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THE NORTH-WEST.

ITS POSSIBILITIES AND RESOURCES.

FEW realize that before the purchase of Alaska, Canada was larger than the United States, but such was the fact. The territory of the Dominion is 3,470,392 square miles while that of the United States was but 3,025,600 square miles.

The area, in square miles, of the organized districts of the North-west is as follows :—

Manitoba	73,000.
Kewatin	400,000.
Assiniboia	95,000.
Saskatchewan	114,000.
Alberta	100,000.
Athabasca	122,000.
British Columbia	311,305.
	1,245,305.

Beyond these provinces and districts lies an unorganized territory with an area of more than sixteen hundred thousand square miles.

The Canadian Northwest falls naturally into three great divisions. The territory lying between Hudson's Bay and the great chain of inland lakes in the valley of the Mackenzie River, extending from Lake Superior to the Arctic Ocean, is wooded, mostly rocky, and swampy, but with some areas of good land, merging finally into what are known as the barren lands, northwest of Hudson's Bay. Second, the great stretch of fertile plains, part prairie and part wooded, lying between the great lakes above mentioned and the Rocky Mountains and extending from the international boundary line almost to the Arctic Ocean. Third, the Alpine region, extending from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific coast.

It may seem far-fetched, but it is a fact, tried and proved, that the limit of the profitable cultivation of wheat lies at least twelve hundred miles to the northwest of the City of Winnipeg. Rye and oats can be grown at least two hundred miles still further north.

The map we give speaks for itself, and will be a surprise to many who have the idea that the wheat belt of the Northwest is but a comparatively narrow strip.

Latitude has a good deal to do with climate but not everything. Altitude is at least as important. The great central plain of North America is two miles high in Mexico and gradually slopes down towards the north, so that the navigable channel of the Mackenzie River is but three hundred feet above the sea level. Hence, the climatic conditions from Iowa north to the Peace River valley, a range of nearly twenty degrees of latitude, are essentially the same. It is a region marked by great heat in summer and great cold in winter.

The greater length of the day in the summer is a great factor in the growth of vegetation in the far northern latitudes. In latitude 56 degrees, which may be taken as the average of the Peace River country, on June 20th sunrise occurs at 3:12 a.m and sunset at 8:50 p.m. To this is partly due the wonderful rapidity with which vegetation matures. At Fort Simpson, Archbishop Clut speaks of trees passing in a single week from bud to perfect leaf.

In the great Northwest, the region of rigourous winters, cold, moist springs, and dry but intense summers, the undue luxuriance of stem and foliage is checked in the earlier stages of growth, greatly to the advantage of the fruit and seed. Dr. Samuel Farry states as a universal fact that the cultivated plants yield the greatest product near the northermost limit at which they can be grown. His illustrations include nearly every plant known to commerce. Cotton is a tropical plant, but yields the best staple in the temperate latitudes. Consul Taylor cites the fact that in Iowa, near the southern border of the spring wheat region, seldom more than two well-formed grains are found in each cluster or fascicle forming the row; in Manitoba three grains become habitual, while in wheat from Prince Albert and Fort Vermilion each cluster is made up of five well-formed grains.

West of the great belt of wheat country is an enormous area not adapted to the production of cereals, but admirably suited for the raising of