

fastened to the "fork," and all is ready for work. First, we will describe more fully the implements. The long piece or tail of the Y is of wood, 12 feet long and eight inches square, the arms each 8 feet, same square, with a cross piece supporting an upright 9 feet high, and a "crane," all of same size, hardwood timber. The "fork" is like an enormous sugar scoop (made of 1½ in. square iron, teeth 30 inches long, 7 or more in number) mounted on a handle 27 feet long, 8 inches diameter. Now imagine this "fork" suspended in the air under the "crane," close to the end of the hole near the windlass, a man grasping the handle by a "cross-arm" at the opposite end.

The man sings out "ungear," the boy who has put the horse in the shafts on the windlass raises a cog, the chain "pays out," the fork descends in the water, the man walking backward, dragging it about fifteen feet, until it reaches bottom; then singing out "hoist away," keeping the handle slightly elevated (with the boy's assistance perhaps), the fork is drawn forward and then upward and high enough out of the water to allow its contents to be turned (by a dexterous twist) into the sled in waiting alongside, and so on until the sled is filled. Another horse now comes on the scene, takes away the sled (which holds about 12 of these scoopfuls), and leaves another in its place; and they work thus from 7 a. m. to 6 p. m., from 20 to 30 loads of 1,500 pounds each being considered good work, with about six feet advance on the "bed," as, of course, when they have gone to the bottom of it, they lengthen truck, move the apparatus, and work on.

These "diggers" are now being superseded by "patent vertical-acting self-lockers," costing twice as much (\$70), run by the same power, but rising over double the quantity.

The Northwest.

The *Free Grant Gazette* speaks in high terms of the Turtle Lake Settlement, which comprises a portion of the northern part of Humphrey and the southern part of Christie. "The first settler, Mr. Alexander Ross, from Glengary, moved in about seven years ago. Since then, there has been a considerable influx of settlers. The quality of the land is among the best in the Free Grant Districts, and the settlers, like the land, are also among the best in the Districts. Large and valuable clearances have been made, fair crops raised, and comfortable buildings are going up. The settlers have given the country a thorough trial, and are highly pleased with their prospects—certainly an encouraging and satisfactory state of matters. This class of settlers deserve success, and the respect and sympathy they have won from all who knew them either personally or by repute."

The first fact I shall state is, that the fertility of the land is beyond doubt. Nowhere in Ontario do I know of any quantity of land that will even bear a comparison.

Perhaps America does not contain land of greater fertility; for miles and miles, in fact from the 40th parallel of latitude to Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba, west of the Red River, extends almost without interruption one grand, unbroken prairie, unbroken, save at long intervals, by the dry bed of some old-time stream, or the tortuous course of some small meandering creek, mis-named river.

Along the banks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, and along the creeks, are fringes of wood, consisting chiefly of aspen, poplar, oak, elm, ash and birch. The prairies sometimes extend for miles without a single tree or bush to relieve their monotony; but in other places, where the prairie fires have now swept for three or four years, groves of young aspen cover the land. Especially is this the case between Assiniboine and La Riviere Sale. Here prairie fires are not so frequent; protected from fires on the north and south, and almost insulated by the river windings, the prairie is almost a succession of groves. The whole of this country is covered by a deposit of rich, black, alluvial mould, varying in depth from a few inches to many feet. Geologists tell us that at a very recent period, recent at least in the annals of geology, the whole country described was submerged beneath the waters of vast lakes, which have continued age after age to subside, until at length they have contracted to their present bounds. And still the change goes on, decade after decade, the black mould is being deposited over the shallow bottoms of the lakes north of us; and it may be, that before many generations, the prairie grass shall wave where to-day water-weeds grow, beneath the waters of Manitoba, and fatted kine shall low where the swift pike darts upon its prey and shoals of whitefish feed.

All over these prairies, at intervals, are shallow marshes, sometimes extending over thousands of acres. Some of them are flooded in the spring, and dry at midsummer. These form the far-famed hay lands of Manitoba. Here has been hitherto no waiting for a calm day to sow the grass seed, no anxious expectation of rain to make it take root, of snow to shield it from the winter's frost. Nature has herself sown the seed, and without aid from art, brought it to maturity. When the time comes, man takes his scythe or his mower, and lo! the tall grass is ready for his hand.

Along the Red River the mould is heavier and richer than it is further west, where it has in most places a greater proportion of sand.

And yet I know not whether I do not prefer the land in the neighborhood of the Portage to that bordering on the Red River. It is easier worked, dries sooner in spring, is less liable to damage from summer frosts, and is rich enough for all practical purposes. Looking out of my office window, I see a field of magnificent looking grain. That field is owned by one of the most shiftless half-breeds in the country; for twenty years he has taken crop after crop from it, and never a single cart-load of manure has it had during that time, yet this year's crop will equal that of a well-tilled field in Ontario. Surely this land is rich enough!

Barnyard manure is valuable in Ontario; here the natives have been accustomed to let it accumulate around the stables (barns they have none), until it encompassed them with a vast mound, preventing ingress and egress. And what did they then? They abandoned the old and put up a new stable.

They seem to know of no better use for manure than to throw it into the rivers, and Parliament has been obliged to pass an Act to prevent them doing so.

All sorts of root crops seem to me to grow and yield better than they do in Ontario, and the quality is fully equal if not superior.

The yield of wheat, oats and barley is much greater, the quality of the grain is equally good, and the labor of the farm is not at all as great as in Ontario. For the last ten years men have lived and even made money by farming in Manitoba, who in any other country could not have made a living by it. In many parts the farmer could run a furrow ten miles and not strike a stone or a root. Wheat is now worth \$1.50 per bushel at the Portage, and for the last ten years the average price has been about one dollar.

With wheat at this price, a farmer could in a few years make a fortune. Of course the price must fall, and a bushel of grain or a barrel of flour will be worth as much less at Portage La Prairie than at Toronto as it will cost to freight the bushel of grain or barrel of flour from Portage La Prairie to Toronto. But the farmer can grow wheat and make money in Manitoba when the price of grain shall have fallen very materially.—*Correspondence of the Toronto Mail.*

British Columbia.

Notwithstanding the isolation of this Province, and the disadvantage under which it labors from the heavy expenses incurred in reaching it, a small but steady stream of immigration is gradually moving thither, comprised chiefly of persons looking for available land for agricultural settlement. Those parties almost invariably choose the Government grants, and they express themselves well satisfied with the country, and have little difficulty in finding suitable locations. It would be very singular, indeed, if it were not so, as the extent of land, capable of easy and successful cultivation, is more extensive and varied in its character than even the oldest inhabitant had any conception of, and it is mainly from parties hunting after land that the undeveloped agricultural resources of the Province have been prominently brought out. The New Westminster district is that which commands the greatest favor from its proximity to the seaboard, the large breadths of land inviting settlement, and its acknowledged fertility; there are also portions on the Island, smaller in extent, which are equally rich, and easily accessible to good markets. Of the richness of the soil too glowing a picture cannot be drawn. As a stock-raising country it is impossible to surpass it, from its succulent natural grasses, the geniality of the climate, abundance of excellent springs and streams of water, and productiveness of root crops. Forty tons of turnips and thirty tons of carrots are considered fair average crops per acre, and these yields could easily be increased by a reduction in the price of

labor and the introduction of improved agricultural machinery. In the neighborhood of Langley, a Swedish turnip was grown last fall which weighed 51½ pounds a considerable time after it was taken out of the ground, and half a dozen on an adjoining farm, from a single row, average 25 pounds each. Timothy hay produces three tons, and wild two to two and a half tons per acre. Wheat, oats and barley have also been raised successfully; but, on account of the sparse settlement, the quantities grown have been too unimportant to give a reliable estimate of the average crop. The prices realized by farmers at present are two cents for wheat, oats and potatoes, five cents for beef, ten cents for dressed hogs, 35 cents for butter, and 20 cents for cheese, per pound, and \$18 to \$20 per ton for hay.

Referring to the climate, the winter that is now passing is the mildest that has been experienced for many years; the thermometer has not fallen below 20° above zero, and for the past week it has ranged from 49° to 55°; more lovely and enervating weather than we are now enjoying cannot be equalled on the American continent during the winter season. The mornings are cool, clear and frosty, with a bright warm sunshine during the day; such weather as the people in Canada would be glad to experience in May. The country generally is as far advanced in growth as it usually is in Eastern Canada during that month. Roses were in bloom at Christmas. Pansies have appeared creeping out from a slight covering of snow, and snowdrops, wall flowers and polyanthes are blossoming in several gardens. When such thrilling accounts are received of the severity of the winter on the Atlantic side of the Rocky Mountains, it seems passing strange that the superiority of the Pacific Coast for the geniality of its climate, both winter and summer, is not more practically appreciated.

Out-of-the-Way Parts of New Brunswick.

A traveler has been exploring the out-of-the-way parts, and from his letter to the *Telegraph* we learn a little of the agricultural resources of places in New Brunswick, little known even in that province. One of the most out-of-the-way of N. B. is perhaps the eastern end of St. John county. A dense forest of spruce, birch, beech and maple, on the high, even, table-land, five or six hundred feet above the level of the Bay of Fundy, furrowed by the streams discharging into the Bay, it presents a peculiar appearance. The rocks on the seashore are said to be stored with hidden treasures, copper and other ores. Gypsum and freestone have been found, and even coal crops out in some instances. The great staple of this section of the county, however, has been the lumber. The land has only been valued for the quantity and quality of spruce trees it contained; and where they are grown, the lumberer despises that which, with proper treatment, would become his greatest source of wealth, for the soil is of excellent quality, and with the exception of the rocks and gullies on the shore, is even and easily worked. Its productive qualities have been fully tested, and the yield in potatoes and grain has been very abundant; this, too, without the aid of manure. Knowing the richness of the soil and its convenience to a good market, several persons residing thereabouts applied to the Government for a tract of land whereon to settle, near Martinshead, and the Government ordered a track of 3,000 acres to be laid off for settlement under the Free Grants Act, and the order has been executed. Roads will now be opened up as soon as the settlers have complied with the conditions of the Act; and the pathless forest of today will in all likelihood be a hive of industry a few years hence. It will be known as the Wolf-Brook Settlement.

Quebec.

At Melbourne, Que., the Melbourne Slate Quarry, property of Mr. Benjamin Walton, has lately been supplied with steam power and derricks, and the work is pushed with great energy. No expense is spared to develop the quarry, so that a large number of slate-makers may be employed and a large amount of slate produced. A shaft of about fifty feet in depth was sunk in the bottom this winter, which is being opened out. The slate from this depth is much improved in texture and solidity, which, for beauty and uniformity of color, cannot be excelled, thus affording the public an article of domestic manufacture superior in all respects to the slate imported from the United States.