grand Forks to Nelson County, as I had heard it called one of the good counties, and I knew a few Canadians that lived in it. I travelled over the county and examined it carefully. The Canadians there are generally in some little business. Very few are farmers, and these few seemed eager to sell out. (Everything seemed to be for sale). I was astonished to find how sparse the population of this county was, and yet the Government land was all taken up! It was the old story--speculators had got hold of it.

In this County, as in others, I found very many of the farms mortgaged. I will give an instance. On the 24th June in the county town of this county, 24 farms were sold under foreclosure of mortgage. This state of things does not show agricultural prosperity. The rate of taxation in the county is very high. The very township in which the county town (Mapes) was situated, contained only ten inhabitants, and the adjoining township not so many.

From Nelson I visited Devil's Lake, Ramsay County. There is a great deal of light land and a sharp gravel in the soil, so hard that farmers ploughing are obliged to keep tools in the field to sharpen the ploughs every time they go around it. In this and Benson County crops were very light last year. Wheat, they told me, averaged last year only seven bushels, and the prospect for this year was no better.

From Devil's Lake I visited St. John, an old village near the Manitoba boundary, settled many years ago by half-breeds, on account of its proximity to timber, this being plentiful here, as it lies at the edge of Turtle Mountain, where there is fine timber, especially on the Canadian side of the mountain, the International boundary crossing this mountain. Towner, Cavalier and Pembina Counties join Manitoba, and are fairly good counties. A number of Canadians settled in them some years ago. At that time the Government land in Manitoba was all settled on, and there was vacant land in these counties with only a line between. It was nothing strange some should cross over and settle here, though now, many of them find themselves a long

way from railways, and wish they were over in Southern Manitoba, enjoying railway facilities and low taxes, as taxes are very high in these counties; in some cases, four times as high as in the adjoining county in Manitoba.

I next visited Batineau. High dry prairie with light soil, except on the Mouse River bottoms; grass very poor. I met here a family from Minnesota which had driven all the way with waggons and stock, looking for and examining land clear through much of Dakota, and they told me nothing would induce them to settle there. Their cry was "no grass," "no water."

I now took a north-west course for thirty miles over high, dry land with a good deal of stone, seeing only two or three settlers on the way, and finally came in sight of and crossed into Manitoba, west of the "Antlers," having pretty carefully examined twenty-seven counties in North Eastern Dakota, with the foregoing results, and I then started to travel over Manitoba and a portion of the North-West, and carefully and critically examine them in order to make a comparison of the relative advantages of Dakota and Manitoba and the North-West as a home for the emigrant.

The first farmer I met in Manitoba was George Thompson, whose farm is on the South Antlers, Souris P. O. He came here from Huron County, Ontario, four years ago, and is more than satisfied with the country and his success here. I travelled east over forty miles of fine rolling prairie, which is fast being settled, to Deloraine. This is a right smart town, at present the end of the South Western railway, which next year is to be extended forty miles west to the coal fields. There is a good grain market at Deloraine, with a fine wheat section around it. A very large quantity of wheat was marketed here last year. A few miles further east is White Water Lake, with a fine hay and grass country around it. A good many cattle are kept here, and a cheese factory is running, turning out a fine quality of cheese. In walking over this district I found the wheat crop most promising. The district has been settled five years, and the farmers are satisfied with their success. The Government land is all taken up but splendid land can be bought in plain sight of the wheat elevators where you can get cash for your wheat at \$5 per acre, with ten years to pay for it, by paying only 6 per cent. for the unpaid balance. Now, this question of interest should be carefully noted by the intending emigrant. The higher rate of interest and taxes in Dakota would pay for a quarter section of land here in ten years. Water is good and plentiful in this district. Twenty miles east is Bossevain, a good business place with two large elevators and a warehouse. Large quantities of wheat are grown between this and the Souris River. I visited the farmers and their farms in this district; many of them old school mates of mine, most of whom came here with a very few dollars, and in some cases, penniless. But how are these men to-day? On the average, 320 acres of land, 100 acres of fine wheat growing; teams, implements, buildings, live stock; they are to-day enjoying a degree of comfort and independence such as I never witnessed before in a new country. When these farmers settled here, they had to haul their effects from Emerson, 100 miles, across sloughs and rivers, at a great expense and hardship and in some cases, suffering; but now they have railroads at their doors, and the emigrant coming here now will find all the conveniences he may have left in an old county in Ontario: schools, churches, mills, elevators, where he can get cash for his wheat, and in plain sight of these elevators and amidst all these surroundings he can buy land for \$5 per acre. Yes, land that will grow 30 bushels of wheat per acre. The quality of this deserves more than a passing remark; a fine black mould, no stones, no ditching required after the sod is once broke. The farmer sits

on the gang plough and ploughs the ground; a boy sits on the seeder and sows the grain; another boy sits on the harrow and harrows in the seed. When the wheat is ripe, a man sits on the binder, cuts and binds the grain; up to this point all the work has been done sitting on a spring seat. Such are some of the agricultural possibilities of this alluvial prairie in Manitoba and the North-West.

Still farther east is Killarney; a beautiful lake and a good grain market. This is a fine section for stock raising; hay, grass and water in abundance and plenty of timber for fuel. Drovers were here buying good fat steers right off the grass for the Winnipeg market. The farmers told me they could grow stock here very cheap. There is fine rolling prairie and farmers say they have never had frosted wheat here. M. Martin, Killarney, on a farm near the lake, had been here five years; came from Perth, Ont.; grows wheat, never had any frosted; said he would not farm in Ontario if he got a farm as a gift. Every farmer I visited, was delighted with the country. Land can be bought for five or six dollars the acre. I met an American farmer from Dakota, looking at land here, and when he saw the quality of the soil and was told of the low rate of taxation, he decided to buy and settle here.

Going on eastward, I came to Crystal City, where is a very prosperous community; good land, good farmers, fine crops and stock and buildings. Several of these farmers came here eight years ago with little or nothing. To-day they have fine farms and are in prosperous circumstances. I am permitted to cite one case. John King, Crystal City, P. O., came here eight years ago, from Leeds County, Ont., with less than \$30. I walked over his fine farm of 320 acres, 100 acres of fine wheat growing, also coarse grain, roots, etc., a lot of good fencing, good house, granary, and stable, first-class set of agricultural implements, good herd of grade cattle, teams, etc., and besides he owns a bush farm, a few miles from his homestead. Now, this man's success is a fair measure of the success of his neighbours. A first-class new cheese factory is running here, paying the farmers well. Stock does well here; no disease of any kind. Land can be bought close to the railway and schools for six dollars an acre.

Manitou, still further east, has a first-class cheese factory making a fine cheese and feeding a large lot of hogs on the offal. Rolling prairie, lots of hay and grass, and plenty of timber. Land here is very fertile. Root crops are enormous. There are evidences of solid, substantial progress among the farmers. Fat steers taken off the grass were being shipped by train to Winnipeg, for which drovers were paying good prices. Stock-growing is a real bonanza here. First-class land can be bought on ten years time for five dollars an acre, close by the stations.

Morden is on the western edge of the Red River valley. I believe that north from it for twenty miles more fertile land is not to be found on the earth. I walked over this land, saw the crops just beginning to get ripe, and in plain English, I never saw such crops. Around Tobacco Creek and up to the foot of the Pembina Hills, wild peas and vetches grow in prodigious quantities. Cattle can be grown as cheap here as in any spot on this Continent. Hay and water are in abundance. There is still a little homestead land that can be picked up; and land can be bought for \$6 an acre, close to the railway. What an opportunity for young farmers? Taxes in this municipality are very low, in fact, almost nominal. The land speculator is made to pay his full share of taxes in Manitoba.

From Morden I crossed the prairie to Plum Coulee, passing over fine lands composed of rich black clay, with luxurious crops of hay and grass.

Immense quantities of cattle and dairy products will be raised here in the near future. There is no homestead land, but land can be bought from agents in Winnipeg for from five to eight dollars an acre. This land is able to grow forty bushels of wheat to the acre. Passing over the same kind of land I reached Morris on the Red River. From this place, ten miles west, over enough for drainage. The land is covered with a fine growth of nutritious rich, rich prairie to the Lowe Farm. This is a large farm, with just full grass and hay—a fine stock country. Wheat is largely grown on this farm. Straw is used for fuel in the house and answers a splendid purpose. While on this farm I witnessed a machine at work that harvested the wheat, threshed it, put it in sacks, and ploughed the ground behind it, leaving it ready for next year's crop. The straw is used for fuel for raising the seam. It is a steam machine, of 22-horse power, mounted on steel wheels 8 feet high, 4 feet on the face; a traction machine—a wonderful piece of human ingenuity, and it will revolutionise wheat growing on the prairies. This machine ploughed an acre in forty-five minutes, cutting the ground six inches deep.

From this place I cross the fine rich prairie to Winnipeg, passing fine farms and stock—no end to the hay and grass. On the way I visited the Mennonites, those people that came from Russia some years since, without capital, ignorant of our language, and the ways of the country; to-day they are comfortable farmers. Industry and economy properly directed here will soon make a poor man rich.

Winnipeg, a few years ago a Hudson Bay trading post, is now a fine modern city, with broad paved streets, fine public buildings, schools and colleges, eight railroads leading from it, and more projected. Immigrants coming here will get any information they may need at the Government, Land, Immigration or Intelligence offices, where obliging agents will give all the assistance required. Besides these all the railways have land offices, where land can be bought at low rates. The splendid vegetable gardens around Winnipeg, prove, if proof is required, the fertility of the soil.

I went next west to Portage La Prairie, passing fields of golden grain waving in the wind, as far as the eye could reach. Very fertile land here, and some fine groves of timber. I follow the fine prairie to Westbourne to visit Mr. Sanford's stock farm and see his 700 head of cattle. In summer they feed on the prairie; in winter they are fed some hay, when the snow is deep, but never stabled. This hay grows here in immense quantities. It is cut and stacked up in summer, and in winter drawn and fed to the cattle. Men were engaged in stacking 2,500 tons; six mowing machines cutting, hay loader put it on the waggon and a stacking machine put it from the waggon on the stack. Everything done by machinery—no hand work. I was told by the foreman that the cost of cutting and stacking was 75 cents per ton. So it will cost about \$3.00 to winter a cow, and nothing to summer her. Here is the place to raise stock and make butter and cheese.

I crossed the prairie to the neighbourhood of Lake Manitoba to see Mr. Lynch's herd of short horns, 80 in number. They were the best herd of grass fed cattle I ever saw. The hay here, for miles, was higher than the calves' backs. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Shannon are also very successful stock growers here.

About Gladstone, there is also a fine stock region. Hay and grass very plentiful. Mr. N. McLean, a farmer living about 4 miles south of Gladstone for the last 8 years, says this is the best country in the world for a poor man to get a start in life. Land can be bought here for \$5.00 an acre.

From this I went to Neepawa on the Manitoba & North Western Rail-

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way, a good road and of great use to the country. Thence north to the Riding Mountain is fine land. Farmers tell me they have never been injured by frost here; there is plenty of hay, grass and timber; a fine stock country all the way north for fifty miles. Neepewa is a nice town, with a good mill and a fine opening for a cheese factory. Farmers in this section tell me this is the best spot in the world. Land from \$5.00 to \$7.00 an acre, and plenty of homestead land north of Neepewa. Next to Minnedosa, a very pleasant town with grand land and crops north of it. Some homestead land is to be got yet, and railway land is good and cheap, all down the valley of the Little Saskatchewan to Rapid City. Tens of thousands of sheep could be fed and grown in this valley—it has grass, shelter and pure water. There is a fine woollen mill here, a good wool market, a new roller-process flour mill, with a capacity of 200 barrels, a cheese factory, a lot of high bred grade cattle, building materials, good hotels; in fact, this is a little paradise for immigrant farmers. They can bring their stock here, get cash for their milk and wool, feed their flocks and herds on vacant land belonging to speculators, and, where the fun comes in, the speculator must pay the taxes. But it is not this way in Dakota. P. A. Campbell, Rapid City P.O., came here 8 years ago from County Grey, Ont., with the proceeds of 50 acres of land sold there. I walked over his fine farm of 450 acres—150 acres, wheat; 50 acres, barley, roots and vegetables, a fine herd of cattle, full set of implements and good teams. House and buildings are all paid for, and he has cash on hand. Mr. Campbell says anybody can do the same thing, if they half try.

From Rapid City to Shoal Lake, where is a good cheese factory at work; a fine stock region all round here, and good land cheap, and splendid crops.

Next to Binscarth to visit the Binscarth stock farm and examine the stock, which is a credit to Canada, and doing much to improve the stock of this country. Then over a fine stock region to Shell River, the home of Major Boulton, of "Boulton Scouts" fame. Horses and cattle are grown here very cheap. A three year o'd steer killed off the grass on July 26th weighed 903 pounds dressed beef, and for the twelve months previous he never was in a stable, nor cost his owner one cent. I mention this case that came under my own observation just to show the stock possibilities of the country, and it includes dairy products as well. There is plenty of land here.

From Shell River I went over the prairie to Birtle, passing fine land and crops. Keeping on south-east over the great growing plains of Carberry, wheat, golden wheat stretched as far as the eye could reach; in fact, one becomes *dazed*, looking at wheat. Finally, I came in sight of the river Assiniboine, and the fine city of Brandon, snugly nestling on its south bank. Brandon, that six years ago only contained a few tents, is now a fine city with two costly bridges across the river, several wheat elevators and good public buildings. It is surrounded by a most productive wheat region, and will this year, market two million bushels of wheat from the Brandon district. Here is the home of Mr. Daly, M. P., who represents Brandon district in the Dominion Parliament. Immigrants coming here will do well to call on Mr. Daly, from whom they can get a great deal of valuable information in regard to that section of country. A railroad is now being built from Brandon to Rapid City on the north, and to the Souris on the south, and then west to the Moose Mountain coal fields, where coal is in abundance. There is a grand chance to get land cheap along this new line of railway.

As time was now pressing, I had to leave Manitoba for the present and plunge into

THE GREAT NORTH-WEST.

I arrived in due time at Moosomin, a thriving town but four years old, containing a flour mill, elevator, and splendid school. This is a very important business centre, as it does the trade of the country for a hundred miles south, to the Moose Mountain, and this through a fairly good tract of land, which is being fast settled up. The country here is said to be fully up to the average as a stock country, and the farmers say the climate is fine and very healthy. Benjamin Long came here from Wellington County, Ontario, where he had had very poor health for years. He has been farming here for five years. He is now a strong, robust man, the picture of health. Men and women tell me one and the same thing, that the climate is fine and healthy. There is plenty of good homestead land from Moosomin south to Moose Mountain, where there is a land office, plenty of grass and good smooth roads. North of Moosomin is a fine farming country. The best 500 acres of wheat I ever saw grown in one field is here, on the farm of Mr. J. R. Neff. He will thresh 15,000 bushels of No. 1 wheat. Close by he has 165 acres of barley that will give 40 bushels to the acre. He has now, summer fallowed and ready for next year's crop, 800 acres.

Seven miles north of Moosomin is the farm of Thos. Boobier, who had then, nearly ripe, 200 acres of wheat that would average 35 bushels to the acre. His barley and oat crop was really wonderful, and his crop of roots and vegetables simply the full of the earth, the best kitchen garden I was ever in. Currants, red and black, cherries, plums, hops, tomatoes, cauliflowers, etc., etc., and this is away up in the North-West, where some would fain make us believe there is nothing but Indians and icebergs. Farmers! if you want land come and see—yes—and feel. Others *are* doing and any farmer *can* do the same as those I have cited. There is plenty of land here to homestead.

I now worked west to Wolseley, a growing town on the C. P. R., with first-class flour mill (roller process) and wheat elevator. Here is the residence of Mr. W. D. Perley, M.P. for East Assiniboine. He showed me over a good deal of this section, away north to the Qu'Appelle river and valley, over fine rolling prairie—a fine stock country. The beef they make right off the grass is very surprising. Fortunes could be made here in sheep-growing. I do not believe there is any healthier climate on earth for man or beast than this. South of Wolseley is a fine rolling prairie, with timber bluffs and plenty of grass and water. Immigrants coming here to look for land, if they would call on Mr. Perley, would get all the assistance they might require, as he is well acquainted with this section, and there is plenty of good land to homestead. A cheese factory is being built, but any man that wishes to engage in sheep-growing as a specialty, had better examine Wolseley carefully.

I moved along west to Indian Head, where it is *real* prairie; no finer land on earth; good rich black clay, full of vegetable matter, and not one stone. A plough could be run for miles in one straight furrow. Mr. Mackay, of this place, said to be one of the best farmers in the territories, drove me away north, across and beyond the Qu'Appelle valley, out over the Pheasant plains. It was a sight to behold. Wheat! Wheat! Wheat! in every direction. Binders at work everywhere, cutting and binding the golden grain which will average 30 bushels to the acre. Fine farms and buildings, and

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roads and stock—the happiest lot of farmers I ever met ; and all this going on where a few years ago the wild Indian and buffalo held undisputed sway. In the Qu'Appelle Valley thousands of sheep could be grown. There is grass, pure water, shade and shelter—a grand place for sheep-growers. The cattle are all fat, even the milch cows are now good beef, and they are giving lots of good rich milk. Here is the Bell Farm with 4,300 acres of wheat now ripe. This is a sight to look at. South from Indian Head there is rolling prairie—good land here to homestead.

Further west I visited Qu'Appelle town and station ; a real live town, a good grain market, with a flour mill. The trail goes from here to Prince Albert and Edmonton, to which places a railroad is being built, and also south to Wood Mountain. This road will pass through good land. I went over a good deal of it. There is plenty of grass, water and wood on it. I will give the story of one settler here. S. Dundas came here from Scotland five years ago, a poor man without a dollar, and settled on a homestead six miles south of Qu'Appelle. I went over his fine farm of 320 acres. He is now cutting a fine crop of barley ; a fine crop of wheat is ripe ; he has a large crop of field roots and a vegetable garden. His wife showed me the dairy and told me (what I have heard up here for the thousandth time) that the milk is far richer and will make more and better butter than in either Ontario or Scotland. He has a fine herd of cows, good teams and implements, and is out of debt. This man is to-day as independent as the "Laird," whose tenant he used to be in Scotland. What possibilities here for industrious men and women—plenty of land here to homestead and it can still be bought cheap in sight of the town.

While here, I went south-east to visit one of the Indian Reserves of which we have heard so much. I travelled over twenty miles of rolling prairie with bluffs of timber, and plenty of grass and water. This Reserve was formerly know as "Piapot's ;" it is well located on high rolling land with plenty of timber for shelter and fuel. There are a large number of Indians on it ; one was cutting hay with a pair of oxen hitched to a mowing machine, and he was doing it well. A boy was raking with an ox hitched to a hay rake, others were hauling and stacking it, and all was being done quietly and well, under the supervision of the farm instructor. Two Indian boys were grinding mowing machine knives (a difficult task) and did it well. The Indians had growing and nearly ripe 100 acres of wheat, and a quantity of other grain, a fine lot of roots and vegetables, and a splendid garden. Mr. Grant, the Indian Agent, showed me the offices, shop, storeroom, &c. The Indian women had just finished knitting several hundred pairs of wool mittens, and I never saw better. In the storeroom, I saw the provisions, fresh beef, bacon, flour, all of first quality ; a medicine chest well stocked ; tools of all kinds. I visited the school room. The teacher exercised the boys and girls in reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic ; and the progress exhibited by these Indian boys and girls would have done no discredit to a country common school in Ontario. Mr. Grant is now teaching the women to spin yarn and weave it into cloth, and they will soon clothe themselves and do it well. Mr. Grant expects, in a very few years to make this Reserve self-supporting. He is beloved by all the Indians on the Reserve. I left it, feeling that all was being done that could be, to improve those children of the plains.

If immigrants coming to Qu'Appelle, will call on Mr. Baker, Immigration Agent, or Mr. O'ler, Intelligence Agent, they will get all necessary in-

formation as to land location, &c. Grass, water, hay and wood are plentiful. This is a most excellent dairy country, and men wishing to engage in cattle and sheep growing will find Qu'Appelle a most desirable place. Society is good, and there are churches and schools. Some wealthy English philanthropists have started a Model Farm and School near this town; a grand institution.

I next reached Regina, the Capital of the North West, situated in the centre of a vast plain. Here the real prairie region begins. I travelled over this district pretty thoroughly and examined it critically. The land is level, a vast deposit of alluvial soil, averaging in depth 3 to 5 feet, rich in plant food, with the necessary amount of moisture. The productive power of the land for either grain, roots or vegetables, is almost incalculable. I defy contradiction on this point. All the farmers engaged in stock raising told me that horses and cattle could be grown very cheaply; there was no disease of any kind among them. Regina is a live place growing fast. One mile from the town are the Police Barracks. They are a credit to Canada. In these barracks is a very high tower from the top of which I saw more rich, alluvial land, than I ever saw in my life at one time or place. Left and right and all around me, a vast sea of rich land. Such is this plain—a heritage in itself. Immigrants will find plenty of this land to homestead, and if poor, they can get plenty of work at good wages, till they get a start. Good servant girls are in great demand, wages 10 to 12 dollars a month and board. Railways are being built north through this good land, and farmers will have a wheat market at their doors.

I went no further west, but now turned my face eastward, collecting as I went from different stations of the North-West and Manitoba, samples of the products of the soil. Grain in the straw and threshed, prairie hay and grasses, roots, vegetables, hops, cheese and butter to bring with me to Ontario and exhibit at as many of the fall fairs as time would permit, so that the young men of Ontario wanting farms, may see with their own eyes, what the soil and climate of Manitoba and the North-West can produce, and what agricultural possibilities awaits them in that portion of our Dominion.

Hon. D. A. Harrison, the Minister of Agriculture for Manitoba, rendered me valuable assistance with the exhibits from his Province, for which I beg to render my best thanks.

After having travelled over more or less, every county in Manitoba, and a good deal in the North-West; after having been over pretty thoroughly twenty-seven counties in Dakota, going on foot 1,500 miles, besides on railways, buckboards and on horseback, and after having carefully examined the natural advantages of both countries, studying their Land Laws and Regulations, their municipal institutions, and social conditions, their taxation and rates of interest, as well as the fertility of the soil, and the ease with which it can be cultivated, their capacity for stock growing and dairying, the water supply, the climate, and all those things that go to make up a good agricultural country, in which an immigrant farmer could make a comfortable home for his family, with the greatest certainty, I, as a practical farmer, am firmly convinced that in all these things, Manitoba and the North-West stand pre-eminently ahead of Dakota. And this opinion will be endorsed by every man that is equally well acquainted with both countries. And I further affirm that there is *no* emigration from Manitoba to Dakota, for the above and other reasons, and further, the near future of Dakota (financially) is not of the kind to inspire confidence in the mind of a thoughtful immi-

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grant farmer. On the 1st of June, 1887, the farm mortgage debt of Dakota was 45,000,000 dollars. That sum if equally divided would be a mortgage of \$400 on every family in Dakota. But all are not farmers; so much the worse for those that are. At same the date the average six mortgages on six sections of 160 acres was \$800, drawing an interest of ten per cent. Add to this the county debts averaging \$30,000, and the thoughtful farmer can see why taxes are high, and why it is hard to make wheat growing profitable in Dakota.

I put down a few practical hints for the benefit of intending immigrant farmers. FENCING can be made fully as cheap in Manitoba as in Ontario. Good cedar fence posts cost but 10 cents at any railway station; wire costs a mere trifle more, but it costs much less to put down the posts, and they never heave with frost.

FUEL. Wood is cheaper in Winnipeg than in Kingston; cheaper in Brandon than in Belleville, Ont. Thousands of farmers have plenty of wood on their farms, and the Government have wisely reserved wood lots for the use of those lacking it. By paying a small fee of fifty cents, a permit may be got to cut a year's supply of wood. No such privilege as this for settlers in Dakota. Coal is plentiful and will soon be very cheap.

WATER. With few exceptions, water is good and plentiful. There are numerous rivers, numbers of small lakes, fine sloughs for stock purposes. The average depth of 200 wells in different sections of the country was 21 feet. In the Red River Valley where water used to be scarce in some places, they are now getting fine flowing wells and pure water. As a rule, the land requires no ditching.

FROST. I met a number of farmers at Killarney, Crystal City, Nelson, Neepawa, Rapid City, Moosomin, Indian Head and other places that told me they had been growing wheat for from five to eight years, and never had it frosted. They say "prepare the land in the fall, sow early, and there is not half the danger from frost that there is from rust and weevil in Ontario.

GRASS, HAY AND DAIRY.

PRODUCTS. Years ago the late Horace Greeley in a lecture on Agriculture said: "The country that produces the most and best grass cheapest, "is the country in which man can make the easiest and most certain "living." If this is correct Manitoba takes the cake. There is no other country to be compared to Manitoba and the North-West, in the production of hay and nutritious grasses. That this crop has been absolutely certain for ages, the bleached bones of millions of buffaloes fully prove. Stand at a railway station and see a pile of bones as high as a barn! Then calculate how many tons of beef it took to clothe those bones. Then the grass being certain, it follows: That beef, hides, tallow, mutton, wool, milk, cheese and butter, the great staples, are certain *absolutely*. Therefore, if there was never a bushel of wheat grown there, out of its grass crop "man could make an easy and certain living."

MUNICIPAL TAXES. I know of no country in which municipal taxes are as low as in Manitoba. Nature made the roads, leaving only the bridges for the municipalities to build.

TEAMS for immigrants to start with: For new beginners oxen are by far the best to start with. A good pair can be bought for \$100. They work in harness, plough, work the binder, mowing machine, hay rake. require no

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shoeing, will work splendidly on grass with very little grain. If any thing happens to one, you can turn him on the prairie, fat and sell him, get your cash and buy another. They are the best team for beginners. There are very few long hauls here now, owing to the fact, that a fine system of railroads permeates Manitoba, bringing a wheat market within sight of almost every man's farm. This has added much to the comfort of the farmer, and the value of his land.

Now, a word to my brother farmers, who have made up their minds to emigrate somewhere. I well know what starting in life without a dollar is. *I have been there.* Bring your wife, bedding, clothes and any cash you may have to Manitoba, and nothing else. Get land, put up a cheap, snug little house as soon as you can, buy a few cows and heifers, some ewes, a sow and some chickens. Let your wife and children manage them, while you get a pair of oxen and go to work. Then, if you and yours will pursue the same industry and economy that you did where you came from, in a few years you will bless the day you came; you will bless our Statesmen who, a few years ago, conceived the idea of getting possession of this fine country, and giving it such railway facilities; and you will Bless God that you are a Canadian!

I arrived in Ontario just in time to show my collection of the products of Manitoba and the North-West, at a number of the Fairs, viz.: Gananoque, Ottawa, Unionville, Lyndhurst, Kingston, Newbury, Centreville, &c. The farmers were astonished at the evidences of the fertility of the soil. They asked me many questions as to how to get land, where the best places were, and showed strong desire for further information. Several young men told me that, after seeing that exhibit, they had made up their minds to go to Manitoba instead of Dakota or any Western State. Among the exhibits was butter, which took the first prize at Toronto, Ottawa and Kingston, these being the only Fairs at which it was exhibited. This fact of Manitoba butter beating that of Ontario (yes, and the world) at these three leading Fairs, speaks more loudly for that country than volumes written in extolling it.

APPENDIX.

THE GREAT COLD AND BLIZZARD.

In Dakota and United States, West and North-West.

Things not put in Flowery Dakota Immigration Pamphlets!

(Extracts from United States' Associated Press Despatches.)

STORM AND VICTIMS.

ST. PAUL, January 10.—The terrible storm which has swept over the Northwestern states, blocking railroads in five states, is now over, and the victims of its fury are being counted. The list is growing almost every hour. It is not improbable, when the record is complete, that it will show that over two hundred lives have been sacrificed to the fury of the blizzard. The present storm, terrible in its result, came without warning.

A TERRIBLE RECORD.

MINNEAPOLIS, January 10.—The *Journal's* revised list of blizzard fatalities shows 97 dead in Dakota, 12 in Minnesota, 6 in Iowa, 17 in Nebraska and 2 in Montana; total 135, besides 15 reported missing.

SOME ADDITIONAL VICTIMS.

In addition to those published yesterday, the following deaths are reported:—Near Mitchell, Dak., a young man named Munger; Mrs. Phillips and son, Amana, Dak.; an unknown man, near Aberdeen, Dak.; at Wyndemer, near Wahpeton, Dak., a school teacher and two of her pupils; near Falda, Minn., the twelve year old son of John Walsh; near Tracy, Minn., Tom Anderson, a farmer, is missing; near Albert Lee, Minn., Olea Egge, a brother of Prof. Egge, of Northfield College. A Faulkton, Dak., special says six persons are known to have perished in the storm near there and there are unverified rumors of six or seven other deaths. Belgrade, Mont., reports rumors of cowboys freezing in the Madison valley.