

more difficult the country through which the road has to run the greater the economy. A broad gauge road requires curves of larger radius, and consequently limits the engineer in his choice of direction, whereas a narrow gauge would in many instances permit the road to follow the natural windings of the hills without necessitating a wide detour or costly cuttings.

In the second place, the first cost of rolling stock is also reduced. The cars, both freight and passenger, are smaller and lighter, and less expensive engines, are needed to haul them at the ordinary rate of speed. And as rolling stock has constantly to be renewed, every saving in this branch of expenditure is of great importance in its bearing on the nett earnings of a railway. Again, the duration of the rails is materially affected by the greater or less weight of the engines and cars passing over them, and every month added to the average life of the iron of a road is of very material importance.

We are not, in this instance, advocating for the heavy traffic which must some day or other pass over a Canadian Pacific Railway a gauge as narrow as has been decided on for the Toronto narrow gauge railways: that we consider admirably adapted for branch roads to open up sections of country not sufficiently served by the main trunk line passing through them, but for arterial railways we should like to see adopted a gauge certainly not less than four feet, or even a few inches more.

We hope the question will engage the consideration of every intelligent man, and that public opinion will declare itself so strongly in favour of the economy attending the narrow gauge system as to compel Government to adopt it, whether the railways to be built by public funds or chartered companies.

#### A BLUNDER OR A CRIME!

WE cannot regard the falling and escape of Reiffenstein, accused of robbing the Receiver General's department at Ottawa, other than as a blunder or a crime. "Somebody has blundered!", exclaimed a celebrated personage on a great occasion, and somebody has evidently blundered at the capital in this matter, whether wilfully or intentionally it would be hard to tell. Here is a man who has been "swelling" it for years at Ottawa on money evidently stolen from the public chest. Of his guilt there can hardly be the shadow of a doubt. Coolly and deliberately, he has for years been engaged in swindling the department with which he was connected, by means of false orders and false figures, until his peculations amount to tens of thousands of dollars. It was shameful enough that this should have gone on for years without detection. It was bad enough that the much-lauded audit system did not discover embezzlements so barefaced. But the public felt this satisfaction at least, that now the culprit had been found, and that justice would at last be meted out to him. But lo! Judge Armstrong and two local magistrates, admit Reiffenstein to bail, a carriage with fast horses await his release from prison, and in a few hours he crosses the St. Lawrence into the United States, and justice is mocked and the community scandalised. A more disgraceful transaction all through, has seldom come to light in Canada. If Reiffenstein had been some poor man, who had taken five or ten dollars not his own, to buy bread for his famishing family, he would certainly have gone to the penitentiary. But because the culprit in this case operated by thousands, and stood high in so-called polite society, giving fine dinners and balls at the public expense, the prison door opens and his crime goes unwhipt of justice. Someone says, "the killing of one man makes a murder; the killing of thousands, a hero." We suppose it must be on this principle that Reiffenstein was allowed to escape. The whole circumstances are humiliating. They are a scandal to Canadian justice. How often has our press decanted on the immorality of the American courts in not punishing influential villains—but what shall we now say of ourselves? Hereafter we may look at home, for this Reiffenstein case casts a dark stain on our administration of criminal justice. As we said at the beginning of these remarks, the admission of Reiffenstein to bail, is either a blunder or a crime, and the conduct of the magistrates more immediately concerned, should be thoroughly investigated. The fact that robbery of the Receiver General's department went on for years, calls for Government investigation, and as to the escape of the supposed guilty party by means of straw bail, why the end is worse than the beginning. Someone has blundered or committed a crime—the public have a right to know who it is.

#### FACTS ABOUT THE NORTH WEST.

NOTWITHSTANDING all that has been written about the North West Territory, very incorrect ideas exist in many quarters regarding it. To dissipate some of these erroneous impressions, we propose to make a few brief but correct statements regarding its climate, productions, minerals, animals, &c., which we trust will prove interesting as well as useful.

##### NUMBER OF PEOPLE THERE.

Most of the inhabitants of what we may now call North-Western Canada, are located in what is known as the Red River Settlement, Fort Garry being the principal village. The number is set down at 14,000 souls, but when this season's accessions are all in and counted, the number will not be far from 15,000. Most of the population are Scotch and French, but the Canadians and Americans are steadily increasing.

##### CHARACTER OF THE CLIMATE.

The climate at Fort Garry is very much like that of the Province of Quebec. The winters are colder by the thermometer than in the neighborhood of Toronto, but in consequence of the aridity of the atmosphere, the cold is said not to be felt so much. The snow fall is generally less than with us. As you proceed West, towards the Rocky Mountains, the climate becomes milder and better. Near the mountains, snow seldom ever exceeds 10 inches in depth, and the winters are comparatively mild. On the Upper Saskatchewan, horses and cattle sometimes feed out all winter! Sleighting sets in about the first week of December, and the ice on the rivers breaks up about the last week of April. Spring comes in very rapidly. The farmers generally sow about the 15th of April, and the growth of the crops is exceedingly rapid. There is no fever and ague—the curse of the American prairies—and the character of the climate cannot be excelled for healthfulness.

##### THE FERTILE BELT.

It is calculated there are 250,000,000 of acres of magnificent farming land. The fertile belt is from 150 to 200 miles in width (north and south) and 800 miles in length (east and west.) It is almost all prairie land, and the soil, according to a local authority, "of a rich, black, vegetable loam, with a clay subsoil." Regarding the great depth and richness of the soil, all authorities concur.

##### WHAT CROPS DO WELL?

This is a query in which all are interested, and one, fortunately, which can be most satisfactorily answered. Wheat, barley, oats, peas, rye, Indian corn, similar grains, attain to great perfection. Wheat averages 65 lbs. to the bushel! Flax and hemp thrive well. As an agricultural country it is certain it is not excelled on this continent. Potatoes often yield 30 bushels for one planted. Almost every kind of vegetable grows luxuriantly. Such fruits as the wild plum, cherry, gooseberry, red and black currants and cranberry, are to be found in abundance. Before ten years, the North West territory must become one of the largest wheat-producing districts in the world. This is a flattering prediction. But it is impossible to consider the almost unequalled fertility of the soil and the ease with which such prairies can be cultivated, and come to any other conclusion.

##### THE BREEDING OF STOCK.

We know no better chance to make a fortune than by going to the Red River district and commencing the raising of stock. A country abounding in natural grasses, which make the best of hay, and in the western parts of which cattle can secure food out of doors all winter, is a tempting field to the enterprising stock breeder. The gold mines of California or Australia do not afford so splendid an opportunity to secure wealth, as do these magnificent prairies to those who understand stock-raising, and who saw fit to enter into it on a large scale.

##### PRAIRIES WITH TIMBER.

One great drawback to the American prairies is the want of timber. It is almost impossible to get lumber there for houses, barns and fences. But our Canadian prairies are happily different. Along the many splendid rivers and streams with which they are watered, are to be found the pine, oak, ash, white and black spruce, the balsam, basswood, poplar, tamarack and ash-leaved maple. The timber is not probably of the best qualities, but there is quite sufficient for all the wants of the district itself.

##### THE TRADE IN FURS.

Will doubtless be continued by the Hudson's Bay Company and by hardy pioneers for decades yet to

come. In the animal kingdom, there are the buffalo, bears, wolves, moose and reindeer, lynxes, otters, foxes, minks, beavers, martens, fishers, and many other species of minor importance. The peltries of these animals have been for centuries the only medium of exchange in the North-West, and have been a mine of wealth annually to the fur monopolists. Hereafter many hardy adventurers will no doubt take part in the fur trade, and share the spoils of this lucrative calling. The larger animals such as bears and wolves are becoming scarce, but in the more inaccessible localities, the beaver, otter, mink, fox, &c., are still to be found in abundance.

##### THE MINERALS OF THE NORTH-WEST.

In addition to its other attractions, the North-west possesses great mineral wealth. Gold, copper and iron are to be found in several localities, but whether in paying quantities or not, has not been ascertained by actual experiment. Coal exists to almost unlimited extent, plaster of Paris, mineral paints, sulphur, asphaltum, and alum, have been discovered. Granite, slate, lime and sandstone, are abundant. The salt springs of the territory are among the richest in the world, and in some cases they throw up natural salt of good quality.

##### ITS LAKES AND RIVERS.

The North-West contains many magnificent lakes and rivers. The principal lakes are Winnipeg, Lake of the Woods, and Great Slave Lake. The Saskatchewan, Mackenzie, Red and Assiniboine are the chief rivers, and the extent of the country may be known from the fact that some of these streams are thousands of miles long! It is calculated that there are ten thousand miles of navigable water within the territory.

##### SCHOOLS—CHURCHES—TRADES.

Red River district is not free from the hardships inseparable from a new settlement, but all the advantages of modern civilization are being rapidly introduced. There are two schools and a classical college for boys, and two schools for the education of girls. The Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists and Roman Catholics, have each several churches. Up till recently, the wants of the community in regard to imported articles, were not very well supplied, but improvement is rapidly taking place in this respect. There are very few mechanics there yet, and a wide field is opened for carpenters, masons, shoemakers, tailors, blacksmiths, &c.—a few manufacturers—particularly those who make woollen goods and farming implements—would inevitably succeed well. In a very few years, every branch of industry will be prosecuted in the Red River district, and its inhabitants have placed within their reach all the advantages which we enjoy.

##### HOW TO GET THERE.

The only practicable way to Red River at present, is by way of St. Paul, Minnesota. From that city, part of the way is by stage, but mainly by carts over the plains. Hundreds of carts are constantly employed in this. Some Canadians have gone to the head of Lake Superior, and then made their way by a route formerly used by *voyageurs*. We would not advise any to try this road. Next year, we hope our Canadian road will be opened, and then our people will not require to pass through the United States at all. We have no doubt that as soon as our route is open to travel, a great revolution will take place in the trade of and travel to Red River, and that the people of Canada will then realise the immense value and importance of the North-West in a way never yet experienced.

##### CONCLUSION.

These disjointed facts about our new North-western possession can be relied upon as correct, and are worthy of attentive consideration, not only by those who may think of trying their fortune in that favored land, but by every one who takes an interest in Canada's prosperity.

#### THE BEAUTY OF PROTECTION.

THE Providence (R. I.) *Journal*, thus speaks of the effect of the high tariff on coarse wool and on the woollen manufacturing business:—

"In closing our article, we wish to speak of some *Mestiza* wool which may be seen in the sorting-room; the last of a quantity which was imported, just previous to the time the present tariff went into operation, from Buenos Ayres. No American wool had ever been found which will make so nice a finish or felt so well. The tariff at the time this wool was purchased was 6c a pound. At the revision of the tariff