

much the country has improved in a few years. This is not an isolated fact—it applies to nearly all Canada West.

My intention was, to stay with my friends till the ensuing spring, and to get a little insight into Canadian farming, clearing land, &c., that I might have some experience before commencing operations on my own account.

The situation of my friend's house was close to the Toronto road, partly built of logs and framework : it had been designed by the former Yankee proprietor, and could certainly boast of no architectural beauties. We lived about a mile and a half from the lake shore, and I took advantage of my vicinity to the water to bathe daily. I found great refreshment in this, for the weather was very hot and dry. The drought lasted for some time, and among its consequences, I may mention the prevalence of extensive fires.* Several broke out in our neighbourhood, and,

* Fires in Canada are of frequent occurrence, and are generally caused by the burning of brush-wood or log-heaps by the settlers. In dry weather, with a brisk wind, the fire is apt to run on the surface of the ground in the bush, where the dry leaves are thickest. In clearing the land a good deal of brush-wood and tops of trees are thrown into the edge of the woods. It follows, as a matter of course, that the greatest danger to be apprehended is the burning the boundary-fences of farms. I have heard it asserted that these fires are sometimes caused by spontaneous combustion, which I consider altogether a fallacy.