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THE EDMONTON DISTRICT.

To keep up with the progress of our growing North-West one has to revise his geography and his statistics every little while. If he does not, he will be hopelessly out of his reckoning. Taking up a pamphlet just received from the Board of Trade of Edmonton, Alberta, the writer, who was out in that place less than two years ago, found some figures that caused him to rub his eyes. For instance, the population of the town in 1903 was said to be 4,000; to-day it is 7,850, and the assessment was \$3,958,000 in 1904. We find on page 16 a list of towns in the Edmonton District, which comprises all the territory between Red Deer, on Red Deer River, 95 miles south, and Athabasca Landing on the Saskatchewan, about the same distance north, 50 miles from Edmonton west and 90 or 100 miles east.

Within these boundaries lie a dozen or more towns and villages, growing fast. Strathcona, with 3,000 people and some promising manufactories; southward thence and we come to Leduc and Millet, about 400 each; Wetaskiwin, a stirring place of 2,500, with two newspapers and three banks; Ponoka, on the Battle River; Lacombe, which claims 1,500 people. If we go eastward, there is Fort Saskatchewan, the headquarters of a division of the North-West mounted police; St. Albert, Morinville—all three connected by telephone with Edmonton. From the last-named town westward lies Lac St. Anne, a post of the Hudson's Bay Co.; while northward is Athabasca Landing, an important place, and a great fur-trading point on the Peace River and Mackenzie River systems, connected with Edmonton by a Government telegraph line. Recent visitors to Manitoba and Assiniboia were often surprised at the extent to which electric light, the telephones, and other appliances of public convenience were availed of in villages of but a few years' growth. The same is true to-day of Alberta,

which has been looked upon as more remote. This Board of Trade pamphlet tells us that in the district north of Red Deer there are 118 post-offices, while "all towns on the railway are connected with Edmonton and Calgary by long-distance telephone."

Wonderfully rich is the black soil of the district just described. Crops are grown there of wheat, forty bushels to the acre; oats, a hundred bushels; barley, forty bushels—all without manuring. Whether it is possible to go on for twenty more years cropping such land without manuring, and whether it is wise to attempt it, we gravely doubt. But that the wealth of soil exists just now one cannot but believe. Roots and vegetables of great size and succulence are grown there, as we can testify, having seen them at Strathcona fair. The rich soil, with ample rainfall and summer warmth, produces tomatoes in the open air on August 1st, according to the compiler of this pamphlet; while "fine specimens of apples have been produced near Edmonton, but their culture is only in the experimental stage as yet." That other fruits can be successfully grown with such advantages as are above stated, there is surely reason to believe.

In case people should think the Edmonton district bleak from lying so far north, it may be well to cite some outstanding facts. 1st. During the fourteen years that the Calgary and Edmonton railway has been in operation the train service has never been stopped or even delayed by snow. 2nd. The average winter temperature, as recorded in the Government Station, for December, January, and February of ten past years, was 9.9 above zero. 3rd. There are no blizzards in the Edmonton District; the almost constant high winds which prevail farther south and west are very rare in the Saskatchewan Valley. 4th. At Peace River Landing, 300 miles north of Edmonton, a flour mill is in active operation—at Fort Vermilion, 400 miles north of that place, there are two, one of them a modern mill of the best equipment, fitted with