

tion, the raising of crops,—settlement—are impossible. This objection, if, indeed, it be a serious one, applies only to a very limited section of the country. And, could no means be discovered by which these inundations might be prevented or at least regulated and rendered advantageous? There are falls of great magnitude near the point where the Saskatchewan joins Lake Winnipeg; and, although the people at Red river do not think that by removing a certain mill-pond in their country, an immense swamp which it dams up would be drained, it is nevertheless beyond question, that if the wants of man required it, the annual floods of the Saskatchewan might be made to find their way into Lake Winnipeg without first inundating the country. But, in a region where it rains so little, the precipitation being in the course of the year only fifteen inches, it might tend more to the raising of abundant crops, to regulate and even extend the rush of the spring-tide waters. To what does Ægypt owe the fertility of its plains, if not to the Nile's inundations? The whole valley through which the great river flows was wont to be overflowed, and often to excess; yet who ever heard of a famine on the banks of the Nile, or that Ægypt was incapable of being, when occasion required, the granary of the world? In order that no inconvenience might arise from excessive inundations, great and stupendous works were erected by the generosity of the kings of Ægypt and the ingenuity of her people. Thus were the superfluous waters disposed of and regulated, so as to increase to an amazing extent the fertility of the land. Who knows but, when people if not princes have been multiplied on the earth, similar works may be undertaken in the hitherto neglected regions of the North-West?—and who dare say that the vast countries there, which have known no sound as yet save the lowing of wild cattle and the war-whoop of the fierce red-man, shall not rejoice one day in all the blessings of civilisation, and become vocal with the glad accents of millions upon millions of happy beings?

SOIL AND CLIMATE OF THE REGIONS WATERED BY THE MACKENZIE RIVER
AND ITS TRIBUTARIES, THE ELK AND PEACE RIVERS.

The valleys of the Elk and Peace rivers, tributaries of the MacKenzie, although much further north than the countries on the Saskatchewan, being situated between the 55th and 58th degrees of north latitude, enjoy a climate and soil adapted to the growth of all the cereals, and all kinds of garden vegetables. Wheat, even, can be raised easily in these valleys, for it grows at fort Liard, in 60 degrees north latitude, on Mountain river, another tributary of the MacKenzie. Although we have no positive evidence before us which decidedly proves that wheat crops may be relied on at Peace river, there is surely ground for believing that, where the spring is so early, grain, which even cold Siberia refuses not to the labour of man, might be successfully cultivated. Sir Alexander MacKenzie, in his journal, of date 10th May, 1793, says that “already the buffaloes were seen with their young ones frisking about them.” At this time also (10th May), “the whole country,” he writes, “displayed an exuberant verdure. The trees that bear a blossom were advancing fast to that delightful ap-