

farmers of Canada have once belonged to the class either of labouring men, or mechanics. They have purchased their farms, probably as wild land, at a time when land could be obtained from 10s. to 20s. per acre. The gradual settlement of the country, added to the results of their own labour, has placed them not only in an independent position, but often made them comparatively wealthy men. How have they expended their wealth? First, in surrounding themselves with comforts; secondly, in purchasing fresh farms (wild land) for their children or themselves. Generally they have retained the primitive method of simply accumulating dollar by dollar the necessary funds, and retaining it in their own homes until a favorable opportunity for expending it occurred. This hoarding process, though very general, has not until lately exhibited any evil effects, because the accumulations were slowly made, small in amount and limited in number. But during the past two years, high prices have enabled farmers to accumulate rapidly and to a large amount. As heretofore, their gains have been expended in the purchase of wild land, and the price of land has risen enormously. Suppose that in one day the farmers about Toronto receive in cash £2,000 for the wheat they bring to market: this sum with a very small deduction disappears at once from circulation; so on day by day until the recipients have accumulated sufficient to make fresh purchases of land, probably in some remote township. Payments are generally made by instalments; and under the prospect of continued high prices, the temptation to secure "lots" of land is irresistible. Not only is a very large sum of money thus withdrawn from circulation, producing a pressure upon commercial transactions, but tens of thousands render themselves liable for payments which the bare occurrence of a decline in the price of wheat to a dollar the bushel would make it difficult, perhaps impossible, for them to meet. It is easy to see how this condition of affairs would react upon the small storekeepers throughout the country, and ultimately upon the merchants. Again it may be observed that during the past two years the value of every kind of farming produce has risen in the same proportion as products adapted for exportation, and must so continue until our great lines of traffic are completed through the great barrier. When these are in active operation, it is possible but not very probable that a reduction may take place. The great increase of population in the Atlantic States, the remarkable falling off in their capabilities to supply themselves, and "reciprocity" will most probably operate in maintaining present remunerative prices for all articles not dependent upon foreign demands. We possess a strong spirit of nationality which keeps us within our own borders. The American, so called, cares not whether he makes his home in Ohio or in Minnesota, in Indiana or in Iowa; he is still in the Union, and knows no home tie sufficiently strong to overcome the desire for gain to be won by moving a thousand miles to the West. Our farmers, it is true, are continually selling out and going deeper into the bush, but this is a process which must gradually exhaust itself, as far as the agricultural region is concerned. They remain, however, in Canada ultimately, as permanent settlers, and become, under the instruction of a continual stream of practical farmers and labourers from the old country, excellent husbandmen. The importance of this feeling of Nationality is liable to be overlooked; it is essentially valuable as conducive to the improvement of the soil and the prevalence of good husbandry. An American of the great producing Western States, rapidly exhausts his farm by repeated croppings, sells out, and seeks new land; a general rise in price, owing to increase of population, settlement, railroads, &c., amply remunerating him for his "improvements." This goes on continually, and the march of the pioneer farmer is always westward. The result is, that the average amount of crops raised in the older states has been continually diminishing for years past; and those which are considered the most advantageously situated with regard to soil, climate, and means of communication, such as Ohio for instance, are positively behind Western Canada in average production. We are continually increasing our averages and improving our farms; ameliorating rather than deteriorating the condition of the soil, because we are a comparatively stationary people. In the States of the Union, the contrary decidedly prevails. We shall soon exceed in absolute production any single state of the American Union, as we now exceed them in relative production. We possess many singular advantages as an agricultural country which are not generally enjoyed by our neighbours. Exactly crossing the centre of Western Canada is a vast series of gypsum beds, from which the excellent fertilizer may

be extracted in a state of great purity at a trifling expense; the same rocks extend as a stripe into New York on the one hand and Northern Michigan on the other. In nearly every part of Western Canada we find limestone, and if not always in the form of massive beds, still as layers between beds of argillaceous shale, and sufficiently pure for agricultural purposes. In the drift clays which cover the country, lies, however, our chief wealth: over the whole of the agricultural region, with the exception of pine-clothed ridges, these drift clays constitute the subsoil, sometimes ten, sometimes two hundred feet thick, and holding up that priceless treasure, pure spring water. So marked is the influence of the Lakes which surround us on our climate, that species of trees which in the Atlantic states only reach the latitude of the middle of Ohio, are found growing in the utmost luxuriance in the valley of the Thames in Western Canada. Neither have we so frequently to lament the occurrence of drought, or of sudden deluges of rain, which distinguish the climates of the North Western states. Under these circumstances of climate, soil, and people, is it not reasonable to anticipate a bright future for the agricultural industry of Western Canada? What then will be the position of this country in 1860? Is this a problem difficult of solution, or is it not partially worked out in the lessons which the past two years have taught us? Let us dwell for a few moments on the scene around us, and then draw conclusions as to what we may be permitted to see before the close of another decade. Yonder to the north, the dividing ridge between the Ottawa Valley and Lake Huron is already gained by the adventurous lumber-men, and the farmers are following from the Ottawa rapidly in their footsteps. Hitherto the rivers and streams flowing to the East have borne, during each spring freshet, the labours of the winter towards the St. Lawrence. The summit ridge has been gained, however, and Lake Huron, begins to receive the treasures of our forests to supply the wants of the West. The crest of the dividing ridge, at the head waters of the Petawawee and Matawa, great affluents of the Ottawa, gives rise to the Muskoka, the Maganetawan and French River, which flow into Lake Huron, and down these noble rivers the first instalment of a vast supply of lumber is preparing for its spring journey to the West, while here and there along the north coast, at the mouths of the rivers, mills are being erected, and the site of future towns marked out. We know what has led to the construction of the slides on the Ottawa; the same necessity will soon overcome the obstacles to be met with in the course of the most important rivers flowing into Lake Huron. Now turn to the south and glance along the lines of railway already completed. See, where the thick forest held absolute sway two years ago, thousands of bright spots illuminated by the sunlight which now reaches them, and growing into little life-giving centres to the scattered industry which has hitherto existed in loneliness and hardship, almost cut off from the humanities of life. Watch these expanding day by day, diffusing life, vigour and hope all around them, and along the great lines of traffic continually increasing in number, and growing in strength, converting silent woods into bustling farms, and pushing the blessings of industry and civilization into the cold heart of the wilderness on every side. Lastly, glance at the Ottawa Valley, and thence to the shores of Lakes Huron and Superior along our wild north-eastern and northern boundary. See how our mineral wealth is already glittering on the surface, won from inexhaustible stores of copper and iron, of more worth to us than "wedges of gold" or "heaps of pearl." One word more before we part. There is nothing illusory in the scene you have been surveying. No mirage to bring out into unnatural relief the brighter spots of the picture; all is solid and severe. The nature and extent of the useful part you may hereafter play in the future of Western Canada, depends entirely upon yourself. All varieties of scene and occupation are open to you, each anxiously seeking to adopt and claim you for its own. And as your heart begins to warm towards those among whom you may choose to cast your lot, seek to acquire and spread a feeling of respect and affection for your new Canadian home, not so much on account of the gifts it so freely and generously offers, but for the independent future it promises to yourself and your children. Remember that you have become one of a PEOPLE, and that you have a proud feeling of nationality to reverence in others and acquire for yourself, which some day, perhaps, may come upon you unawares, bringing with it deep thankfulness for the blessings you have so peacefully won.

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