

are not equal in area to the lands which have been patented in each of many recent years. At the dawn of the new century the only public lands will be the arid lands."

The reclamation of land in the arid regions by irrigation works on the most extensive scale can never have more than a limited influence on the general problem; and the general emigration, both from America, and, above all, the surplus population from Europe, will inevitably take the line of least resistance—the direction of the vast unoccupied areas of land "available for individual settlement and suitable for cultivation by ordinary methods," offered in Manitoba and the Canadian North-West.

Mr. Thompson thereupon proceeds to inquiries on the suitability of the region in question, and to disabuse Americans of their general ignorance on the subject.

"To the average American the Canadian North-West is an absolute *terra incognita*. In an article by Mr. C. Wood Davis, in the *Arena* for May, 1891, on the Wheat Supply of Europe and America, the statement was made that to the north of the international boundary there is only a narrow fringe of land capable of producing wheat—a strip so insignificant that it is not worthy of consideration. In an interview with Mr. Blaine, in which the question of a ship canal from the Great Lakes to the sea was under discussion, I found that even a man of such wide and varied information as the great Secretary of State had accepted this ridiculous statement as the truth. The facts are that wheat can be, and for many years has been, successfully grown at Fort Simpson, a Hudson Bay Company post lying at the junction of the Liard and Mackenzie Rivers near the intersection of longitude 122 degs. west and latitude 62 degs. north. If the average citizen of New York ever thinks of Winnipeg at all, he probably has a hazy idea that the capital of Manitoba lies somewhere in the Arctic regions; but Fort Simpson is as far north-west of Winnipeg as Winnipeg is north-west of New York. And not only is wheat raised at this far north-western point, and wheat of a finer quality than was ever produced in New York State, but rye and oats are grown 200 miles beyond that, and barley and potatoes are ripened 200 miles still further on, at old Fort Good Hope, beyond the Arctic circle.

"Canada as a whole is larger than the United States, excluding Alaska. The provinces and provisional districts of the Canadian North-West, corresponding nearly to our States and territories, have an area of 1,262,600 square miles, which is about equal to the whole of the United States east of the Mississippi River plus one tier of States west of it. But we will leave out of present consideration the 400,000 square miles of Keewatin, much of which lies in the barren grounds west of Hudson's Bay; the 382,000 square miles of British Columbia, with its untold wealth of forests, fisheries, and mines, and its marvelous mountain scenery, because agriculture will never be the principal industry of that beautiful province, and we are considering the question mainly from an agricultural standpoint; and even Athabasca, with its area of 122,000 square miles, because American emigration has not yet gone so far afield, there being, in fact, no settlements of any kind except a few trading posts and mission stations.

"We have left, then, the province of Manitoba and the districts of