

# NEW DOMINION MONTHLY.

APRIL, 1872.

## A PROSPEROUS FUTURE FOR CANADA.

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### THE FIRST SETTLERS.

Wild land or wilderness, whether sea or land, is unquestionably one of the elements of wealth. But one element is not wealth itself; labor, which is another element, must be combined with it, and this must be guided by knowledge, which is a third element, while both are sustained by capital, which is a fourth, for without food and shelter and tools to work with, and seed and stock from which more shall spring, labor itself cannot continue.

From the manner in which wild land is often talked of, it would seem almost to be wealth itself, or at least that labor, without either knowledge or capital, could be easily combined with it, and render it at once fully capable of providing for the wants of a community. A thousand instances of long and weary experience in the backwoods have not sufficed as yet to dissipate the first visionary notions of the earliest adventurers from Europe to the vast Western continent.

Nor has experience sufficed to teach us how different the results are of combining the four elements in different proportions of each. The excess of one element, such as land, will not compensate for a serious deficit in the other three. We see on a large scale, and therefore as an average, the result in England of the combination of a small area of land with a large amount of labor, knowledge, and capital; while in Canada, especially in the Province of Que-

bec, we have the reverse: a large area of land with a sad stint of the other elements, producing a very insignificant result. Five acres of land cultivated in the most perfect style, with abundance of scientific knowledge and practical skill, and with a sufficiency of labor, may easily produce more than a hundred acres of land, originally of the same quality, but reduced to the sad state of wreck in which we often see it.

Moreover, there is another result besides the wealth produced in proportion to the just ratios of the various elements producing it; that other result is the time which elapses in the process. The present slowly-creeping process from the first poor settler in the bush, to the approximately perfect farm, has occupied in the best portions of the country a period of some forty years, and in less favored regions it is only half through or less than half during the same time. This is simply the result of disproportion in the elements of wealth sought to be combined, an excess of land and a deficit of labor, knowledge, and capital.

In other enterprises the true principles of business are fully recognized in new countries, while disproportion in the means to the end has ever clung to agriculture; and hence prosperity in the one case attracting more and more people into it, and a weary picture to look at in the other, deterring thousands from the bare attempt.

In Canada nationally there is no subject of higher importance than the management