

workers needed are farmers. There is hardly any honest way of making a living there except by taking it out of the ground. And the farmers have special difficulties to contend against, such as scarcity of lumber, high prices for fuel and low prices for produce, owing to distance from markets of the world, not to speak of terrible risks that have been attended to already. To handicap them under the policy of protecting them may be the last straw added to their burden, and, therefore, they protest with one voice against the increased duty on agricultural implements. Of course, the object is simply to keep out American wares, and the Ontario manufacturers gave a pledge not to increase their price. But the Nor'-Wester stubbornly answers that the American wares are not kept out, and that next session the duty ought to be doubled if the object aimed at is to be accomplished. He must have the best agricultural implements that can be made, on account of the shortness of the season and the high price of labour. Every handling of grain costs at least 5 cents a bushel, and manual labour must be minimized to the utmost. Perhaps I may be allowed to suggest a compromise. Old books are now allowed to come into Canada free of duty, and perhaps the Government may see the propriety of admitting also ploughs, harrows, and binders not less than seven years old. The suggestion at any rate is worthy of consideration by the intellects that devised the plan of taxing only the best books, and claiming that a sensible relief was thereby given to public and university libraries.

The most cheerless sight about Winnipeg is the small amount of land under cultivation. As we approach Portage la Prairie things look better. Beyond that again, the reservation of the mile belt would make you fancy that the country was still uninhabited, were it not for the elevators at points like Brandon and Virden testifying that there must be a great deal of grain raised for export as well as for home supply. The general appearance of the soil is all that can be desired. It is not the rather low-lying, swampy-looking, heavy, black-loam of the Red River Valley, but fine rolling prairie, intersected with good hay meadows, patches of wood, and ponds well covered with duck; a light dry loam on good clay, fertile though not of inexhaustible fertility, and much more easily and pleasantly worked than the abominably sticky mud near Winnipeg. The 400 miles from Winnipeg to Moose Jaw, extending south to the boundary line and to the north and north-west indefinitely, is a glorious land that will yet support a population of millions. The winter is merciless to the ignorant and unprepared, but there is no healthier climate and no better soil in the world. Life flows with a full current. No sense of lassitude is felt. I do not know the percentage of sickness, but it must be unusually small. At one of the railway stations I met a student who had left Kingston three months previously used up with his winter's work, looking like a Hercules. "Yes," he responded to my congratulations, "I have gained forty pounds in weight, but"—and the tone changed to melancholy as he evidently thought of how much more he might have gained—"I was ill for some weeks after coming here."

Regina we passed in the night. Moose Jaw is an ambitious city, with about a hundred very unpainted, most new-looking buildings; shops chiefly, perhaps a half or fourth of which may be needed. The business of founding cities is terribly overdone by our work-shunning generation, but this evil, too, will right itself. At Moose Jaw the soil is apparently a warm friable clay, fit to produce any kind of crops, could a sufficient rainfall be depended upon. The little grain that we saw was short, though the heads were well filled, and every one—even those who had been in the country only a week—swore stoutly that it had been an exceptionally dry season. Mr. Chollop is not confined to the other side of the boundary line, though it is only there that he is found in all the glory of war paint. We were told that at Moose Jaw the current of immigration had ceased to flow, and that thirty miles farther west good land ceased and would not be seen again till we came under the lee of the Rocky Mountains. The proof of this was the all-powerful "they say."

Soon after leaving Moose Jaw the hills of "le grand Coteau de Missouri" stretched right across our path. These are immense ridges of drift that extend from the Missouri to the South Saskatchewan, marking the western limit of the deep water of that ancient glacial sea whose icebergs sailed over what are now the prairies of Manitoba and Assiniboia, and left striae on the underlying limestone that are plainly read to-day in the quarries at Selkirk and Stony Mountain, and on the splendid cellar floors of the village of Stonewall. The hills are about thirty miles broad, and two hundred feet higher than the plains on either side. The railway winds cunningly among them, cuttings here and there revealing the character of the drift.

After travelling as far as Medicine Hat, or nearly three hundred miles beyond Moose Jaw, we came to the conclusion that the country is neither desert nor semi-desert. It is not equal to the Fertile Belt.

There the soil is loamy, the rainfall abundant, pasturage always superb, and the traveller seldom out of sight of trees. Here the grasses are short, and in August dried to russet colour, except in marshes, or where fires had run, and new grass had sprung up. But we saw almost no bad lands. The soil is pretty much the same as that round Moose Jaw, apparently capable of bearing all ordinary crops. Tree-planting on an extensive scale should be encouraged, as it is, by the Central and State Governments and the Northern Pacific Railway, in Montana and Dakota. That and every kind of cultivation tend to increase the rainfall. Of course, settlers are not likely to offer themselves as subjects to be experimented on, when there is so much good land elsewhere, and the Syndicate has therefore at once set men at work to break a few acres at different points all along the line, with the intention of seeding those plots in the spring, and so testing fairly the soil and climate over this enormous area. Not a moment has been lost. This is simply another instance of the ready initiative and the "go" displayed on every occasion, in such startling contrast to the "how not to do it" of Government. The heads give their time and strength to the work, unfettered by the thought of how this or that constituency is to be influenced, or this or that political friend to be rewarded, or by the necessity of having to explain in eloquent speeches innumerable their own virtues, omniscience and economy, and of proving that everybody else is, and always has been, generally lunatic or worse. Governments ought to have advantages over any private company. They can command the services of a higher class of men, even when salaries are moderate, because the positions are presumably more permanent and there is more honour in serving a Government than a company. But when faction reigns, the heads of departments have to attend supremely to their political interests. Every one under them knows that party exigencies are paramount, and as these come in everywhere, paralysis is the result. The people insisted on the construction of the railway being taken out of the hands of the Government; and if no improvement on the party system can be devised, they are likely to call for Syndicates to manage our forests, our Indian department, our education, and everything else that is of importance to the common-wealth as a whole. GEORGE M. GRANT.

EGERTON RYERSON.

ONE of the most noteworthy objects for a thoroughly interesting book, as far as English-speaking Canada is concerned, is the life of the late Chief Superintendent of Education in Ontario. "This life has been attempted," to borrow the *bon mot* of George the Fourth, by Dr. Hodgins, Deputy-Minister of Education, who has pieced together with little literary skill the "Story of my Life," bequeathed to his care by his patron. Egerton Ryerson's genuine merits and services to Canada are not made clearer to the reader of his autobiography by the adulatory tone adopted by his Deputy, who is certainly no fit Boswell for the Johnson of the Educational Department. The book is very poorly made. The paper is bad, the typography coarse and indistinct, the engravings are hideous; but worst of all is the part of the work for which Dr. Hodgins is responsible. Deputy-Ministers of Education must in some cases get their education by deputy. Leaving this unsatisfactory book, let us consider the circumstances which determined the career of a man who has left his mark, to a great extent for good, on the Educational System of this country, and on the important branch of the Christian Church of which from first to last he was a devoted adherent.

Egerton Ryerson was born in March, 1803, in what is now the County of Norfolk. His father was one of the American Tories who, after their forced expatriation, called their hatred of the American Whigs loyalty to the muddle-headed Hanoverian, King George the Third. The Ryerson family, originally Danish, had long been resident in Holland, and afterwards in the Dutch Colony, since known as New York. His mother, "a tocherless lass," with a long pedigree of Massachusetts Puritan ancestry, was a Miss Stickney. The elder Ryerson settled on a grant of 2,500 acres of land between the present village of Vittoria and Port Ryerse, the latter being the property of his elder brother Samuel, whose name had been docked of its final consonant by a clerical error in his Army Commission.

Both father and uncle were men of importance in their district, and a most interesting picture of the life on a pioneer farm in their early days is given in a memoir, by Mrs. Amelia Harris, daughter of Colonel Ryerse, which is published in the second volume of Dr. Egerton Ryerson's "United Empire Loyalists," of which, in a literary point of view, it forms the most valuable part. Hard work, temperate habits, plentiful food, and the affectionate care of a very tender father and mother, who, amid the rude surroundings of the backwoods, still retained the traditions of culture derived