

The Mennonites.

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ment, there being fifteen townships in the Western and seven in the Eastern Reserve. The wisdom of their choice of a location has long ago been demonstrated. Many of the settlers who scorned the lands they choose would now gladly exchange with them.

At the present time the Mennonites form about one tenth of the total population of Manitoba and are therefore numerically alone, a very important factor in the life of the Province. They are an extremely conservative people, a very peculiar people. Since their foundation their church has again and again been divided upon various questions. But to-day every branch of it holds, in their original simplicity, the few general principles that Menno himself laid down for them. There are four sects or divisions of their church amongst those settled in Manitoba. The questions on which they split are very interesting, but as Mr. Hespeler is about to write a pamphlet dealing extensively with this side of the question; and as he has a knowledge of the subject not possible to one unacquainted with German, and as he also hopes to get the Government to bear the cost of printing it, in both German and English, it will be much more reliable than anything I can give. All the evidences I have been able to collect from many sources points to the fact that they are a highly valuable class of settlers. They are very industrious and their business integrity is of such a high standard that many loan companies place them first on the list of those to whom they prefer to grant loans, and banks are willing and eager to handle their paper. As I have already said they are extremely conservative. An attempt has been made to induce them to adopt our public school system so far without success. In their actual home life they have changed not at all, though in a number of instances they are building their houses on the Canadian plan. In some other respects they are slowly very slowly adopting Canadian customs. Perhaps the most noticeable departure from the customs of their fathers is their voting. About 300 of them voted in the last election. Of course considering that between 2,000 and 2,500 could qualify as voters this is a very small proportion. But when you take into account, that many branches of their church wholly forbid voting, and scarcely any of them look upon it with favor, this was quite a stride. There is no doubt that with a leader from amongst themselves many more of them would vote even now. With every passing year they will become a more and more important factor in political contests. They have their regular municipalities now and I believe most of the municipal officers are Mennonites. As municipal treasurers they are exceedingly prompt and satisfactory in their returns as to taxes. There is a manufacture of printed cottons carried on at Schauenfeldt, one of the Mennonite villages. The goods are very pretty and durable.

One of the reasons for speaking of this matter at this time is, the exemption granted those in Russia will shortly expire. Many of them are extremely anxious to leave before it does expire. The position taken by the present Czar, towards all who are not of the orthodox

church, is certainly not encouraging, viewed in the light of Lanin's recent article in the *Contemporary Review*. There are about 40,000 of them in Russia now. Many of them very wealthy. They point with pride to the fact that the famine is unknown to them. Some attempt is being talked of by which the Canadian government may be induced to offer these people such advantages as will insure their coming in a body to settle in the Lake Dauphin and Prince Albert districts to grow Ladoga wheat for us. Had space permitted I should like to have spoken of the success of the Mennonite colonies in Kansas and Minnesota. I had the pleasure of meeting two of their ministers from Kansas last summer, when they were up here prospecting for a colony. I learned many very interesting facts from them. These men in addition to their work as pastors, owned large farms and vineyards and judging from the white grapes to which they treated me, Kansas is not at all a bad place to live in. Many of the Kansas Mennonites are from Germany. The whole colony seems to have progressed much more rapidly than those on this side of the line. They have to some extent adopted the public school system and a larger proportion of them vote. The Mennonite church in the United States is divided into twelve branches or sects. They have 550 congregations and 41,541 church members. When you take into account the fact that the total Mennonite population of the States is 100,000 this is a pretty good showing. It may not be known to many of you that they do quite an extensive work among the Indians. Last year the Mennonite Mission Board expended \$10,784.03 and of that sum \$6,089.18 was spent among the Indians. And now I suppose the reader is wondering where the heroes come in. Perhaps to some who have but a slight knowledge of these people they do not seem very heroic. They are almost wholly an agricultural people. People in cities are migratory. Those who till the soil cling to it. Yet not once but many times these people have left home and country for what they held to be the truth and James Russell Lowell has said—To side with truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,

For her cause brings fame and profit and 'tis prosperous to be just.

E. CORA HIND.

Immigration Notes.

The Allan Liner Peruvian landed about 400 emigrants at Halifax on her last trip.

The weekly emigrant train which left Toronto on March 29th for Winnipeg had on board five hundred settlers.

On Sunday, April 10th, the steamship Sarnia landed 250 emigrants, most of them bound for Western Canada, at Halifax.

Four families aggregating forty people were a feature of the party of English immigrants which arrived at Winnipeg on April 7th.

Forty-two immigrants, mostly Germans, French and Danes, registered at the Dominion Government immigration depot at Winnipeg on March 17th.

The Killarney, Man., Irishmen's Immigration Society are sending to Ireland quantities of immigration literature, with a view to promoting immigration.

Lake Dauphin district is to receive a portion of the party of English emigrants which left Liverpool for Manitoba by the steamer Parisian. This is said to be due to the liberal advertising which that district has received.

Mr Sazarac de Forge, formerly prefect of Charente, France, recently arrived in Montreal with his wife and family. He is on his way to the French colony at St. Malo, Man., where he contemplates carrying on farming and ranching.

A colony of Belgians is being established on the Beaver Dam Creek between Gladstone and Lake Dauphin. Some fifty families will at once take up land in this district. A carload of effects went out from Winnipeg on March 28th.

Rev. Father Morin passed through Winnipeg on March 25th in charge of a party of 30 families totalling 103 persons bound for Edmonton district. He expects to take out in all 200 families this spring to the colony which he is establishing there.

Dominion Government immigration agent Bennett in charge of the sheds at Winnipeg received during March seventy-four applications for girls for household work. Of this number only ten were supplied. Out of eighty-two applications for farm help only thirty were supplied. The wages offered for girls were from \$6 to \$20, and for boys and men from \$8 to \$20 a month.

Provincial Immigration Agent Smith, chief of the Winnipeg offices, received a letter on April 5th from Mr. McKellar, who is in charge of the Moncton, New Brunswick, offices stating that a tremendous rush of settlers might be expected from the maritime provinces as a result of the energetic work which has been done by George Ham.

A party of Russo-German refugees numbering 51 all told have been located on land about 20 miles from Yorkton, Assa., close to the Beaver Hills. They were brought out by W. McNaught, having been forced out of Russia by the Pan-Slavist movement, and are to form the nucleus of a colony. Mr. McNaught is now in the old country preparing to bring out another batch.

Messrs. I. Roth and C. McDermid, who were mentioned in last month's *Colonist* as being in Western Canada in search of a location for a colony of Russian Jewish refugees, under the auspices of the Baron Hirsch committee are now on their homeward journey. They went as far west as Edmonton examining each district as they went through. They were particularly pleased with a spot south of White-wood, Assa., in townships 11 and 12, range 2, about twenty miles from the C.P.R. A party of about six hundred people will be brought out this spring to take up this land.

Northwest Ontario.

The Ontario legislature has finally settled the dispute between Port Arthur and Fort William. Fort William has been incorporated as a town. Port Arthur has been given power to extend its electric street railway through East Fort William to West Fort William. Port Arthur instead of the extension of limits asked for, has been given a portion of Neelburg about 2,000 acres, including all the water power on Current river.