

extension of the great Montana desert, is being rapidly occupied by the farmer and especially the rancher. The country around Maple Creek is admirably adapted for horse, sheep, and cattle ranges.

The Province of Alberta differs widely in its general characteristics from the other Provinces as to climatic and physical features and resources. Here the country generally is much more broken, and especially is this true as one approaches the mountains. The level monotony of the eastern plain is varied by frequent valleys, down which run rapid mountain streams; while the whole western boundary is guarded by the rugged grandeur of the mighty Rockies.

The climate here is much more moderate than farther to the east. Almost the whole of this great Province is influenced by the balmy chinook, a warm wind blowing from the mountains. Seldom does cold weather obtain for more than a week in any part of the Province. I am at present writing early in December. For the last week we have had fairly cold weather, but to-day it is so mild that one could go out comfortably without either overcoat or gloves. The southern part of the Province is particularly suited for ranching. The climate is such that stock can easily live outside all winter. The rich, nutritious grass of the prairie cures itself, and consequently all over these vast meadows there is an abundant supply all winter long of splendid hay. The fact that stock not only lives on it, but comes through the winter in splendid condition, demonstrates the excellence of the dried grass as fodder.

It is only a few years since the government designated the region south of Calgary as arid, then, later, as semi-arid. Now, it is a common thing to see anywhere over that extent of country fields of fall wheat producing from forty to fifty bushels to the acre and fields of oats yielding commonly ninety bushels to the acre. Almost all over this whole Province there are immense, unmeasured deposits of coal. I think I would be safe in saying there are few points in the Province where the settler is more than sixty miles from a coal mine.

Calgary is the largest and the most progressive city in Alberta. It is an important railway and distributing centre for the whole Province. At this point the C.P.R. is tapping the Bow River and, by means of an immense irrigation ditch, carrying its limpid waters far over the plain stretching eastwards from the city. This splendid piece of engineering will bring tens of thousands of acres under cultivation. The enterprise of the C.P.R. in this matter is fully abreast of its splendid railway system.

The northern part of Alberta is quite different from the south. Here the soil is much heavier, and of the same character as that of the Red River valley. The country generally is timbered, presenting in its natural state a park-like appearance. The north is better fitted for mixed farming. Edmonton, 450 miles north of the boundary, is the capital. It is 400 miles south of the northern limit of the Province. Even beyond this northern limit, which is 700 miles from the international boundary, wheat has been successfully grown. The lakes north of Edmonton teem with whitefish, while large portions of the country are undoubtedly underlaid with oil and salt. The whole western portion is well timbered with spruce, tamarack, and poplar. Over eight million feet of timber were cut at Edmonton last year.

Away to the north of Alberta is the Mackenzie District, reaching out to the ocean, and traversed by a river 1,500 miles long and averaging two miles in width. This can surely be no mean country which is able to feed a river of such noble proportions.

The population of this western country is of a very cosmopolitan character. From almost all lands, from almost all political and religious conditions, they have come to us. Generally speaking, they are a thrifty, industrious, law-abiding people. They must, however, be welded into one Canadian

people, with Canadian ideals and sentiments. There is, as far as I know, no disposition to do otherwise than to become one with us. Here is a very important work. Some sections, no doubt, will endeavor to transplant into the new soil their peculiar beliefs and practices. But no quarter should be given to anything which would tend to destroy the sanctity of home, the purity of the marriage relation, the sacredness of individual freedom.

The churches are making a heroic effort to keep abreast of the wonderful development here on the plains. But lack of funds and lack of men, especially men of the experience necessary to grapple with the situations constantly confronting the missionary, is a serious handicap. It is a crisis in the history of the Church in this new land. Men are needed. It is a surprise that the Church has secured as many as she has.

Our Church lays hold of a man, sends him away to some lonely field, lets him work for three years with a starvation



"NO COMPLAINTS"

A North-West Settler making reports to an Officer of the Mounted Police.

salary, and then expects him to be able to get an education. If the Church lays hold of a man and expects him to go wherever she sends him and take whatever salary he can get, she ought at the least to see that his education is provided for. We have some splendid fellows. May God bless the boys on our broad plains. Their heroism and devotion is worthy of the men who have made Methodism what she is. The fires of enthusiasm and sacrifice are not burning low on the altar of our young manhood.

Lately we have had a general election in Alberta. The outcome of this was watched with intense interest all over Canada. The result was a complete surprise. The main issues were the land question and the school question. Many of us thought, and still think, that the Dominion went out of its way to insert the clause in the Act erecting the Provinces. How, then, do we account for the overwhelming majority in support of a Government which did this? 1. The people were acquainted with the system in vogue and were satisfied with it. 2. The opposition had no program but a litigation. The leaders did not even declare that they would change the present system. 3. The people felt that they would rather remain with a system whose limitations they understood than go to something possibly akin to that which existed here fifteen years ago. I would not say that the spirit of materialism did not enter into the contest. Many of those who have come into the Province during the last few years feel they owe a debt to the Government for bringing them here, and consequently see no reason for not supporting it.

Ours is a great land. The smile of Heaven rests upon it. We have great problems to solve. It would not be well for us if we had none. Our ambition is to make the ideals and aspirations of the West the highest and the best. One land, one nation, one language, one people, free and prosperous, rounding constantly in fuller measure the thought of God concerning them.

Edmonton, Alberta.