

their "waste land," but I did not understand at that time what this meant. I found, on going to look at it, that their waste land was what none of their big men would have; for when a piece of land is opened, these men have the first choice, and as there is only about 100 acres out of every 1000 that is fit for cultivation, I found it a very hard matter to get 40 acres that would produce enough to support me. I could show you hundreds of farms on which the men that took them had expended all their capital, and, when they found that they could not make a living, were forced to leave them—to sell out was out of the question.

I have met a great many that have come from Canada, but not with any that would stay here a day longer if they could get away.

I would advise all that come here to bring money enough to take them away again in the event of their not liking the country, for I can assure them they are leaving a good agricultural country for a bad one; a good government for a bad one; and a good educational system for none at all.

They talk about their gold fields, but I am certain that not one out of every 1000 make a fortune, and the majority go away poorer than they came.

Then, too, we have Fenians here as well as in Canada, besides an unconquered race of natives, who at present are murdering men, women and children, and in the last two or three engagements they have had the best of it. On account of the regulars being recalled, we are now trying to raise volunteers, but they are mostly young men, and besides not having sufficient drill, they have no confidence in their officers, for there are so many whites connected with the natives by marriage. The natives are thus kept constantly informed of every move of our troops, and it is such a broken country that those accustomed to the hills can very easily escape.

I am confident that there are 100 men here who would leave for Canada to one that would stay, could they only get back the money they have expended on their land.

I trust you will pardon me for encroaching on your valuable space; but I thought it was nothing but right that those who were intending to emigrate should be made aware of what they might expect to meet with.

"R. E."

Auckland, Nov. 23rd, 1868.

THE MUSKOKA SETTLEMENT.

We have had numerous inquiries addressed to us within the past year respecting the capabilities of the Muskoka district, recently opened up for settlement under the Free Grant policy of the Ontario Government. It is asked whether there are sufficient quantities of arable land to meet the wants of a large influx of population, and also whether the climate is so severe as has been described by those who point to the Western States as the emigrant's earthly paradise. To the first of these inquiries we have

uniformly replied that a very large amount of good land, well timbered and watered, awaits the settler, although the whole country is crossed by rocky ridges where the primitive formation crops out, and which are of course unavailable for agriculture. We feel assured that though there may not be such large tracts of rich farm land as are found in the vicinity of Toronto and to the westward, yet that individual farms will be found in large numbers, which will compare very favourably with the farms in these fertile districts.

Our purpose at this time, however, is not so much with the first inquiry as with the second; and as we happen to have some information of a reliable nature before us, we purpose giving it as briefly as possible.

The Muskoka settlement is situated about ninety miles north of Toronto, and about thirty east of the Georgian Bay, in the immediate vicinity of three beautiful lakes—Muskoka, Rosseau, and Joseph. The settlement lies on the 45° parallel, which to the westward passes through the northern part of Michigan, the middle of Wisconsin, and the southern portion of Minnesota, and to the east passes out of Canada in the neighbourhood of Cornwall; so that the whole of Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland, together with the greater portion of Maine and Nova Scotia, lie to the north of it. The city of Montreal is thirty-five miles further north than Bracebridge, the political and judicial capital of the district, and the French settlement at Riviere du Loup is over two hundred miles directly north of the same point. Observing this fact, and noting at the same time that the isothermal lines passing through Canada bend away to the north as they pass westward, we can laugh at these alarmists who would condemn the whole northern portion of Ontario to a more than Siberian cold. About two years ago a number of gentlemen of this city, who were in the habit of spending their vacation in the back country, made arrangements for a regular series of meteorological reports in this section of country. The observations were such as could be taken without any time interfering with the regular employments of bush life, and by the aid of very inferior instruments; yet, from the regularity with which they have been taken, a certain amount of value must be attached to them. The spot whence they were taken is situated on the southern shore of Lake Muskoka, exposed to the biting northwest winds of winter, and cooled by breezes from the lake in summer. At the foot of the lake there lies a small land-locked bay, about 3 miles long and 1½ wide. It is so situated as to make it almost impossible for ice to drift out of it, and so cut up by islands that in no one portion has the wind an opportunity of exerting any great force upon it. It forms, therefore, an excellent means of judging how long ice will resist the modification in the temperature, apart from any extraneous influences. In 1867, the ice took on the 4th of December, and in 1868 on December 1st.