

2,824,929, and of this area the acres wooded number 1,159,806, which is a larger proportion than one usually ascribes to "the Prairie Province." Cattle number 219,743; horses, 98,808; sheep, 29,566; pigs, 66,565. These figures as to animals will be found, we think, to show a very considerable increase in recent years, for the farm animals of Manitoba have grown in number at quite a remarkable rate.

Assessment valuations show a total approaching seventy-five millions of dollars, thus: Assessment, real and personal, rural municipalities, \$43,134,980; assessment, real and personal, cities, etc., \$31,455,619. The aggregate of taxes imposed upon Manitoba rural municipalities is \$704,536; of which sum \$323,148 is for school purposes. In the cities and towns there has been imposed for municipal purposes taxes reaching \$405,756, and for school purposes \$158,884.

In the two cities, eleven towns, six villages and four rural municipalities of the province there are 48,942 school children, equal to about 22 per cent. of the population; and there are 1,002 rural schools in operation. The amount of annual government grant to rural schools, is \$180,000; grants and payments to schools in cities, towns and villages, \$44,883.

It will not be amiss to note here the figures of some of them, relating to cultivation and production. We omit the average yields of grain and root crops, as our readers may be presumed to be tolerably familiar with them. The total grain crop of last year was 47,345,000 bushels; cattle exported, 12,525; hogs exported, 23,100; pork imported, 1,917,784; poultry disposed of by farmers, 1898; Turkeys, 41,455; geese, 13,010; chickens, 127,660. The total value dairy products was, last year, \$409,455. Expenditure on farm buildings, etc., in the year 1898 was, \$1,469,740.

#### THE CHOCOLATE KING AND HIS ISLAND.

La Courrier de Ste. Hyacinthe publishes an extraordinary story about the pretensions of M. Menier, the Chocolate King, of Paris, who purchased from the private owners the Isle of Anticosti. The statement is attributed to Commander Wakeham; where made is not told. He recites that, in 1585, Jacques Cartier took possession of the island for the King of France. The island was given to Sieur de Joliette, and has passed from one holder to another till, in 1884, it was purchased, at sheriff's sale, by M. F. W. Stockwell, by whom it was re-sold to M. Henri Menier, in 1895.

Then comes the astounding statement: L'islen'a jamais appartenu au Bas Canada, ni à Quebec, ni à la Puissance. "The island never belonged to the old Province of Quebec, nor to Quebec [Province] nor to the Dominion." If it belonged to the French king in 1585, it continued to belong to that sovereign till the conquest of Canada; and the inference from this statement is that it was not transferred to Great Britain along with the rest of Canada, in 1763. The statement is not made in direct terms, but what is stated can have no other meaning. This is perhaps thought to be ingenious; we do not think it is. This claim is very much as if the purchaser of a slave were to be told, long afterwards, that the man's tongue did not go with the man, never having been a part of him. It is also a denial that the greater contains the less. The pretence is preposterous beyond measure. If Anticosti neither belonged to the Province of Quebec nor to the Dominion, what sort of a title has M. Menier got to it through a sheriff of the Province of Quebec? Let him consider this. And if the island never belonged to Canada, on what

authority was it surveyed, geologically? On what authority were lighthouses built on it?

Whether any of the previous inhabitants of the island have a right to cut wood on the island is another matter. The Wakeham way of dealing with some of them is to give them a bad name; they are represented as being enthusiasts in religion and as having the piratic element largely developed. The two qualities ascribed do not hang well together, though they, or something like them, have sometimes been found in combination. Some of these people, it is admitted, have been twenty-one years on the island, and who on every principle of humanity and justice ought to have some right. The piratical instincts ascribed to them did not prevent them pursuing the lobster saving industry; and this commander complains that they occupy *conserves de homards*, and hints that they and some Nova Scotians situated on the north shore have taken up that position with a view of robbing vessels that may be wrecked in the dangerous neighborhood. Perhaps M. Menier would like to control the north shore as well as the island, and drive these men, thus calumniated, away.

These people claim a right of possession, and in most parts of North America twenty-five years possession, which is here admitted, would give them some rights which even a Chocolate King could not take away. The real difficulty seems to be that M. Menier wishes them to surrender their rights whatever they are, and this they refuse to do. Legal rights they probably have not, and if this be so it would be cruel to create in their minds an impression contrary to the fact. If they have no legal rights, the law of humanity should plead in their favor. There are possible faults on both sides. The sympathy of the world will not lean to the side of Cræsus. At the same time let no man envy the Chocolate King the enjoyment of his well-earned 1,000-ton yacht.

#### BUSINESS HANDWRITING.

It was a little startling to hear a young man say, no longer ago than last week, when spoken to about careless handwriting, "Oh, it doesn't matter nowadays, as much as it used to, how a man writes. Pen and ink are not in it with the typewriter." It is not necessary to question the increasing popularity of the typewriter in this age of business, but it is necessary to protest against slipshod and illegible handwriting on the part of commercial employees. It is unbusinesslike, in the first place, and is a blot on the qualifications of any man who seeks a commercial position. It is dangerous, too; for we have known a quarrel between partners result from stocksheets being negligently made up in the handwriting of one partner and misunderstood by the other, and it is well known that numerous law suits have arisen from misapprehension of faulty handwriting.

To show how far astray this young man was in his supposition that clear handwriting is no longer deemed necessary by business men, we cite a recent occurrence. One of the large manufacturing concerns in Canada had applications from several persons for a certain position in its employ. A certain man among these being recommended by a friend, one of the principals wrote to that friend: "The application of your candidate came in yesterday. He unfortunately does not write a very good hand. While the position would not be entirely a clerical one even at the first, and would be decreasingly so with time, good penmanship would be a very attractive qualification to me, for there would be more or less writing, and, as you know, we like things well done. It is a misfortune, I think, that penmanship has so much deteriorated in these latter