

A Public meeting of the citizens of Battledore and the surrounding country was held in the School House on the 1st inst., for the purpose of taking into consideration the encouragement of immigration to the Battledore country. Notwithstanding the short notice, quite a number of farmers and others were present. Mr. J. M. Carneg was called to occupy the chair and to explain the objects of the meeting, and Mr. F. A. Smart, William Mather, and John P. A. Smart, William Mather, and John P. A. Smart, were elected secretary. After a brief explanation by the chairman of the objects in view, several gentlemen addressed the audience upon the superior geographical and agricultural position and capabilities of this region. The following gentlemen were selected as a committee to draft a circular for the purposes intended: John Finlayson, William Lathmer, J. M. Carneg, John P. A. Smart, William Mather, and John P. A. Smart. A meeting of the committee took place immediately after the close of public proceedings, and the work commenced in earnest.

OROGRAPHICAL AND AGRICULTURAL.

The position of Battledore. It is situated on the south side of the Battle River, about two miles from where it empties into the Great North Saskatchewan—which River is navigable for 1,500 mi.—and 67 miles from Winnipeg, and 450 miles from the present western limit of the C. P. R. The N. W. M. Police barracks are on the opposite side of Battle River, in the centre of a beautiful level plain, which is bounded both by Rivers, at which of this point is about two miles apart. Battledore is nearly as may be in the centre of the North-West Territories, and at the intersection of all the principal trails, and as a centre of trade between the rival, Battledore is the capital of the West. On the south side are: Crows Nest House, Registrar General's Office, Indian Affairs, Division Court Office, Telegraph Office, four excellently stocked general stores, and two boarding houses. Here are stored immense supplies for the Indians in the Northern Department. Here, large sums of money are disbursed by the Indian Department in annuities to Indians, and on employees on Indian reserves and farms etc. The following are extracts from the special correspondence of the leading journals in Canada, for the last year, with respect to the Battle River country.

"As I have already had a good deal to say about the capital of the North-West Territory it will not be necessary to add much here; its location is admirable both from an agricultural and a commercial point of view. Being at the junction of the Battle River with the North Saskatchewan, it has facilities north-west, south-west, and eastward, and besides there is a country lying to the south of it through which heavy freight wagons could be run with perfect safety all the way to Calgary and Macleod if necessary. In no part of the North-West did I see better growing crops when I was in my way westward, and in no part, either of the North-West or Manitoba, did I find the farmers better satisfied with the results of their season's work than I did here on my return. The soil is not so heavy as that of Edmonton or Prince Albert proper, but this rich sandy loam that is to be found every where about Battleford is, I am convinced, in the long run as profitable soil for the agriculturist, taking one year with another, as can be found any where on the continent. This autumn excellent harvests were taken off fields that had been cropped continuously without manuring for five years. Here I found no disposition on the part even of the most conservative settlers to buy land for any short period, but to buy and improve, and only twice, through several of the settlers who had been there about gathering their potatoes suffered from the early advent of winter weather. From all that I can learn, I think that, as a rule, the winters are less severe at Battleford than in any other of the

other settlements in the Territories. From its location it cannot, in the very nature of things, be subject to the conditions of climate and to that intense degree of cold that characterizes more low-lying localities and especially those in the neighbourhood of extensive muskeg or marshy flats. For practical purposes a great deal of howling has been done in the Battleford sandstone. Battleford has been, in fact, the centre of nowhere, and in fact everything that a logical man could suggest has been said against it, step by step, since the late Government of the Dominion made some improvements here with the view that it was to be permanently the Capital of the North-West. At this sentence that has been talked and written to me, I have said to myself, "What a mischief both to Battleford and to many a settler who, in coming to the winter here, has gone farther and fared worse, will still be upon a false basis as a means of permanently checking this settlement's onward and upward progress. I have no hesitation whatever in saying that there is no settlement in the North-West that possessed, all in all, of natural advantages equal to those of Battleford, and I have confidence enough in the future of the railway monopoly, which is just what is so powerful in the Territories, to be very sure that it will not imitate the example of the present Dominion Government, and shut its eyes to the importance of this locality. Whether the main line of the Canada Pacific Railway is destined ever to reach Battleford, I am unable to say; but that Battleford is, in a comparatively short time, to have rapid communications with the outer world, I have not the slightest doubt.

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S OPINION

"Southward from Battledore overland which in many of the maps is variously marked as consisting of a plateau or as a continuation of the American desert. Recent maps, especially those containing the exploration of Professor Macoun, have corrected this wholly erroneous idea. For two days march that is to say for about sixty or seventy miles, south of Battledore, we passed over land whose excellence could not be excelled for agricultural purposes; thence to the neighborhood of the Deer Bed Valley the soil is lighter, but still, in my opinion, in most places good for grain, and, in any case, most admirable for summer pasturage. It will certainly be good also for stock in winter as soon as it shall pay to have some hay stored in the valleys. The whole of it has been the favorite feeding-ground of the buffalo, and their tracks from watering-places to the grazing-places (never too far apart from each other) were everywhere to be seen, while in very many tracks their dung lay so thickly that the appearance of the ground was only comparable to that of an English farmyard. Let us hope that the time will not be long before the disappearance of the buffalo from these scenes is followed by the appearance of domestic herds."

TORONTO MAIL.

"Battleford is prettily situated near the confluence of the Battle River with the North Saskatchewan. It is surrounded by a good country suitable for farming purposes. This years crops have been gathered earlier, and are reported as less damaged by frost than those settlements east and west, namely Edmonton and Prince Albert. One of the settlers informed me that by the meteorological reports formerly kept at Battleford, it was shown that spring was earlier here than the interior settlements; so that the grain crop is secured in good condition. The soil is fertile and of good quality equals any part of the country. Land is settling up fast, considering the disadvantage of having no survey. A survey of the town is also badly needed, to enable the energetic business men of the place to put up buildings worthy of the trade transacted. There are several well filled stores, both wholesale and retail, all in lower town; and judging from the large number of the loaded Red River carts I saw passing, it must be a large business carried on. As to the future, being the seat of Government for the North-west, Battleford is headquarters of a large land district. They have a good bridge across the Battle River, erected partly by private subscription and partly by Dominion funds, but before this section of country can progress as

rapidly as it should, more liberal provisions will be made for the improvement of roads and to build bridges. The town is built on the south side of the river, and from the upper level, on which the Government building and offices are built, commanding a magnificent view of the country in every direction. The police barracks are built on a plateau on the north side of the river, about a mile from the bridge. They have a farm in connection with the barracks, on which this season a large crop of good oats has been raised. The finest garden vegetables grown in the Territory are claimed to be raised here. I saw several good samples—cabbage, turnips, beets, and onions, which were certainly very large, grown by Mr. Laurie of the HERALD—a semi-weekly paper, recently published and edited by him. There are over 25 farmers in the neighborhood, cultivating farms ranging from 50 to 150 acres. The most extensive are Finlayson Brown, McFarlane Brown, P. & J. Pambrere, G. Gosnell, A. J. Frongia, and J. W. Brown. The latter two have about 150 acres each, and grow within six miles of the town. Messrs. Forster, Richardson, Bullenfield, McKay, Baker, and O'Neill, their manufacture better, which is in great demand at 50 cents per lb. This is what the Mackintoshen HERALD says of the crop.

"Our wheat has been pronounced by Chief Factor Clarke and Capt. Macdowell—two competent judges having no predilections in our favor—to be equal to any, and superior to most that they had seen in Prince Albert. In vegetables this district cannot easily be beaten. Here are some specimens to begin with—Onions as large as cucumbers; cabbages of the size of a bushel of the crop measuring a foot in circumference, all grown from seed this spring; turnips, 8 inches, 30 inch, in circumference, and still growing; rhubarb, two feet long and 7 inch. In circumference; cabbages by the hundred, grown without the aid of glass, 30 to 40 inch in diameter, solid and well headed, and other vegetables in proportion; and of beauty in the home grown potatoes, a return for which the home grown wheat is made. We do not know whether these are the best in the Territories; but if anyone has been better we should like to have the figures."

— SASKATCHEWAN HERALD.

"The soil is productive and climate favorable to agricultural pursuits, while herds seek and obtain a good living during the winter on the prairies, and comfortable shelter amongst the bluffs—thousands of domestic animals are at this hour browsing at large in this Territory, thus relieving their owners of that serious expense of wintering, which unavoidably attends stock raising in the old provinces.

Those who are still in the dark with respect to this vast region, may rest assured that incoming settlers are not subject to those traditional difficulties such as beset pioneer life in the old provinces—such cannot possibly be, for similar obstacles do not obtain in this territory, the country being of a totally different nature and character in nearly every respect. It does not require a life time to clear up a moderately sized farm. The ground is ready for the plough, and a cash market at hand for all kinds of produce, at prices now as follows: Oats, \$1.25 to \$1.50 per bushel; Barley, \$1.50 per bushel; Potatoes, \$1.00 to \$1.50 per bushel; Wheat, \$1.50 to \$2.00 per bushel, and in demand. All other produce commands equally good prices excepting hay which is of spontaneous growth, consequently cheap at all times, or for the cutting of it."

*LONDON TIMES-ENGLAND

"Battleford is close to the junction of the Battle and North Saskatchewan, and has been given a bad name altogether undeserved. A bad name sticks, and "Battleford Sand" has become proverbial, though really it is but a handful in proportion to the first-class soil adjoining it. The country through which we have passed since leaving the bluffs is above suspicion. Here at our camp ground the grass is thick and rich, and almost up to our knees."

SUGGESTIONS.

New settlers in this region can keep in many cows as it may suit their means to purchase and attend to from the first hour of their settlement, for pasture is already for them in abundance, and in most places especially in this section, cattle can find the

greater part of their winter's food for themselves and be in good condition in the spring. The produce of the dairy, as well as a beef command excellent prices, and will continue to so for many years to come, particularly during the construction of the many railways in contemplation and under way at the present time. The Hydro-Electric Co. have announced that they will build 300 miles of line in 1902, which will extend the track of C. P. R. to the coast, which circumstance will, when consummated, prove a great boon to this country. The C. P. R. track extends at the present time, some 200 miles westward from Winnipeg. The Portage la Paire, Westbourne & North-western Railway Company will commence work this season, a branch of which will run from the C. P. R. to the town of Stobbe-
willy, there are also other lines in con-
templation designed to tap the fertile val-
ley of the Battle River.

The climate of this country is superior to Manitoba, which fact is observable while travelling from east to west during the winter months, both in respect to winds, intense frost and depth of snow, which preceptively moderates—hence, it is more comfortable in the North-West for man and beast. This circumstance is accounted for by its inclination, which places this country in the influence of the west (chinnook) winds reaching from the Pacific, passing through the Rocky Mountain gorges moderating the cold air in its course until absorbed and chilled by the air in the more distant and cold east.

Settlers need not be under any apprehension of Indians, in this direction at least, as all the natives of the plains are settled down on reservation following agricultural pursuits for a living and closely observed by officials in charge.

AN INTERVIEW

The following interview between Mr. J. Finleyson of Battle River valley, a member of the committee, which is very comprehensive and is substantiated by the settlers enumerated in the extract from the Mail above. It contains more truthful information respecting this section of country than can be obtained through any other source, it being the outcome of successful, practical experience of some years :

Q.—What do you think of the Battle River valley as an agricultural district?

A.—I think it is second to none in the North-West for general agricultural purposes.

Q.—Why do you think it is superior to other portions of the North-West?

A.—Different reasons. First, there are less summer frosts, earlier springs and later falls without frost.

Q.—What kind of soil is it generally?
A.—It is generally a rich heavy soil with

It is generally a rich loamy soil with clay bottom. It is nearly as rich as the soil of Red River and Edmonton.

Q.—Do you think it will raise as good crops as very heavy soil?

A.—Yes, I think it will raise better crops one season with another.

Q.—How do you account for this?

A.—Because very heavy flat land during wet seasons the crops are very apt to be drowned out. In wet seasons if they are not injured by water, they are apt to run to straw, and do not ripen in time to escape the fall frosts, which are much earlier on heavy flat land.

Q.—Was the grain ever caught by fall frosts in the Battle River valley during your experience therein?

A.—There has not been any grain caught by fall frosts that I know of as yet, except two small patches of oats sown on sod in June, after all other crops had quite a growth.

Q.—Does wheat do well in the valley?

A.—Wheat does well, and yields from twenty-five to thirty bushels per acre.

Q.—How long has wheat been raised in the North River valley?

A.—It has been raised in the valley for the past four years.

Q.—During that time has it been stripped by frost?

A.—It had not.

Q.—Is wheat the only grain you grow?
A.—No, we grow various varieties of grain.

wheat, oats, peas and barley—all successfully.

Q.—Does the grain raised in the valley stand weight? (YKX)