

the past twelve months in the Northwest on Government granted homesteads alone.

The statement of the C.P.R. land sales for the first nine months of the year are equally significant and satisfactory. In 1896 there were 48,234 acres of railway lands sold in the first nine months for a total of \$168,406; for the same period in 1897 there were 114,496 acres sold for the total of \$383,281, while in 1898 there has been sold up to September 30th 288,395 acres for a total of \$930,974; so that the sales for this year are considerably more than double those in the same period in 1897.

Taking the free homestead entries and the land sales together, it will therefore be seen that more than twice as much land has been taken up this year for settlement in the Northwest as in 1897, and that 1897 was far ahead of its predecessors.

A distinguishing feature in the developing of the country this year has been the movement northward, and it has been suggested that the Canadian motto for some years to come will be not "Go West," but "Go North." Ontario has found a source of wealth in the mines and forests of her far northern regions; Quebec is showing activity in the same direction, and Manitoba is developing the Dauphin and Swan River districts; while all three Provinces have railway enterprises heading for these storehouses of latent and limitless wealth, and working towards the Hudson Bay as their terminal point.

The Peace River district, which promises great things in wheat growing, is attracting more and more attention, and its development by railway communication must soon become a live question. British Columbia is looking north to the Cassiar region, and all that rich mining country which lies through the mountains, even to the Pacific coast.

Of course, the improvement has not been uniform in the various sections of the country, for in some cases whole townships have been opened up and are already assuming a settled appearance, that a season or two ago were beyond the limit of settlement. Of the new territories that have been developed this season none are more notable perhaps than the Dauphin and Swan River districts in Manitoba, and the Edmonton district in the far Northwest. As a sample of the manner in which this latter locality is developing, it may be mentioned that more homesteads were taken up in that district in the month of May last than in the

whole six months ended June 30th, 1897. Large numbers of farmers from the Northern States are going into this section, and the more that come the more there are likely to come.

Mr. J. W. Tyrrell, the noted explorer, states that "The Mackenzie River basin is one of the richest wheat districts on the continent, the section between and including the Athabasca, Peace and Liard valleys, has a climate milder than that of Manitoba and comparing favorably with that of Ontario."

Improved Regulations.

The wonderfully satisfactory manner in which settlement has progressed in the west this year is no doubt due largely to modifications in the regulations affecting the taking up of land, which has been made by the Minister of the Interior within the last two years. There have been numerous and important changes made of a nature which can only be appreciated after practical experience of their working, but it may be safely asserted that the system under which the country is being settled to-day is more advantageous to the settler and of greater permanent value to the country than it could possibly have been made under the older system.

One change effected is in connection with persons who have obtained a second entry for lands. It is not now necessary for such persons to put in the ordinary residence of three years or of six months in each of three years, residence on the first homestead being deemed sufficient. So also regarding the homesteading by sons of parents who are also farmers, the residence of the son with the father or mother as the case may be, whether they are living on the homestead or not, so long as they are farmers, is now considered sufficient residence to qualify the son. Another very desirable change, which has in many cases removed an injustice, is that which permits the residence required by law to be counted from the time it actually commenced, even though the homestead entry had not been made; thus observing the intention of the act where the letter has been technically broken through misunderstanding or otherwise.

The Department has also, within the last year, cancelled a very large acreage of lands in Manitoba which were the subject of time sales, extending back as far as 1879, in order that these lands may be available for entry; the object being to have them settled upon rather than to allow them to lie waste