

on the banks of the great North Saskatchewan, and in the town of

#### SOUTH EDMONTON.

The town of South Edmonton is one of very recent growth, and in reality dates its birth from the construction of the railway from Calgary to this point a little over three years ago. Before that time only a few houses and not a place of business of any kind existed on its site. Its growth from nothing three years ago to a town of 500 population to day is something unusual even in the Northwest. At present it has about a dozen stores and twice as many other places of business, including a commodious hotel much ahead of the ordinary tavern of the country town. A flour mill of 150 barrels a day capacity has been added the present year, and a local land office is also situated here. The town has all the appearance of a thriving business point destined soon to rise to the importance of a city of some size. It has a good school, well attended, and the Church of England, Presbyterians and Methodists have all church buildings to worship in.

The town of South Edmonton has a beautiful site on the very bank of the North Saskatchewan, and the view down the bluff bank on which it stands 150 feet to the deep rapid river below is one not often to be equalled. Then the view across the river to where the old town of Edmonton peers at different points through the brush and timber which line the steep northern bank of the stream, suggests the thought that the old town is near and yet far away. It requires only a few minutes to descend the sloping road to the margin of the water and a few minutes more is sufficient to cross the stream by the cable ferry. Then the ascent of about a half mile of an up grade brings the traveller into

#### THE CITY OF EDMONTON.

This frontier city at the present day, is a strange mixture of evidences of rushing progress and enterprise and old pioneer state of affairs. Half way up the steep bank of the river before the town site proper is reached stands the old Hudson's Bay Company's post, a relic of former days, when trading with the fur hunter was the business done therein. Even in the city proper many of the store buildings have the old pioneer appearance about them, and carry the heavy and varied stocks carried a score of years ago.

Half a dozen years ago Edmonton consisted of business buildings and residences divided into clusters located at a distance from each other, while timber, brush and open space lay between these clusters.

In those days the population did not exceed six hundred, but it has now increased to nearly two thousand, and the gaps between the clusters of buildings are being gradually filled up with structures of a more modern type, giving the place altogether more of a city appearance. Society is in a much better organized state than it is in the newer towns and villages of the far Northwest, and a system of schools for the education of the youth of the place have been organized and working for quite a number of years, and is now being steadily widened in scope to meet the demands of an increasing population. Churches of different denominations of Christians have been organized for years also, and there is now no famine for either church accommodation or church privileges. Society has here in fact a system of organization which is adapted to present wants, and quite capable of being enlarged to meet

changing circumstances such as more rapid settlement of the surrounding country is sure to bring about.

The business of Edmonton is steadily increasing with the settlement of the surrounding country, until there are now close upon one hundred business places of every description. A number of these are mercantile houses carrying quite large stocks and doing quite a jobbing business with the traders, who go over the country to the North and West. Now that the city is being lighted by electricity it has received one of the finishing touches of modern progress.

The country around Edmonton is surpassed by no other in this world for agricultural richness. The soil everywhere for many miles around is capable of producing any commodity suitable to a northern latitude, while the abundance of pure water and timber, and brush shelter proclaim it an unequalled district for stock-raising. A drive from the city out to the little village and convent of St. Albert, will make the visitor stare in wonder at the Edenic beauty and richness of what the outside world have in years looked upon as a barren and inhospitable hyperborean region. Truly the country around is a very paradise for the agriculturalist.

Nature is prolific around Edmonton in timber for building and fuel purposes, but the locality is in no way dependant for fuel upon a timber supply. The whole country around is underlain with a bed of high grade lignite coal, and at many places in the steep river banks quarries of this valuable fuel crop out. No great effort at organized mining has as yet been made, as the local market is not yet large enough to support such, and freights to the South are too heavy to allow of coal export. The local price is exceedingly low, and depends almost entirely upon the cost of digging it out of the river bank, and hauling it to the point of consumption. Mining to fill the local demand would not pay under such circumstances.

But Edmonton has long been known as a gold as well as a coal producing region. Many a thousand dollars worth of gold has been washed out of the sand in the bed of the Saskatchewan in this region, and old pioneers without capital have made from \$3 to \$10 a day at this work and accomplished it with the most primitive appliances. Even the agricultural settlers of modern days have done a little in this line, and not a few poor farmers in their first struggles to get comfortably settled on a prairie home have with the aid of their families and the most commonplace appliances, washed enough of the shining metal from the river sands to supply the ready cash necessary to carry them through until they could get returns for their agricultural efforts.

Altogether the Edmonton district is one where the poor pioneer can in very few years reach a position of independence, which he could never reach in an old eastern home. One point often advanced against the Edmonton country was its long distance from eastern markets, and the consequent heavy freight charges on the farmers products, especially on rough grain like oats and barley. To do away with this difficulty the C. P. R. managers have greatly reduced freight rates on such products going to the Pacific coast, and there the farmers of the North Saskatchewan country have found a market for much of their products, and realize prices for the same as good as can be secured in places hundreds of miles nearer to eastern markets. There is undoubtedly a great future before the Edmonton district.