

DEVELOPING NORTHERN MANITOBA

Something About the Country Being Opened by the Canadian Northern Railway.

The Canadian Northern Railway now extends 340 miles from Portage la Prairie in a northwesterly direction, running through the Dauphin and Swan river sections of Manitoba into the Northwest Territories. Construction work is still being pushed ahead. A large portion of Manitoba is open prairie land, but this section is quite different. It is a rolling country, covered with scrub and groves of poplar, spruce, jack pine, tamarac, etc., separated by patches of open prairie. This appears to have been heavily wooded at one time, but forest fires have swept large tracts and the new growth which has sprung up is as yet very small. In many places the land is low and even swampy, affording abundance of grazing and hay land, suitable for stock raising, but other sections, notably around Dauphin, the Gilbert Plains and the Swan river valley are good grain sections. Since the building of the railroad a large immigration has set in and everything points to this being one of the best farming sections of Manitoba. While wheat raising alone may be carried on successfully in some localities still mixed farming will be the rule. The railroad skirts the Riding, Duck and Porcupine mountains, on which are large timber limits and the amount of dressed lumber manufactured annually is very large. In the immediate vicinity of Dauphin alone there are some five saw mills in operation, while several others are to be seen along the line further north. The Canadian Northern Railway have running rights over the Canadian Pacific Railway's northwestern branch from Portage la Prairie to Gladstone, at which point their road commences.

Piomas is the first town on the Canadian Northern Railway north of Gladstone. Mixed farming is the rule in the surrounding country and as the land is now well settled a large amount of grain is raised each year, as is shown by the two elevators and two grain warehouses at the station. The wheat yield this year is estimated at from 16 to 35 bushels per acre, averaging probably about 18 bushels. There is an abundance of good pasture and hay lands and the numerous bluffs serve as a shelter to the cattle in winter, making it necessary to house only the young and weaker animals, and for these reasons stock raising is a profitable business. Piomas has three general stores owned by A. E. Chandler, McRae & Williams and W. D. Lamb, the hardware of Williams Bros.; butcher shop, James Leggett & Co.; harness shop, A. Madill; furniture and lumber, Munro & Shirray, five implement warehouses, watchmaker, and a drug store. The business changes for the year are: R. G. Wellwood has sold his harness business to A. Madill, and F. W. Vickers, watchmaker, has opened a shop. This town was started four years ago with the advent of the railway, and each year has added a little to its size, the present year having seen the erection of several dwellings.

Glencoln, McCreary and Laurier are small villages containing one or two stores each and a few dwelling houses. A. Shaw supplies the groceries, dry goods, etc., at Glencoln and W. Ledoux at McCreary. John Burgoine is erecting a store at McCreary and will open up a stock of hardware. A grain warehouse has also been built at this station this year.

Makinak, the next town, is 20 miles from Dauphin. All the business places, with one exception, and the majority of the other buildings, are on the main street facing the railway. These buildings are close together and present a neat and business-like appearance from the station. A sawmill situated about twelve miles back shipped from this point last spring about 2,000,000 feet of dressed lumber, besides supplying the local market. There has been quite a change in the business community during the last year. Camy Bell & Co. have acquired the general store business of J. G. Lockhart, A. F. L. MacDonald has opened a general store this fall, erecting a new building for the purpose, Max Trudel started a fruit and confectionery business, and H. Armstrong bought the grocery store of Geo. Johnson. In addition to these businesses A. Douglas has a

hardware store and lumber yard, and C. L. Vickery, a flour and feed store. There is a large French settlement near here, of which Ste. Rose du Lac, ten miles to the northeast, is the centre. Two cheese factories do a very good business.

Ochre River, the next station, is a small village. E. J. Oliver has a general store at this point.

Dauphin, the next stopping place, is the most important business centre touched by the Canadian Northern railway. Although it is only four years old this fall, it has a population of about 1,200 and has many good stores



Laurier, Man., on Canadian Northern Railway.

and manufacturing establishments. It is true that previous to the construction of the railway, a small town known as Dauphin, or Lake Dauphin, had been in existence for some time about a mile north of the present site, but its growth was slow and in 1896 its population amounted only to about 250 all told. As soon as it was known where the station was to be placed the old town was moved to the present site. Dauphin is situated on the banks of the Vermilion river, within sight of the Riding Mountains to the south, which add greatly to the beauty of the landscape. On the outskirts of the town there is a fine grove of large trees, almost surrounded by the river, making a park of about 30 acres. A ridge of earth, running through part of this park is said to be the remains of an old beaver dam. As Dauphin is the centre of a very large tract of country which is now being opened up, it enjoys a large trade and is growing very rapidly, there having been nearly \$75,000 worth of building done this year. The most important of these buildings are the brick veneer blocks being erected by Theo. A. Burrows and J. Clark. The Burrows block will be occupied by the branch office of the Bank of Ottawa, a drug store and Ramsay & Phillip, general merchants, the latter especially securing large and conveniently laid out premises. The upper story of the Clark block is fitted up as a concert hall with a seating capacity for 800 people. The drainage of prairie towns will ever be a matter of great importance and, Dauphin has been no exception to the rule, but sewers are now being laid along the main street, McKenzie, Burrows and Vassar avenues which, it is hoped, will improve the sanitary condition of the town. The town is well supplied with sidewalks and has broad, clean and well graded streets. The rate of taxation is 25 mills, which is a low rate when it is taken into consideration that all works, such as grading the streets, sidewalk construction, etc., is taken out of the taxes instead of being raised by debentures. In the matter of public buildings, there are here four churches, a public school containing four class rooms, and a general hospital, the latter having been opened on the 14th of September last. The need of a hospital at this point has been left for some time, but on account of the prevalence of fever here this fall, in common with other parts of Manitoba, it was found necessary to open one at once and temporary quarters were secured in a dwelling house. Application is to be made for incorporation and a suitable building will be erected next year to hold about 25 cots. The directors and others interested in the hospital feel satisfied that it will prove a

success financially, and it certainly will be of great benefit to all the Dauphin district, and especially so to the men engaged on railway construction and in the lumber camps.

As a grain and cattle centre Dauphin is well known. It has four grain elevators and a flour mill of 125 barrels daily capacity. The yield this year will average about 15 bushels to the acre. Among the manufacturing establishments here are a planing mill owned by Shaw Bros., a machine shop, pump factory and the flour mill already mentioned. The Canadian Northern Railway have their shops located across the river, where the repairing of the rolling stock, etc., is attended to.

The merchants of this point are now established on a firm basis and seem to be so well satisfied with their prospects that we have only two changes to note in the past year: H. Durham bought the butcher business of A. Bennett, and Geo. Johnson has

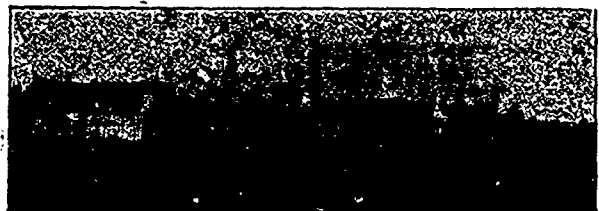
cold storage plants at Winnipegosis, but in the winter several other companies have representatives on the ground and competition becomes a little keener. Quite a thriving farming community is springing up in the neighborhood as the fishing and lumbering give the man with a small capital an opportunity of earning some cash during the winter months, thus helping him greatly in his farming operations. E. Hartman, Thos. H. Whale and the Hudson's Bay Co. have general stores here.

Returning to the main line, and continuing on northward the next town reached is Ethelbert, 15 miles north of Sifton Junction. This is a very compact and neat looking village containing three general stores, kept by Herman Raglin, John McLean and G. C. Bear. G. C. Bear had a new store built this year and John McLean has enlarged his premises by an additional store adjoining his old stand, thus giving him very commodious quarters. There is a Galician settlement in this neighborhood in addition to a fair sized English speaking community.

Fifty-eight miles further on Minnionas is reached. Between these two towns the country is very thinly settled, but two or three sawmills are to be seen, the largest being at Garland, nine miles past Ethelbert, where a heavy stock of dressed lumber is piled up awaiting shipment.

Minnionas has two general stores owned by Fred J. Rice and J. Pocock and a hardware kept by J. Foerster. The town is only a year old but it shows indications of becoming a good business point. A Presbyterian and a Methodist church are now being erected. From this station the Porcupine Mountains, about fifteen miles to the north, show up very conspicuously.

Swan River, the next place reached, is the most important town north of Dauphin. It is just one year old this fall and its substantial appearance and size would surprise anyone unfamiliar with the rapid development of which the west is capable. It has a population of about 400, with four general and two hardware stores, two furniture stores, one boot and shoe store, two harness shops, two drug stores, fruit and confectionery, flour and feed, butcher shop, photograph gallery and a weekly newspaper "The Star." Before the railroad was built last year, a small village, known as "The Tents" had been located between Swan River and Minnionas, about two miles from the latter place. This town contained a population of about 200 who lived and transacted business in tents or small shanties. When the road was built the town was broken up, some of the people going to Minnionas but the majority to Swan River. The site of Swan River is a very fortunate one, built among the trees near the banks of the swift flow-



Makinak, Man., on Canadian Northern Railway.

largely through carelessness fires have been started which have completely devastated many parts of the district so that now marketable timber can only be found in scattered groves. There is, however, a large tract of country to go over and unless what is now standing should be destroyed by fire there will be sufficient to support a good lumbering business for many years. Since the construction of the railway to this town the fishing industry has grown to large proportions and there are now five steamers employed on the lake in this connection. On Lake Manitoba the fish business is largely controlled by two or three companies, who supply the boats and outfits and hire the fishermen, but at this point it is carried on under the domestic license, the fishermen working independently, selling their catches to companies who have buyers on the market. During the summer months the business is almost entirely handled by two companies who have

ing Swan river, almost in the heart of the valley, its location is at once beautiful, healthful and convenient. This summer Geo. Sissons, saddler, erected new premises, Thos. Figgatt built a large temperance hotel, and Field & Co. have started a general store. A Presbyterian church and a Methodist church have also been built.

As soon as it became known that a railway would be built into the Swan river country a large number of farmers began to come in and take up homesteads, and there are now about 2,500 settlers in this valley and most of whom have located during the last two years. In addition to this there is a settlement of about 4,000 Doukhobors twenty miles to the west. This section is admirably adapted to mixed farming, having a rich soil, an abundant supply of good water and large areas of forests or scrub land, together with good timber ranges. The following account by T. A. Burrows, M. P. F., Dauphin, as published by the Swan