

During a hasty visit like the present, I cannot pretend to acquire more than a superficial insight into your condition, but so far as I have observed, things appear to be going sufficiently well with you. The homesteads I have visited seem well built and commodious, and are certainly far superior to any of the farmhouses I remember in Iceland, while the gardens and little clearings which have begun to surround them show that you have already tapped an inexhaustible store of wealth in the rich alluvial soil on which we stand. The three arts most necessary to a Canadian colonist are the felling of timber, the ploughing of land, and the construction of highways, but as in your own country none of you had ever seen a tree, a cornfield, or a road, it is not to be expected that you should immediately exhibit any expertness in these accomplishments, but practice and experience will soon make you the masters of all three, for you possess in a far greater degree than is probably imagined that which is the essence and foundation of all superiority—intelligence, education and intellectual activity. In fact I have not entered a single hut or cottage in the settlement which did not contain, no matter how bare its walls or scanty its furniture, a library of twenty or thirty volumes; and I am informed that there is scarcely a child amongst you who cannot read and write.

“ Secluded as you have been for hundreds of years from all contact with the civilization of Europe, you may in many respects be a little rusty and behind the rest of the world; nor perhaps have the conditions under which you used to live at home—where months have to be spent in the enforced idleness of a sunless winter—accustomed you to those habits of continued and unflagging industry which you will find necessary to your new existence; but in our brighter, drier, and more exhilarating climate you will become animated with fresh vitality, and your continually expanding prosperity will encourage you year by year to still greater exertions. Beneath the genial influence of the fresh young world to which you have come, the dormant capacities of your race, which adverse climatic and geographical conditions may have somewhat stunted and benumbed, will bud and burgeon forth in all their pristine exuberance, as the germs which have been for centuries buried beneath the pyramids and catacombs