

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY AND THE NEW NORTH-WEST.*

BY T. E. PENDERGAST.

FAR away in the North-west, as far beyond St. Paul as St. Paul is beyond Chicago, stands Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba, and the gateway of a new realm about to jump from its present state of trackless prairies, as yet almost devoid of settlement, to the condition of the most prosperous Western States. Here, bounded on the south by Dakota and Montana, west by the Rocky Mountains, north and east by the great Peace River and the chain of lakes and rivers that stretch from Lake Athabasca to Winnipeg, lies a vast extent of country, estimated to contain 300,000,000 acres, or enough to make eight such States as Iowa or Illinois. Not all of it is fertile, it is true, yet it may be safely said that two-thirds of it are available for settlement and cultivation.

In fact, the extent of available land in these new countries is apt to be under-estimated, for if the traveller does not see prairies waist-deep in the richest grass, he is apt to set them down as barren lands, and if he crosses a marsh, he at once stamps it as land too wet for cultivation. Those, however, who remember the early days of Illinois and Iowa, have seen lands then passed by as worthless swamps, now held at high prices as the best of meadow-land. This is a land of rolling prairies and table-lands, watered by navigable rivers, and not devoid of timber.

Its climate is hardly such as one would select for a lazy man's paradise, for the winters are long and cold, and the summers short and fiercely hot, though their shortness is in some measure compensated for by the great length of the midsummer days. Nevertheless, it is a land where wheat and many other grains and root crops attain their fullest perfection, and is well fitted to be the home of a vigorous and healthy race. Manitoba, of which we hear so much now, is but the merest fraction of this territory, and, lying in the south-east corner, is as yet the only part accessible by rail.

*We have pleasure in reprinting from *Harper's Magazine*, the estimate of an intelligent American of our great North-west.—ED.