

CHAPTER XLVIII.

HOW TO VISIT THE NORTH-WEST—INFORMATION FOR INTENDING SETTLERS.

Before closing this *resumé*, I may be excused for offering a few suggestions to those who desire to see the most important points in the North-West, with as small an expenditure of time, money, and physical discomfort as possible. If one desires to make only a brief excursion, covering perhaps, only five or six weeks from the date of leaving Ontario, of course he will go by way of Winnipeg; but in doing so, he will do well to outfit completely in Ontario, and when he has done with his outfit sell it. For example, should he desire to visit Qu'Appelle, Touchwood Hills, and Prince Albert, he should provide himself with two or four large mares, sound and active, a light lumber waggon (with cover), and a set of good work harness. When he reaches the end of his journey (Prince Albert) his mares will sell for a handsome advance on what they cost him, and if he has taken good care of his waggon and harness (and can satisfy intending purchasers that he did not buy them in Winnipeg) he will lose but little on them. He is then on the bank of the North Saskatchewan, and can take passage to Selkirk by steamer, and thence home by rail. If, however, the traveller desires to see the whole Territory, or at all events to cross the prairie lying between the base of the Rocky Mountains and Red River, he should ship a good pair of Canadian horses and a light waggon (in bond) from Sarnia to Bismarck by rail, and thence by steamer up the Missouri to Fort Benton, whence he will drive to Fort McLeod overland. Once at Fort McLeod he is sure of a good price for his team of Canadian horses, especially if they are large and stylish; and having sold them he can buy excellent ponies at very moderate prices. In fact it is almost impossible to pick up good ponies about Winnipeg, or anywhere between there and Qu'Appelle, at any price, and the prices asked for such as they are range during the summer months from \$75 to \$100; while at McLeod, Calgary, or Blackfoot Crossing, vastly better ponies are always to be had, at from \$30 to \$45. Regarding the difference in the character of the ponies, I would have no hesitation in saying that the *kyuses* to be purchased in the West would be cheaper at \$100 than the average Red River ponies would be at \$45. Regarding the waggon to be used, I should have some little doubts as to what should be recommended. Hitherto the buckboard has been more popular than any other style of light waggon, but there are serious objections to it. It is rather low for fording streams, and where the bolster rests on the bed of the axle, it gives an ugly and constant jar to one's feet, that becomes very unpleasant. Besides this, the want of elasticity makes a buckboard more apt to break and wear itself out (especially on a new trail), and in addition to all this, a buckboard that has any spring