

struck out away to the Northwest and founded their new settlements. They located, not in the further portions of Manitoba which lay near at hand, not in the plains of Southern or Central Saskatchewan with which they were quite familiar, but pushed on westward and northward until they reached the best land they knew—what is now called Central Alberta, or as it was better known in the early days, the Edmonton District. They wanted the rich black soil of a fertility only equalled by that they left, the luxuriant pastures, the more comfortable climatic conditions which were to be found in the partially timbered, well watered, parklike country which they found in the Valley of the Saskatchewan and along its tributaries in the neighborhood of Edmonton, St. Albert and Fort Saskatchewan.

**They
Wanted
the Best**

From the early beginnings about Edmonton, settlement gradually spread outwards; and long after the C. P. R. in the early 80's, passed across what is now Alberta, but 200 miles to the South of the Edmonton Settlements, settlers by the thousands continued to make the trek northward from the railway into the rich lands of the Saskatchewan Valley, in preference to entering upon lands more readily accessible from the only railway there was then. They wanted the best, and were prepared to put up with such disadvantages as the absence of railway transportation and want of access to markets, in order to possess themselves of the fertile and pleasant land along the Saskatchewan, the Sturgeon, the Vermilion and Battle Rivers, and the Valley of the Red Deer, the latter being in the 80's approximately the dividing line between the rich agricultural lands of what is now Central Alberta, and the open plains of Southern Alberta, at that time devoted exclusively to cattle ranching.

**There's a
Reason**

To give an idea of the extent and location of Central Alberta, it may be said that Edmonton, the Capital of the Province, and the commercial metropolis of Central Alberta is in Tp. 52, R. 24, W. of 4th, and is 800 miles west and somewhat north of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and is 312 miles north of the international boundary. Vermilion and Wainwright to the east and southeast, are each 130 miles from Edmonton; Athabasca Landing is 105 miles to the north; Edson is 131 miles to the west; and Red Deer 100 miles to the south. Reference to the accompanying map will show location and approximate distance of other Central Alberta points.

**Geography
of Central
Alberta**

Though referred to as Central Alberta, the district lies almost entirely in the southern half of the province, the centre line of the province passing a few miles south of Athabasca Landing.

This is a good country to farm in; a good place to do business in; and withal, a mighty pleasant place to live in. A stranger, wishing to get any proper conception of Central Alberta, must divest himself entirely of the usual idea that the whole of Western Canada consists of