

The Fort Pelly District.

A DESCRIPTION BY A CORRESPONDENT OF A WESTERN PAPER OF THIS FINE SECTION OF THE NORTHWEST.

Fort Pelly—from which this district takes its name was established by the Hudson's Bay Company in the year 1824, by a Mr. Robinson, and used to be a very busy place in the good old days of monopoly, when there used to be a staff of 20 or 25 in connection with the Fort. The present Fort is not on the site of the original Fort Pelly. The present buildings were built in the year 1858 by W. J. Christie, who is well known throughout the N. W. T. The trade now done at Pelly is very small as compared with a few years ago. The fur trade never was under systematic and judicious management and it naturally tends to exhaust itself. The H. B. Co. at a post of this description depends for its trade with Indians (and as this has fallen off so has the staff, until to-day there is no one living at Fort Pelly but the clerk in charge and one or two house servants) and the Indians, though they love the wandering life of hunters and hate to settle down as agriculturists, but forced to on account of game getting so scarce, are beginning to feel that only by doing what the Government want, i. e., live on a reserve, farm and keep cattle, can they hope to make a living in the near future, therefore Fort Pelly is only an old landmark in the history of the Northwest Territory.

The Fort is nicely situated on the banks of the Assiniboine, on the east side, and one obtains a good view of the surrounding country. The valley is very beautiful at this point; at one's feet is stretched a panorama of hill and dale, chequered with the various tints of the pine, the aspen and the poplar, while through the middle there wanders the silvery stream of the Assiniboine, often doubling and turning as if willing to linger forever on so lovely a spot.

Swan River Barracks, the site of the first government of the N. W. T., was up on the Swan River, about 11 miles from Fort Pelly, but they were burnt to the ground some years ago, and nothing now remains but the old "Snake Deer" to mark the spot.

The Assiniboine is at present about ten yards wide, but at high water in the spring it must be quite a big stream. The banks are thickly clothed with willows of different sorts, and are very steep in some places. There is a large lumbering outfit about 20 miles up stream from Fort Pelly taking out logs, which will in the spring be floated down to Brandon; so one must not judge by present appearances of the Assiniboine.

There are a few fish of inferior quality, such as suckers and small Jackfish caught during high water in the spring, at which time the Indians make basket nets (something after the pattern of a lobster pot), and they also dam the river in shallow places and as the fish go over the dam they fall on a wicker-work stage, which leaves them high and dry and easy to capture. Just now when the water is low there are no fish to be caught. In fact fish and all natural food grows scarcer every year, and the day is not far distant when the moose, red deer and bear will be, like the buffalo, a

thing of the past, and only live in memory and be something for the Indian to look forward to when the time comes for him to go to the "happy hunting grounds," for they think all the good times of the past "before the white man came to the country, boy," are still waiting for them. Poor people! It is a pity such is not the case.

The country between File Hills and Fort Pelly is perfect for stock raising. There is any amount of hay, and splendid shelter for cattle, and I think in a season that was not too dry one could raise good crops of all kinds. There is quite a difference between it and the Regina district. From about 12 miles on this side of Fort Qu'Appelle the prairie gives place to a succession of hills, which are generally covered with brush and small poplar. Some places along the road from Qu'Appelle to Pelly are almost, one is inclined to think, as pretty as artificial shrubberies. This district is finely watered. Creeks flow along nearly every mile or so, and I am told this has been a dry season. Prairie fires burnt over the whole country last September and part of October, and destroyed hundreds of tons of hay belonging to the settlers, some of whom will be short of hay this winter.

There are many fine lakes in the vicinity of Fort Pelly, many of them with fish in them, and on the shores of all are very fine pieces of land for farms. The shores are generally well wooded. There is one part of this district that is especially worthy of mention—that is the Swan River Valley. This valley is bounded on the south and east by the Duck Mountains, and on the northwest by Porcupine Mountains. It is about 125 miles long and from 10 to 40 miles wide; well watered, well timbered, and the richest of soil, and not to be excelled in the Territories for stock raising (this is in the district that the Wood Mountain and Qu'Appelle railroad have been granted by the Government) and mixed farming. The valley is bounded on the north by part of Winnipegosis, and the large body of water so near at hand getting warmed up in the summer does away with the early frosts which are felt so much in parts of the Territories. Tomatoes, pumpkin, cucumbers, etc., grow to perfection in the open air, and all the wild fruit of this district cannot be beaten by any other locality in the Territories. All kinds of wild fruit grow here. Raspberries, strawberries, currant, gooseberry, high and low-bush cranberry, and also the saskatoon. Wild pea and hops grow all through the woods, and then the different kinds of timber in this district (were it for nothing else) are well worth the settler's thought. Spruce, pine, ash, birch, poplar, maple and elm all grow to perfection. One could get good timber fifteen or sixteen inches in diameter 20 to 30 feet long, and even more. The Swan River Valley is also well adapted for sheep raising, and on the whole I do not think any other district in the Northwest could beat it for a stock raising country. Thousands of tons of hay can be obtained every year with little trouble. There is good shelter for stock, good timber for houses and stables, and above all good water, which is one of the principal things to be thought of in a stock raising country. I heard a cattle buyer say a short time ago when up here, that "he

never went to look at cattle where the water was not good."

One cannot pass through this country without feeling that it is destined sooner or later to become the happy home of thousands of settlers from the older provinces and the old country, with their flocks and herds, with their schools and churches, with their full garners and their social hearts.

United States Farmers in the Canadian Northwest.

The Dominion Department of the Interior continues to receive from time to time favourable reports from delegates from the United States who have visited the Canadian Northwest. Recently a report was received from a farmer of Jacksonville, Illinois, who, amongst other things, says:

"I found that nothing had been overstated in regard to the quality of the land in cultivation, as the samples of grain I brought home with me and the display of vegetables in the market show. . . . I found men who, eight years ago, had not five dollars to their name, now prosperous farmers, the owners of a quarter section of good land, well cultivated; cattle and horses around them, and, of course, contented and happy. My conclusions are that for grain raising the Regina district in Assiniboia, and east of Red Deer and south and east of Edmonton in Alberta, are as good as the best. For ranching purposes the region south and west of Calgary, and it may be north also, cannot be excelled, while for mixed farming the region north of Olds is said to be unexcelled. I took good care to talk to men who had no land to sell.

"As to the healthfulness of the climate, I can say this, that for two years I had scarcely seen a well day from bilious trouble, and that from the first week nearly all the symptoms of my complaint vanished, and by the end of the second week I felt like a new man. This is the unanimous verdict of all I met that no region on earth is healthier than the Canadian Northwest. I think Ponce de Leon searched in the wrong place for the fountain of perpetual youth. I would not advise old people accustomed to a southerly climate, and who are reasonably well to do, to remove to an extreme northern country, but young people with a little capital to start on, and who wish to avail themselves of the advantages of a new country, fertile soil, healthy climate, good markets, excellent railroads, unobjectionable neighbours, and nominal taxation has to offer, can find no better place on the continent of America than the Canadian Northwest."

World's Agricultural Congress, 1893

Among the many World's Congresses to be held at Chicago during the Columbian Exposition, the Agricultural Congresses will hold an important place. From every nation, men will come together for conference and discussion, who from practical and successful experience, patient and accurate research, or consequent official position, are able to report the condition of farming in their own lands, and to suggest the wisest and best means of removing obstacles, securing greater success, and advancing the conditions of land owners, working farmers and farm laborers. Topics of a broad and general nature will be discussed, concerning the principles rather than the working details of general farm culture, animal industry, horticulture, agricultural organizations and legis-