

# Notes on a Western Tour.

By MAJOR CLARK.

Major Clark returned to England from Canada per *Parisian* last week. He has been absent about four months, having gone to British Columbia, in company with Colonel Engledue, of the Royal Engineers, on business arising out of the projected scheme of Croftor Colonization to that Province. His last visit to the Pacific Slope was in the early part of 1888, previous to taking charge of the Canadian Court in the International Exhibition of Glasgow in that year. On his present journey he has had an opportunity of noting the progress made in the western portion of the Dominion during the last three years, and has kindly handed to the *Canadian Gazette* the following notes, which will be of interest to many readers:

"Winnipeg is steadily recovering from the period of depression which followed the 'boom.' There is evidence everywhere of steady improvement. The class of business blocks recently completed announce that they are there 'to stay.' The temporary style of buildings which marked the earlier stages of the city's growth are being replaced in the leading business thoroughfares by handsome brick and stone structures, while the new hotel on Main street, to be opened next month, will hardly be second to any in Canada. There seems to be a gratifying growth of opinion among the leading business men of the city with regard to its future. It can readily be seen that the leading lines of trade are only in their infancy, and that successive harvest and increasing acreages under cultivation will yearly add to the wealth of the commercial centre of the Canadian Northwest. Chicago in her early youth could boast of no brighter prospect, because possessed of no better surroundings, and it requires no prophet to foretell the position of Winnipeg when she has attained the present age of the commercial mart to the south.

What applies to Winnipeg applies in degree to every town on the journey westwards. Everywhere there is evidence of progress and improvement arising from the best of sources—the agricultural development of the country. The present position of the ranches and the cereal estimates of the present year are but earnestness of what the future will be. The train-loads of cattle which have passed eastwards during the autumn, and the millions of bushels of grain now awaiting transport, are but samples of future yields. The Canadian Pacific Railway, taxed as it is now to carry the present products to the east and west, is as yet only doing a sample trade, though it is already earning dividends on the very threshold of the country's possibilities.

Settlement goes on surely and steadily. One of the most encouraging features in this matter is the repatriation of so many Canadians from Dakota and neighboring States of the Union—settlers of the best class who have purchased their experience dearly in the blizzard belt and to whom nature has this year accorded a bounteous welcome back to Canadian soil. The extension of branch railways to Prince Albert and Edmonton respectively will bring two most desirable districts into direct touch with markets

and facilitate settlement in the splendid mixed farming stretches on the banks of the North Saskatchewan.

The development of British Columbia is apparent at every stage on the journey westwards. Nothing strikes one more forcibly than the extraordinary difference in the natural resources of the country east and west of the mountains. British Columbia and the prairie section of Canada can never come into competition. The development of the Pacific coast must of necessity tend to the advantage of Manitoba, and *vice versa*; the interchange of commodities already begun must continue to increase till the Canadian Pacific will find its hands full with the interprovincial trade of this region.

'There is much land yet to be possessed' and settlement does not keep pace with expectations. It, therefore, behooves the Government and all organizations interested to do everything possible for the increase of emigration, and throughout the whole prairie section business men are watching with anxiety to see what is to be the future programme in this respect of the Government at Ottawa. One thing must ever be borne in mind—that mere numbers are a doubtful advantage. Immigrants suitable for the country and the conditions of life are what are wanted, and on securing this class of recent years the great Northwest may be fairly congratulated. The estimate of 25,000,000 bushels of wheat available for export this season is evidence of the improved character of the settlements. As a benefit to the country and as an immigration medium, one good farmer is a better bargain than ten indifferent ones."

Major Clark heard a good deal of the practical benefits arising from the establishment of the various experimental farms, and had the pleasure when in Ottawa of noting the extraordinary improvement that has taken place on the Central Farm during the last three years. Of his mission to British Columbia he had little more to say than has already been announced. He has every confidence in the deep sea resources of that Province, and of the suitability of the Scotch coast fishermen for opening up that fertile source of wealth. The Government of British Columbia has now before it the offer of the Imperial Government with reference to the proposed Croftor settlement, as well as the commercial scheme intended to work in conjunction with it. Both measures will be dealt with by the Local Legislature during the session which begins in January next. The early spring may therefore see the necessary legislation passed and a beginning made with a movement which will open up a new and important source of revenue to the Province and place upon the seaboard of British Columbia a brigade of a thousand trained men for the better protection of the ever-growing interests of the Empire in that part of the Dominion.—*Canadian Gazette*, London, England.

## A Native Genius.

One of the acquaintances of a New York editor, while travelling in the "far West," was at a loss to know what course to steer, and rejoiced when a farmhouse presented itself before him. "Near the road was a tall, raw-

boned, over-grown, lantern-jawed boy, probably seventeen years of age, digging potatoes. He was a curious figure to behold. What was lacking in the length of his tow breeches was amply made up for in width; his suspenders appeared to be composed of birch-bark, grape-vine and sheep skin; and as for his hat (which was of a dingy white felt)—poor thing! it had evidently seen better days—but now, alas! it was only the shadow of its glory. Whether the tempest of time had beaten the top in, or the lad's expanding genius had burst it out, it was difficult to tell; at any rate it was missing—and through the aperture red hair in abundance stood six ways for Sunday. In short, he was one of the roughest specimens of domestic manufacture that mortal ever beheld. Our travelling friend (we quote the New Yorker), feeling an itching to scrape acquaintance with the critter, drew up the reins of his horse, and began:—

"Hallo, my good friend, can you inform me how far it is to the next house?"

Jonathan started up—leaned on his hoo-handlo—rested one foot on the gambrel of his sinister leg, and replied:—

"Hallo yourself!—how'd dew?—wall, I guess I can. 'Taint near as far as it used to be afore they cut the woods away—then it was generally reckoned four mile, but now the sun shrivels up the road, and don't make more'n tew. The fust house you come to though is a barn, and the next is a haystack—but old Hoskins' house is on beyant. You'll be sure to meet his gals long afore you git there; tarnal romping critters they plagus our folks more'n a little. His sheep git into our pasture every day, and his gals into our orchard. Dad sets the dog arter the sheep, and mo arter the gals—and the way he makes the wool, and I the petticoats fly, is a sin to snakes."

"I see you are inclined to be facetious, young man—pray tell me how it happens that one of your legs is shorter than the other?"

"I never 'lows anybody to meddle with my grass tanglers, mistur; but seeing it's you, I'll tell you. I was born so at my tickerlar request, so that when I hold plow I can go with one in the furrow and t'other on land, and not lop over; besides, it is convenient when I mow round a side hill."

"Very good, indeed—how do your potatoes come on this year?"

"They don't come on I digs 'em out; and there's an everlastin' snarl of 'em in each hill."

"But they are small, I perceive."

"Yes, I know it. You see we planted some whoppin' bluenoses over in that ere patch there, and they flourished so all-firedly that these ere stopped growin' just out of spite, 'cause they knowed they couldn't begin to keep up."

"You appear to be pretty smart, and I should think you could afford a better hat than the one you wear."

"The looks ain't nothin'; its all in the behaviour. This 'ere hat was my religious Sunday-go-to-meetin' hat, and it is chock full of piety now. I've got a better one to hum; but I don't dig taters in it, nohow."

"Then you say it is about three and a half miles to the next house?"

"Yes, sir; 'twas a spell ago, and I don't believe it's grow'd much shorter since."

"Much obliged—good-bye."