

growth than near the water. There is a very good garden at Island Lake Post, and certainly I have never seen potatoes look better than they do here.



GARDEN AT CROSS LAKE, NELSON RIVER.

The other varieties of soil noticed in the district include clay, sand, vegetable loam and sandy and gravelly loam. Spruce is the most abundant wood everywhere in this region. Next in order comes aspen, white larch, tamarac, balsam, poplar and Banksian pine. In many places the spruce attains a very good size and is used in the form of logs and beams for building purposes. It is also sawn into planks and boards for all sorts of carpenter work. The tamarac and Banksian pine sometimes have a diameter of twenty inches. Balsam fir is common and of good size around Island Lake, some of the trees measuring nearly four feet in circumference. The rowan and mountain ash is to be found at Island Lake, as well as ground maple.

From Mile 1112 to Mile 1237, or fifty miles west of the crossing of Lake Winnipeg, the information is derived from a report of Dr. Bell's on the country between Lake Winnipeg and Hudson Bay, in 1878.

"The outlet of Lake Winnipeg is situated about fifty miles south-eastward from the northern extremity of the Lake. After flowing for four miles through a channel averaging over a mile in width, its waters enter Groat Playgoun Lake, the main body of which is four miles in length, and is separated from Lake Winnipeg by a level peninsula of clay and sand, four miles in width, called Mossey Point ridge is where the Trans-Canada Railway will cross Lake Winnipeg.

timber in this district is generally spruce, tamarac, Banksian pine, white larch, aspen, Bulm of Gilead and willow with a little balsam fir.

The forests and the flora generally of the Nelson River region indicate a milder climate than that of the corresponding tract on the opposite side of Hudson Bay. This appears to be at least partly due to the southerly winds which prevail in summer, bringing the warm air probably from the valley of the Mississippi down that of the Red River and over the whole length of Lake Winnipeg, which has a high and even temperature during the summer months. This condition of things also prevents the occurrence of summer frosts in the Norway House region, which appears to enjoy a climate fully as good as that of the Province of Manitoba. Small fruits, cucumbers, musk, melons and vegetables of all kinds come to maturity at Norway House. Barley is a sure crop. Hitherto, as there has been no object to be gained in attempting the cultivation of wheat, the experiment does not appear to have been tried in this region, but there is every probability that it would succeed, as this cereal is known to come to great perfection in the Athabaska and Pine River region, in localities more than a thousand miles to the

north-westward. Nelson River carries it towards the sea the high temperature of Lake Winnipeg, derived partly from the rivers, of the south and west. The effect of this is to induce a rank growth of reeds, rushes and a variety of water plants in the clayey soil along its banks. The climate of this region is pleasant in summer without an excess of rain, and in winter the weather, although cold, is said to be bright and uniform with only a moderate amount of snow. The land would be easy to clear of timber, and considering the unlimited supply of wood for building purposes, fuel, etc., the prevalence of good water in which a variety of food fishes abound, as well as the greater proximity of this region to Europe, it offers some inducements to immigrants which are not to be met with in the greater part of the prairie country to the westwards. At Oxford House, barley, peas, root crops vegetables and hay thrive well, and the surrounding district might make a good dairy and stock farming country; even as far as York Factory potatoes and some kinds of vegetables may be successfully cultivated.

From a geological point of view the east coast of Lake Winnipeg from the outlet southward does not present much of interest or importance. The shore is low and sandy. A light gray clay like that of the Nelson River region was frequently noticed and is said to occupy a good deal of the surface from the Lake shore inland.

I am informed that toward the height of land a good deal of clayey land of fair quality extends southwards along the Burnas River. But for some miles inland the country east of Lake Winnipeg from the extremity to the other as far as it has been explored, is reported to consist mainly of rock and swamps. It is, however, very imperfectly known.

The Trans-Canada Railway Engineers are now surveying east and west of Lake Winnipeg and definite information of this portion will soon be available.)

From Lake Winnipeg to Leech or Slave Lake, Mile 1237 to Mile 1899 the information is derived from reports made by Government Surveyors to the Chief Engineer and Director of the Geological Surveys, and are to be found in the Government reports of 1879 and 1896.

The country, as a whole, is of a level character and is cut up by a great many lakes and streams. The granite and gneiss rocks which form the western coast of Lake Winnipeg widen out at the northern extremity of the Lake passing to the mouth of Spider Lake in the direction of Beaver Lake. A short distance west of the general trend of these rocks, the Saskatchewan River passes through a level country cut up by numerous lakes, in the Sturgeon



OXFORD HOUSE. LOOKING SOUTH-EAST.

Lake Winnipeg is 710 feet above the sea. The banks of the rivers about Norway House, and in fact the surrounding country, consist of a light colored clay. The