

PROFESSOR SHELDON, THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, DOWNTON,
SALISBURY, ENGLAND.

I was much surprised to find among the Manitoban farmers one of my old Cirencester pupils. He had bought a farm of some 400 acres a few miles west of Winnipeg, paying, as was thought, the extravagant price of 20 dollars (£4) an acre. He declared, however, to me that he had the best farm in the locality, which may be taken as evidence of his being satisfied with it; and he was growing crops of turnips, potatoes, oats, &c., which were already a theme of conversation in the Province; this was done by better cultivation than the land of Manitoba is used to, and it is clear that the soil will produce almost any kind of crop in a very satisfactory way, providing it is properly attended to. And yet, how can we expect the rank and file of farmers to cultivate the soil carefully in a country which has such a superb abundance of magnificent land still unoccupied? In time, no doubt, better farming will prevail, and I hope my old pupil will set an example which will be worth extensive imitation; but at present land is too cheap and plentiful to admit of microscopic cultivation as we have it in England and Scotland.

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The soil of Manitoba is a purely vegetable loam, black as ink, and full of organic matter, in some places many feet thick, and resting on the alluvial drift of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. It is of course extremely rich in the chief elements of plant-food, and cannot easily be exhausted; the farmers know this, so they take all they can out of it in the shortest possible time, and return nothing whatever to it in the form of manure. By turning up an inch or two of fresh soil now and again, the fertility of the surface is renewed, and the same exhaustive system of growing wheat, year by year, may be pursued for a long period with impunity. It is true, in fact, that for several of the first years, at all events, manuring the soil would do much more harm than good.

The following extracts from a letter from the Rev. Dr. Bryce, of Winnipeg, upon the climate of Manitoba, which appeared in the *Edinburgh Scotsman* of October 19, 1881, will be read with interest:—

Edinburgh, October 14, 1881.

Sir,—Last week I wrote a short letter on Manitoba, and, in answer to certain queries about the climate of that province, now wish to write a few lines. A very common delusion exists as to the exact position of Winnipeg. Winnipeg is situated on latitude 50° N., while Edinburgh, being about 57 deg., is several hundreds of miles nearer the region of polar ice than Winnipeg. To those who have read the old books in which Toronto, somewhere about 44° N., is stated to be in the midst of a hyperborean region, it is no surprise to find Winnipeg falling heir to the same unenviable reputation. It is quite true that latitude has not all to do with the matter, but it has surely something to do with it. The very modifying influence

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