

Saskatchewan.

Prince Albert Town and District.

The following letter, written by one of the Maine delegates who visited Western Canada last summer, gives the writer's impressions of the Prince Albert district. The letter appeared first in the *Auburn, Me., Gazette*:—

"The first thing that impresses us with this village is the New England-like appearance of everything. It is beautifully situated on the south bank of the North Saskatchewan, on a level plain running back perhaps half a mile, after which the land rises in terraces. Back there in the high ground the large police barracks looms up, looking larger than it really is, while the Union Jack floats serenely from the lofty flag staff.

It is evening, and the bank, post office, and stores are closed, so we take a walk out and enjoy the fine, cool air. We are on the 53rd parallel, no latitude, and the North Star, the prairie traveller's guide, shines with more than usual lustre. It is not cold though here, even if it is seven hundred miles further north than Portland, Maine. Sitting down on the grassy banks of the calmly flowing Saskatchewan, we look over its waters and see the forest growing down to the shore. How far would you have to travel in a direct line north-west from the other side of the river before you would freeze to death? No one answered the question but the Venerable Archdeacon McKay came along and advanced some very interesting information. "About 250 miles north of here," he said "the Churchill river flows parallel with the Saskatchewan." We knew the Saskatchewan ran parallel with the American boundary line 300 miles south of us, so we began to open our eyes as to the extent of the country.

"But that is not all, for," continued the clergyman, "I know a Catholic missionary who runs a school 500 miles to the north of here."

"And does anything grow in that country?" "Oh, yes, I was stationed you see 250 miles from here and my wheat crop never failed me for seven consecutive years."

The next morning we took a buckboard and behind a pair of fleet bronchos drove down the Saskatchewan valley on a trail about 50 miles. What a glorious country! One could not but think as he sped along through this very garden of the gods, that if the people of the outside world, or even the farmers of rocky old New England, could but get one glimpse of the scene spread out before us, there would be a grand rush for the favored country such as has never been recorded in the history of any part of any country. If the crowded denizens of Boston and New York, to say nothing of European cities, could get one breath of this health giving air it would brighten their very souls.

The farmers around Prince Albert are very prosperous and why should they not be? Their young cattle and horses can roam at large all winter without the trouble of even being fed or watered. There is plenty of natural hay, free as the air itself. Oats, wheat, barley, and in fact, all grains grown in New England, flourish, and the market is always good for everything the farmer raises.

The price of beef and the beef itself which it costs nothing more than a song to raise, is the finest grass fed beef in the world, and commands the largest prices in the London markets. It sells readily in the ranch for from \$3 to \$4 per hundred live weight, a good three year old steer being worth about \$60. The inhabitants of Prince Albert are as fine a class of people as you ever met. They came here mostly before the railroad in old Hudson Bay times, when the Red River carts carried their supplies overland from St. Paul, Minn., over a thousand miles distant.

Speaking of the Prince Albert district. There is a luxuriant growth of vegetation all over the surrounding country. The soil is deep and fertile and there is an abundance of good water and plenty of timber for fuel and building purposes. The impression has gone abroad somehow that the farther north you go the more rigorous the climate. But it is not so with the Prince Albert district, as the climate really is more equitable than on the southern plains. There are never any blizzards, cyclones or hail storms or any atmospheric commotions that the country south suffers from. Its geographical position, too, is the very best, as the Soo road from Minneapolis and St. Paul and the Manitoba and Northwestern which is now at Yorkton within 200 miles, is pledged to be built before '93. And then again it is the nearest point to the line which is to be built to Hudson Bay, thus making a short route for the transportation of wheat to Liverpool. A new government building to be built at Prince Albert next summer, and outside of being a great distributing point; it is bound to be the capital of Saskatchewan, which, although yet nothing but a territory, will be soon knocking at the gates of the Dominion capital for permission to enter the Confederation. It would not be exaggerating in the least to call Prince Albert the coming city of the Northwest. Along the line of the survey from Prince Albert to Yorkton, the terminus of the Manitoba and Northwestern, lies tens of thousands of fertile homesteads.

Just think of it, 160 acres of timber, plough and meadow land free to all who will avail themselves of the opportunity. If the farmers of New England who are not well located would take up with the magnanimous offer made by the Canadian government and work as hard here for ten years as they have in New England, they might retire with plenty of cash for the rest of their natural lives. If your homestead is not large enough you can always find plenty of railroad land near by at prices ranging from three to four dollars per acre. Under the present law homestead duties may be performed as follows: "Fifteen acres at least must be cultivated during the three years, and the settler must live on his property at least six months each year."

It is wonderful, the interest taken by the farmers of the United States, in the agricultural prospects of the Northwest. Every train brings delegates from the States, who come to look over the country and report to their friends the true condition of affairs. In one party I saw thirty-seven Vermonters, among whom was S. B. Waite, clerk of Raymond

country, and a popular young newspaper man. Then there were delegates from Michigan, Iowa, Dakota, Nebraska, Montana, in town at the same time. They were all of one opinion that the soil of this vast and almost untenanted country cannot be excelled on the continent and that the offer of free homesteads by the Canadian government is one that in a few years will only be known in the memories of the past.

Notes.

The water in the Saskatchewan River is very low.

A large eagle was shot at Jackfish Lake recently.

The Onion Lake Indians have received their treaty money.

A large amount of plowing has been done in the Red Deer Hill district.

The Indians of Battleford have received their annuities and returned to their reserves. Every year sees them making a better use of their money, by spending it on useful instead of fancy articles. About four thousand dollars were paid out here.

"The visit of the Michigan delegates to the Saskatchewan has attracted the attention of the Indians, and they put their own interpretation upon the 'invasion,'" says the *Battleford Herald*. "In talking over the matter the other day with an Indian who had spent some time in Montana he said, with a smile of superior intelligence beaming over his countenance, 'Yankee no good to work on farm; he no want farm; he want to sell all the Cree country, and if he like it, he take it all, him. Plenty guns, plenty horses'—pointing over his shoulder in a way that indicated the south."

Battleford Herald: "All the country south of the Eagle Hills is burned, and every night the reflection of a fire may be seen far away to the south-east—most likely in the timber on the hills. The fire ran northward through the hills near the Swift Current trail, destroying a quantity of hay in its course. H. A. Head and Gid Jackson are the heaviest losers, having lost nearly all they had. A tongue of the fire ran northward, passing to the east of Poundmaker's reserve, and stopping near Battle river, without doing serious damage except to the timber in its course. Yesterday afternoon a north-west wind set in and drove back the fires that were working in the woods on the outside of the hills and threatening the settlements."

A REPORT has been in circulation lately to the effect that the British Government intend withdrawing the Imperial troops from Canada.

Two Japanese boys, brothers, arrived in Winnipeg lately on their way to a farm near Mariapolis, Manitoba, where they intend to learn farming.

One day the children were having an object lesson on the blue heron. The teacher called attention to the small tail, saying: "The bird has no tail to speak of." Next day she asked the scholars to write a description of the bird, and a little girl wound up by saying: "The blue heron has a tail, but it must not be talked about."