

A portion of the Barr Colony Encampment at Saskatoon, Sask., as it appeared early in May. The Barr Colony has since been disbanded, and its members have now the same status as ordinary immigrants.

English Farmers and Emigration to Canada

Judging from the utterances of the emigration commissioners and emissaries from Canada there is a good deal of misconception concerning the condition of British farmers and laborers. On returning from a visit to Canada this spring I found that the delegate farmers from Manitoba were still traversing the country. Beyond a doubt, together with the good prospects of the Canadian Northwest and the exertions of the emigration department, they have succeeded in attracting great numbers of emigrants from England and Scotland to Canada. But a fraction of these, however, are men used to the land or acquainted with farming. The average English farmer just now is very much in the position of the Ontario farmer. Like the latter he has had his hard times in the face of Western competition and low prices; but now farms are cheap, while laborers are in great demand. When any of these people, who are of ordinary account, leave the old country they leave a sure living behind them. Only the young and the adventurous will do this on the chance, even though the chance be a good one, of a higher wage and a better living out of a farm. The emigration writer or orator always forgets that to most people the wrench of leaving home and friends, surroundings and customs to which a person is used, must count for something. An Ontario-bred farmer can understand this. If he were asked, for instance, to go four thousand miles from home and to part in all probability, from his friends or relatives for ever, he would want an inducement that would hit him pretty squarely in the face, I think! And the dweller in the English rural districts is for obvious reasons even yet more wedded to his surroundings. This is the reason why so few genuine farmers and genuine laborers go from the old country to Canada. Thirty to forty years ago rents were too high for the farmers and labor plentiful and low. Now all is changed—infinite change! Land for the most part is rented very low, and so long as a man pays his rent he can remain in occupation practically at his pleasure, while as regards labor though wages in money are not high—\$15 to \$20 with a good cot-

tage and garden sometimes—still it is a living.

WHY SO FEW BRITISH FARMERS EMIGRATE.

The English farmer is none the worse off nowadays because he does not own his freehold. No landlord is any longer fool enough even to wish to get rid of a respectable tenant who pays his rent, which is about three per cent. on the purchase money, but the farmer, instead of waiting till a purchaser will give him a fair price, and waiting sometimes very long as in Ontario, can leave at short notice. It is true the English farmer has a rent to pay but that is usually less than the interest of the money absorbed in a freehold in Ontario of equal fertility. The landlord in England has all those repairs to do, sometimes even to renew gates, which fall on the Canadian farmer. Lastly, labor even, if contented, is cheaper than in Canada, while farm produce, taking it all round, is forty per cent. higher. I do not say that British farmers are making money. They do not work as hard as the Ontario farmer, nor do their men; but they are doing very fairly well and are leading the life that suits them in their own homes and among their friends. This is the reason why so few bona fide agriculturists are found in the emigration lists from Great Britain. These last are composed of almost every class but farmers and laborers, and when such are included they will very often be so by reason of their lacking the qualities that make for success in any line. I can remember when there was tremendous competition for farms in England. Prices were high, rents were pushed up and there was a certain pride among business men of middling situation in getting leases of farms for their sons. Those were the times when good men emigrated, simply because they were squeezed out. There is nothing of that now, nor ever will be again. No one thinks it any longer a fine thing to be a farmer. Indeed there is the same hankering after the towns among the rural classes as there is in Canada.

WILL BE "KICKERS."

Much more than half the emigrants who are now leaving Great Britain for the North-west will be

useless on the land and what is more, will be "kickers." I know these people well and have seen them as colonists in many parts of the new world and know them also of course at home. It is too much to expect of any townsman to make a good settler in a far off country, though some of them do, and the modern Englishman not brought up on the land is particularly bad agricultural emigrant. And the less educated he is the more likely to fail and to "kick." I trust I may be a false prophet as regards these people and these colonies of persons personally conducted settlers, particularly as I know the North-west and the opportunities it gives to the steady and sensible; but history, I fear, will repeat itself and in a year or two we shall hear a good deal in England from certain quarters of the "heavenly country," "curable climate," "nothing to be made out of it," "all a swindle," etc., etc. "Bedford."

The Australian Wool Shortage

According to Goldsbrough, Wort & Co's review of the wool situation in Australia for 1902 just to hand, the shortage in the wool supply from that colony will be very marked indeed. Owing to the continued and disastrous drought, killing off sheep to the extent of 25,000,000 in 1902, a shortage of 275,000 to 300,000 bales is estimated in the crop of 1903. To counteract this, however, a rise of 30 per cent. in the value of fine wools and 40 to 50 per cent. on coarse is chronicled. It is pointed out that continental (European) buyers are buying, not only more fine wools, but also more medium and cross-bred, which formerly went largely to Yorkshire. Americans are said to be buying more Australian wools, which indicate even higher values in fine wools. Owing to the drought the wool crop of Australia for 1902 was the poorest on record.

As to the outlook the review states that rains in November last did great good in some districts and copious rains since have helped the situation in others. But these have been largely of a temporary character and more rains will need to follow to ensure fair lambing this season and to prevent further loss in grown sheep.