

Agriculture at
Lesser Slave
lake.

agriculture was given me by the Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries and others, while there. We arrived at the settlement, June 2nd, not having been able to get through the lake sooner as the ice did not break up until the 1st. At the Roman Catholic mission, at that time, pansies and perennial poppies were in full bloom and had been in flower for two weeks. Peas were six inches high, potatoes four, rhubarb was fit to use, onions from seed were above the ground and the first paragon had been cut ten days before. Pumpkins, started under glass, were a foot high and seeds planted out of doors had already sent up leaves. Everyone agreed that the season was about two weeks later than usual. At both the missions, the greatest possible care is taken in the cultivation of both vegetables and cereals and the mission gardens and farms are an object-lesson which others engaged in agriculture do not fail to study and profit by. As we passed the farm of the Roman Catholic mission several miles west of the lake on June 4th, barley, oats, and wheat were all above ground, but exactly three months later when I examined these fields, the wheat and oats were all frozen. Wheat was selected for examination from what seemed the ripest heads and none was found that was not too badly frozen to be of use for any purpose.

Condition of
crops.

When I reached the mission the next day the Rev. Father Demaris told me, however, that only part of the wheat had been frozen. Barley had either not been touched at all, or so slightly as to be barely noticeable. All the grain seen by me west of the mission farm had been badly frozen. The oat crop at the Anglican mission had ripened before the frosts came and was uninjured. The gardens at the Roman Catholic mission, at the Hudson's Bay Post and at Bredin and Cornwall's trading post on the east side of Buffalo lake—an extension of Lesser Slave lake—were almost untouched by frost. This was probably due, in part at least, to the frost having been accompanied by a light wind from the west which lost some of its coldness in crossing Buffalo lake and in part to the fact that the ridge behind these gardens keeps the sun's rays from the vegetation for an hour or so longer than on the west side of the lake where there is no such protection, thus allowing the frozen vegetation to recover by degrees. It is at any rate true that the gardens on one side escaped while in those on the other nearly everything but the hardiest vegetables was frozen, and I was told that this was not unusual.

There is a large and growing settlement around the west end of Lesser Slave lake and both as regards climate and soil this region is in the opinion of the writer as well adapted to agriculture and cattle-