

PART I.

HOW TO PROSPECT FOR LAND.

COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY—SUGGESTIONS AS TO OUTFIT—ESSENTIAL INFORMATION—HOW TO FIND ANY PARTICULAR SECTION—A SIMPLE METHOD OF LOCATING CORNERS ON UNSURVEYED LINES.

COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY.

THE object of a trip on the prairie, for the purpose of selecting lands to homestead or purchase, can be attained with much more satisfaction and success by the organization of a small party composed of from two to four persons. If the number exceeds the latter figure, disputes are apt to arise, through conflict of interests, when the choice of locations has to be arrived at. Two companions may get along very well; but, in following up lines, setting off right angles, and in some other situations, the presence of at least three persons will be found to facilitate operations. In case of a break-down, getting "stuck" in a swamp or coulee, or the occurrence of any other contingency of prairie travel, it will be found that "many hands make light work" in overcoming the difficulty. The expense of such an expedition, moreover, will fall much lighter upon the individual if shared *per capita* among several explorers participating in the use of a joint outfit.*

* In the North-West the term "outfit" is understood as including not only the transport accommodation and equipment of a party, but even the commercial stock in trade of a mercantile venture.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO OUTFIT.

The necessary articles with which to equip a party of Land Prospectors are but few in number, and, with the exception of means of transportation, very inexpensive. The quantity of provisions to be taken along must be determined (1), by the number of the party; (2), by the length of time it is expected the trip will last; and (3), by the possibility of obtaining further supplies while in the field.

Land hunters will find it to their great advantage, no matter what may be their transportation facilities, to travel on such an excursion as lightly laden as possible, for, by duly observing this consideration, they will be able to pass without check over rough country and through bad places, which would be altogether impossible if they carried much freight.

The most convenient way, if the Prospectors do not already possess teams of their own, will be for them to purchase or hire a waggon (if a light one, all the better) drawn by a pair of native ponies. As these hardy animals thrive on the grass of the prairie meadows, the necessity for the party carrying with them oats or other forage may be obviated.