

practice. They abandoned physic and engaged in other avocations. There are often to be found more medical men in some of the towns in Western Canada than there are in Manitoba and the whole North-West.

LETTER XIII.

Camping on the Snow—Winter in the North-West—Cold but Healthy Atmosphere—Land Speculators—How to Encourage Immigration—Territory Equal in Size to Twenty-six States Awaiting Settlement—Enormous Freight Charges—History of the Grasshopper Plague—Imports at Pembina, &c., &c.

We left the Little Saskatchewan on Thursday, 4th October, after a day's delay on account of a snowstorm that covered the ground to the depth of about three inches—not very pleasant weather for camping out! The road was heavy and slippery; but the mud did not cling with such tenacity to the vehicle as in the Red River valley. For the first few miles we passed through some strips of good timber, and noticed several fresh-water lakes. Towards noon the clouds cleared away and the sun shone out brilliantly; the remnants of the snowstorm disappeared as if by magic, and since my return I have been informed that for two months afterwards the weather was delightful, and that no snow fell till late in the month of December. The snow-fall in the North-West is not as heavy as in Ontario; it scarcely ever exceeds eighteen inches or at most two feet in depth. The snow is not so compact as in Ontario, but light, much drier, and easily removed by animals seeking for grass. Cattle and horses roam out frequently during the winter, picking up the rank natural grasses, and keeping themselves in good condition with but little care or attention on the part of the owner. Sufficient snow falls to preserve the earth and the roots of the trees from the influences of the atmospheric cold, and the internal heat is prevented from escaping. The ploughed lands become pulverized and as mellow as a garden. The winters are steady and uniform and not subject to sudden changes; the atmosphere is bright and exhilarating; there are no fogs, thaws or rain till spring sets in. Then the covering of snow vanishes and the soil is soon ready for the reception of seed. To the north, distant some six or eight miles, is a range of hills, running parallel to the trail known as the Riding Mountains. These mountains are covered with a dense growth of valuable timber down to the southern slope. They extend east and west for thirty or forty miles, diverging somewhat to the north near the Little Saskatchewan. On these mountains and