

selling their improved farms in those States, and purchasing the uncultivated land in the Winnipeg district. The farmers already settled in this district are prosperous and contented; indeed some of them have succeeded so well that they are amongst the wealthiest agriculturists of the Province. Such a large area naturally has a variety of soil, and peculiar features. Land here may be had ranging from the finest, with a rolling surface and a great depth of black loam, to low-lying sections, and others covered with brush and timber.



FIRST YEAR IN MANITOBA.

In the early days of Manitoba, the Dominion Government reserved large blocks of land in this district for division amongst the natives of the country, with the result that little free grant land was available to settlers when they first rushed into Manitoba, and the tide of immigra-

lines will be extended to you." The settlers replied "Give us a railway and the settlers will soon occupy all the vacant lands and make a branch line a safe investment."

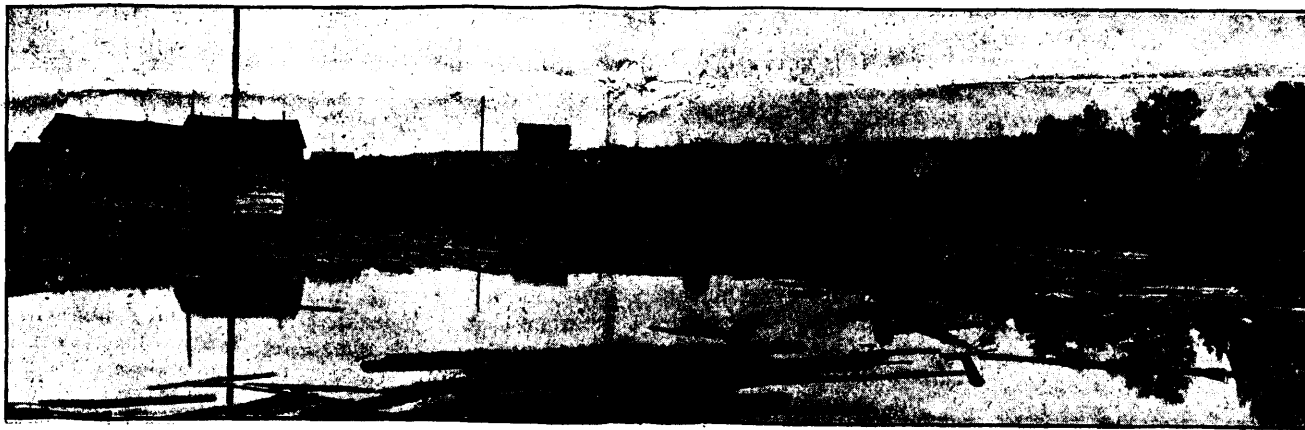
1898 has been a banner year for many such settlements as five different districts of Manitoba have been supplied with branch lines.

The Manitoba Government has given much assistance in this work. Mr. J. A. Macdonell, Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department in Manitoba, sums up the railway construction of the past year as follows:—

The railroad mileage constructed this year is the Dauphin extension from Sifton, fifty-five miles; the South eastern to Marchand, forty-six miles; Rockwood extension on the Stonewall branch, twenty miles; the Pipestone extension to the boundary of the province, three miles of

Winnipeg, a distance approximately of twenty miles; extension of the Southwestern to the Lake of the Woods or Rainy River—if the former be chosen, seventy-five miles; if it be decided to go around the southwest corner of the Lake of the Woods to Rainy River, the length of construction will be in the neighborhood of 125 miles. If the season is favorable about 100 additional miles will be constructed on the Dauphin line, carrying it to the northern limit of the province, and beyond. Construction of the Belmont branch will be continued to Hartney or a point on the Souris river in that vicinity. Other extensions are also being considered by the Northern Pacific, the particular location of which it is not at present possible to indicate."

Settlements along the branch lines are fast filling up. There are still many homesteads to be taken, especially on the Pipestone extension, and on the extension of the Stonewall branch, north and east of Foxton, as well as on the line of the South Eastern railway. These new lines are a great benefit for colonization purposes, for new settlers were passing our doors to the far west, where they could locate on line of railway, rather than go out 15 or 20 miles from railroad, although not more than 50 or 100 miles from Winnipeg. It is now different where these branch lines are extended, for all are in direct communication with Winnipeg, and farmers so situated have market privileges that make their lands exceedingly valuable. Winnipeg is already reaping the benefit of the branch lines by the increase of trade and by reduction in prices of fuel, and already investments are being made by mill men and capitalists with the object of locating mills on the line of the South Eastern and Rainy River Ry., or in Winnipeg to supply lumber to the province. The farmers of Manitoba are ready to engage extensively in erecting buildings. The first comfortable house, erected on the homestead 15 or 20 years ago, is now too



SAW MILL NEAR BIRTLE, MAN.

tion thus flowed past to more westerly parts of the province. These lands have, however, nearly all fallen into the hands of private owners, and of the uncultivated acreage, it is safe to say that fully 500,000 acres, scattered throughout the whole district, may now be purchased by incoming settlers at the low prices quoted above.

It cannot be contradicted that with the superior advantages possessed by their proximity to the largest city in Canada west of Lake Superior, these lands are the cheapest to be had in Manitoba. Indeed it may be stated as a fact (and investigation is solicited) that these lands are selling at from one-half to one-fifth the price per acre asked for similar lands in many districts in Manitoba remote from any considerable local market."

### RAILWAY EXTENSION.

Nearly 180 Miles Added to Manitoba Lines this Year.

Previous to 1898 Manitoba was fairly supplied with railways. Outlying districts, however, where settlement had been made fifteen and even twenty years ago, found it a great hardship to team grain from twenty-five to fifty miles to the nearest station. Further settlement was retarded and farmers located in these districts were becoming discouraged. Railway companies said "Fill up your district with settlers and branch

track and seventeen miles of grading; Belmont-Hartney extension, forty-six and one-half miles; switch connection between N. P. and C. P. R., one-quarter mile; making in all a total of 178 3-4 miles. The probable extensions of next year are:

small; fortune has smiled on the owners so that larger houses, commodious barns, large granaries to hold wheat, if necessary, without selling direct from machines, is the order of the day. One of the greatest boons to encourage farmers in these



SCENE IN NORTHERN MANITOBA.

The C.P.R. Pipestone branch from the end of track at present, fifty miles to the Moose Mountains; the continuation from Toulon, the end of the present Rockwood branch, to Gimli on Lake

enterprises will be a liberal supply of cheap lumber, and there is no doubt but this will be supplied in the near future by means of the South Eastern and Rainy River Railway,