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TOWN TALK

IN real estate business there are two kinds of town talk. Both have points of interest. One deals with land as bought by merchants and mechanics for their own use, and the other deals with land as bought by large or small capitalists as an investment.

When a merchant or mechanic buys a town lot in a western townsite, he begins at once to erect a store, workshop, or home. He is the kind of buyer that the western people love. They admire the capitalist and the speculator, but the real hero is the man who joins the town as a citizen.

Small merchants and mechanics are flocking into the western provinces at a tremendous rate. Every farming settlement containing five hundred people must have a small village in its midst to supply it with a doctor, a lawyer, a dentist, a photographer, a druggist, a barber, a harness maker, a newspaper publisher, a painter, a veterinary surgeon, in addition to the usual run of bankers, traders, and general dealers in merchandise. As that farming settlement grows, the village grows. Its growth is composed of the new merchants and mechanics who come in, buy a town lot, erect a building, and commence business.

Nor is this migration of business and professional men into the west a movement of small proportions. Last year the Canadian Pacific Railway alone established forty new towns along its lines. Mr. F. T. Griffin, land commissioner of that railway, has prepared a little booklet of "Town Talk," in which he estimates that in these fifty towns two thousand new businesses were opened up within twelve months. He believes that there will be as many this year. He is on a ceaseless hunt for men with some capital, who will go out to one of these new towns and set up in business as a dentist, druggist, tinsmith, blacksmith, and so on. The other railways are opening up new towns also, and it is safe to say that at least six thousand new businesses are to be opened up on new town lots every year in the western country.

Mr. Griffin places the average price of a business lot at \$300, and of a residential lot at \$100. Most new business men will buy both. Therefore, these six thousand new business men will invest every year in town lots alone the magnificent sum of \$2,400,000. This is for their land alone. After that comes the erection of stores, and the buying of the necessary tools and merchandise.

Mr. Griffin also points out that the attractive feature of beginning business in a new town in the west is that not a dollar has to be paid for "good will" or trade connections. The young man with limited capital gets a business at once which he doesn't pay for. It is a new business, created by himself and the community.

A young man starting in the east would necessarily have to meet well-established competition, or pay a considerable sum for the good will of a going business or practice. In the new towns in the West it is quite different. They don't sell established businesses there. There are too many opportunities to create new ones, and to create them with very little capital. In a country where they open up fifteen new towns every month, the energetic young man doesn't need to buy out an old business.

Any person interested in this phase of western life would do well to write Mr. Griffin at Winnipeg for a copy of this little pamphlet, which is issued free. Like other Canadian Pacific publications, it is packed full of information and suggestions.

There are dangers in buying town lots from private parties or companies, although in most cases the buyer gets fair treatment. There are no dangers in buying real estate from the land commissioners of the railway companies. The advice they give the public may be tinged with optimism, but it is absolutely above suspicion.

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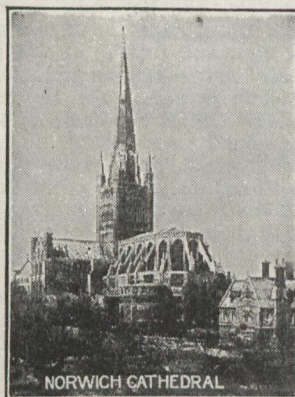
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