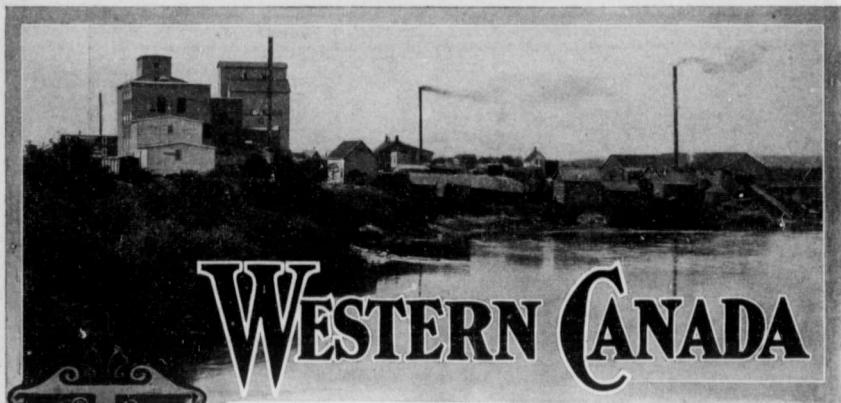




THESE pages of The Geography of Canada deal with that portion of Canada known as "Western Canada." Although the Department of the Interior, through its immigration branch, has availed itself of every opportunity to make known to the world the advantages that are offered to those who wish to make new homes for themselves, there is still a great demand for information of an authentic character. This it is the wish of the Government of the Dominion of Canada to supply. To render advice to prospective settlers and make known the possibilities of Canada, the Canadian Government has established agencies in many of the principal cities of the Western United States as well as in Great Britain and Ireland and on the Continent.

Canada is to-day the attractive point for a greater number of desirable settlers than any other country on the face of the globe, Western Canada's magnificent area of grain and grazing lands, admittedly the most productive on the continent, being the strongest inducement to colonization. During the past seven years the rate of immigration has increased marvellously from year to year. During the year ending December 31, 1903, the number of declared settlers was about 135,000, a far greater increase over the previous year than was even the immigration of 1902 over that of 1901. In the past seven years, the prairies of Western Canada have added to their population about 700,000 souls.

The prairie of to-day presents a scene vastly different from that of a few years ago. Then one might travel hundreds of miles without seeing more than a very few residences; to-day these same prairies are everywhere dotted with new homes, and yet there remain, still obtainable, scores of thousands of the free homesteads offered as an inducement by the Government to actual settlers. Considering that Western Canada is bounded by Lake Superior on the east, and the Rocky Mountains on the west, and that from the 49th parallel at the south it extends northward nearly five hundred miles, a slight conception may be had of the vastness of the region to which settlement is invited. The marked increase that settlement has made from year to year is the best evidence that can be offered that the country has been found to meet the varied requirements of the settler.

Ordinary common sense prompts the idea that in a country over one thousand miles in length and nearly five hundred in width there will be found many different conditions of climate, soil, and topography. This is the case in Western Canada, and while, in a general way, there may be dissimilarities, yet there is uniformity in the one essential, that all parts offer inducements, according to the desire of the settler.

For the sake of clearness, it is well to bear in mind that "Western Canada" comprises the Province of Manitoba, and the territorial districts of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. Athabaska and some of the northern districts might be included, but as these are in a measure inaccessible to settlement at the present time, it is not thought desirable to deal with them further than by passing reference. It will suffice to state that even in these northern districts excellent yields of grain have been produced and successfully harvested — striking collateral evidence of the favouring climatic conditions in the districts farther south.

The Province of Manitoba.

Manitoba was the sphere of the pioneering efforts in Western Canada's immigration, and its people may be proud of what it has accomplished by way of example for the three territorial districts to the west, where equal success is rewarding the efforts of the tillers of the soil. It is not a quarter of a century since the Province had only 66,000 inhabitants. To-day its population exceeds 350,000. For nearly a century agriculture has been carried on, dating back to 1812, when Lord Selkirk planted the first colony, entering the country by way of Hudson Bay. In 1870, when Manitoba entered the Confederation, its agricultural production found no place in the records. In 1881 it was credited as producing 1,000,000 bushels of wheat on an acreage of 51,300, and 1,270,268 bushels of oats. As will be seen by the diagrams elsewhere, the acreage of Manitoba in 1902 was 3,189,015; 2,039,940 of which was in wheat, producing a yield of about 53,000,000 bushels. Correspondingly large increases were seen in oats, barley, flax, roots, and potatoes. The acreage under crop in 1903 was 3,757,173, with 2,442,873 acres in wheat. The average wheat yield per acre in 1903 was 16.42 bushels, about ten bushels less per acre than in the previous

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