

The character of the soil cannot be exceeded. It is a rich, black mould, from ten to twenty inches deep, reposing on a lightish coloured alluvial clay, about four feet deep, which again rests upon lacustrine or drift clay, to the level of the water in all the rivers and creeks inspected by the expedition of 1857 and 1858.

It is far from being true as has been stated, that there is only some arable or cultivable land along the course of the great rivers. "I frequently examined the soil," writes Professor Hind in his official report, "some miles distant from the rivers along my line of route, and I invariably found the prairie country to exhibit an uniform fertility." This rich and beautiful region which has been described by some travellers, as an unbroken level, watered by numerous tributary streams, and abounding in elm, oak, ash, maple and all the varieties of trees known in Canada, is no less than one million five hundred thousand acres in extent. Recent observations also prove that this "paradise of fertility," as it has been called by one of the settlers, is not more than six hundred feet above the level of the ocean.

Passing to the west of the valleys of the Assiniboine and Red rivers, we find a country no less fertile, and even more beautiful, as it possesses the pleasing variety of hill and dale. It is watered by an infinite number of lesser streams, the principal of which are the Swan river and the higher tributaries of the Assiniboine. This interesting region was likewise visited by the exploring expedition sent by the government of Canada in 1857-58. In Mr. S. J. Dawson's official report of this expedition published by order of the Canadian House of Assembly, this extensive portion of the North West Territory is described as being eminently adapted for the purposes of agriculture and colonization. Possessing a milder climate than the more elevated lands to the south of the United States' boundary line, all the varieties of cereal crops can be produced without difficulty or risk of failure. According to this gentleman's description, the whole country has more the appearance of a fine park beautifully varied with lawns, woods, gardens, shrubberies, lakes and streams, than an unreclaimed tract of broken wilderness. If the late Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Sir George Simpson, had passed through this country, it would undoubtedly have inspired one of his most eloquent and glowing pictures of woodland, lake and river scenery. If it has not hitherto been colonized to any extent, the blame for such neglect of the interests of humanity must be charged to the Hudson's Bay Company whose policy, however worthy and meritorious each leading member is well known to be, is necessarily hostile to every enterprise that is not calculated to preserve and increase the profitable breed of martens, beavers, musk-rats, foxes, wild cats and other vermin, together with the aboriginal races in their rude state, who are the best hunters of such animals and the most expert purveyors of skins and furs for the great fur-dealing company.

THE SASKATCHEWAN COUNTRY.

This extensive territory stretches from the borders of the granitic plateau already alluded to, and from which it is separated by a chain