

THE ROAD TO THE SPRINGS.

The Harrison Hot Springs resort is just about 65 miles from the cities of Westminster and Vancouver. All but five miles of that distance is covered by the C.P.R., the jumping off station for the springs being Agassiz from where a bus, conveys the traveller, over five miles of level and very fair corduroy and gravel road, right up to the grassy lawn in front of the hotel.

Report of a Special Committee on Alberta.

The special committee of the Northwest Assembly, composed of all the members from the district of Alberta, appointed to report on matters specially pertaining to that district, submitted the following report to the Assembly:

1. That in our opinion, sufficient attention is not given to the development of the mineral wealth of Alberta.

It might be pointed out that in every State and territory traversed by the Rocky Mountains from Mexico northward to the international boundary, mining has been carried on to a very great extent. In Montana alone the annual mineral production far exceeds that of the entire Dominion of Canada. We may assume that providence has been as liberal to Alberta as to those states and territories to her south, which are linked together by the same chain of mountains and it is only for us to draw attention to the wonderful growth and development of California, Colorado and Montana in order to show the advantages that would accrue to these territories in the event of Alberta's mineral wealth becoming developed. Her mines may in time reveal themselves, but in the interests of our own generation, we would suggest a more active policy by

(a) Having a summary of our mining regulations prepared and published in the various mining centres of the western States and Territories.

This would help to overcome a false impression, which we understand, exists in those places regarding our laws.

(b) The establishment of a properly equipped Mining Bureau in some central point, say Calgary.

(c) The establishment of subsidiary Mining Bureaus in some of the Dominion lands and timber offices where specimens, statistics and other useful mining information may be found.

(d) Endeavoring to arrange with the Canadian Pacific railway for space in the smoking compartments of their sleeping coaches for a very small cabinet of specimens, accompanied by a neat, concise and attractive pamphlet containing analyses and other matter referring to these specimens and the locality from which they came.

2. That owing to the growing settlements in grazing districts, a change is desirable in the existing leases and in the system of leasing lands. The existence of a large number of grazing leases is a great obstacle to the settlement of an important part of Alberta. The enormous acreage covered by these leases is altogether out of proportion to the actual needs of the leaseholders.

While admitting the existence of certain vested rights in the leaseholders, it must not be forgotten that valuable privileges have been granted to them, under a policy which is now

clearly detrimental to the best interests of the country, upon conditions, which in a majority of cases, have not been fulfilled by them. Public policy and convenience now demand the earliest possible throwing open for settlement of large portions of the country now covered by grazing leases, and the government of Canada will be justified by using every means in their power, not inconsistent with good faith, to bring about that result. In every case in which a leaseholder under an old grazing lease, has not strictly complied with the conditions of the lease, he should be obliged to give up the old lease at once and accept in its place a lease under the new regulations, which would permit of all or any portion of the leased lands being withdrawn from the operation of the lease as might be required by the government for sale and settlement. Other leaseholders under the old form of lease, should be given two years' notice required by the lease and offered a continuation of grazing rights under the new regulations.

Hereafter the settlement of the country should be the first consideration of the government, and any system or policy of the past, which is an obstacle to settlement, should be done away with or reversed as rapidly as a fair regard for vested rights and interests will allow.

We believe that the policy of the government in regard to the grazing lease system has been largely due to mistaken ideas of the agricultural capacity of Southern Alberta.

The government has no doubt depended for its information on officials who should be able to give accurate information in this respect, and it is a matter of regret that false and unfavorable impressions have been persistently created and spread abroad by the public utterances of the principal quarantine officer of the Dominion, who is largely interested in the continuance of the grazing lease system, as the lessee of the largest and most valuable parts of the district.

3. That the existing quarantine lands consisting of a belt 12 miles deep, following the international boundary throughout the district, are unnecessarily extensive.

It would be sufficient for the purpose of quarantine to reserve blocks of, say, four townships in this belt, at convenient points where cattle trails intercept the international boundary. This would leave the balance of the belt available for sale and settlement.

4. That owing to the rapid development of the coal mining industry, the duty will devolve upon the Northwest Assembly of passing an ordinance regulating the working of coal mines, and as the Federal government derives all the revenue from these mines, it is deemed proper that it should provide in the future estimates for the Northwest, a sum sufficient for the maintenance of an inspector or other officer to carry out the provisions of such an ordinance.

5. That we would call attention to the continued complaints which come from certain settlers in the Rocky National Park in regard to the government's dealings with them. Rightly or wrongly these settlers believe that the government have committed a breach of faith in dealing with them, and some steps should be taken to remove this impression. We would suggest that such settlers, as can show to a reasonable extent, that they believed them-

selves to be purchasing lots outright when they made their first payment, should be allowed to complete the purchase. And we would further recommend that in the interest of the Park itself, the lots on the north side of the river, on the townsite at Banff, should be opened for purchase.

7. That the completion of the Calgary and Edmonton railway to the Saskatchewan river has had a very great effect already in developing Northern Alberta, but owing to the terminus of the road being on the south bank of the river, while the principal region to be developed and whose trade now furnishes the principal traffic of the road is on the north side, a traffic bridge across the Saskatchewan at that point is an absolute necessity if the country is to receive the full benefit of the construction of the railway in facilitating its trade, and increasing its development.

And finally in making these recommendations the committee has decided not to ask the House to adopt this report, as in the opinion of the committee representations of this kind are more properly made by the localities interested direct than by the Assembly at large and it is asking more of the Assembly than is altogether right to invite it to commit itself to propositions foreign to the general work of the House.

C. A. MAGNATH,
Chairman.

Regina, 6th January, 1892.

A Winter Drive in Manitoba.

Written for THE COLONIST.

Among the many winter pleasures which fall to the lot of those who live in Manitoba none afford so much enjoyment as sleighing. The common impression among those who have never seen this country in winter, is that we do little or no driving for pleasure, that we only drive when business compels us to. A sight of Main street, Winnipeg, almost any afternoon would dispel that idea. There, scores and scores of handsome horses attached to all kinds of vehicles, some single, some double and a few tandem, can be seen speeding along and showing off their paces as they go.

A long drive in the country is not so much of a hardship, either, as some people would have us imagine. Of course if the weather is very cold or stormy, it is not an undivided pleasure, because outside of the physical discomfort, there is always a fear in the mind of a person not experienced in prairie driving of becoming lost.

In the latter part of the year just passed, the writer was called upon to journey between two towns in southern Manitoba, and the trip afforded a fair idea of the pleasures of the country driving in late weather. An experienced driver, and a good fast team of native horses were hired, and in company with a commercial traveller from Winnipeg, we started at an early hour in the morning. The road lay along the regulation allowance and had plenty of snow to make our cutter run easy. On each side of us as we sped along we could see comfortable-looking farm houses, generally set on a high piece of ground and surrounded with stables and cattle sheds. Sometimes the cattle could be seen standing near the sheds, looking as though they had just been let out. In the fields great stacks of wheat, stood her