

letter I fully described what I thought to be the best system on which to establish and conduct a horse-ranche, it is not necessary for me to add anything just now, farther than that a more protracted and intimate acquaintance, not only with the ponies, but with the climate, of the North-West, has only served to confirm me in the opinions to which I then committed myself.

South and west of McLeod as far as Pincher Creek and the Crow's Nest Pass, which were the limits of my journey in that direction, there is very little but thoroughly good agricultural and grazing land to be seen. The soil in some of the river and creek bottoms appears to be occasionally light and gravelly, as though the alluvial deposits had been washed out by freshets, but in the main, both uplands and bottom lands in this region are rich and productive, and the only factor that makes the value of the country as a grain-growing region problematical is the question of summer frosts. I think however, that the belts in which these visitations occur, though they may be frequent, are very circumscribed in area, and that a large portion of this rich country lying close to the base of the Rocky Mountains will be found to be admirably suited to the production of wheat and coarse grains.

Commencing now with my return journey, which, after leaving the back track, began at Calgary, the first 100 miles, or at all events the first 80 or 90 miles on the Calgary and Edmonton trail appear to be as fine cattle ranching country as has been seen anywhere in the Territory. I think, too, that the belt of grazing land here is very broad, extending probably all the way from the foot hills of the Rocky Mountains, and out along nearly the whole course of Red Deer River. At the point where this trail crosses Red Deer River, however, and in fact some fifteen or twenty miles to the south of it, the prairie is too much overgrown with weeds and fine brush to be considered a good grazing region, but the soil is remarkably rich, free from all objectionable properties, easily drained, and in all respects desirable for agricultural purposes, and this may be said of it north of the Red Deer up as far as Battle River. In this whole region, that is from a point about twenty miles south of the crossing of Red Deer River up to Battle River, there is a fair supply of timber, including besides the ever-present white poplar and grey willow, a considerable quantity of cotton-wood, a fair sprinkling of spruce, and here and there a few sticks of white birch.

From the crossing of Battle River all the way to the North Saskatchewan at Edmonton the country is much too wet and low-lying, to be at all desirable unless it could be very extensively drained. In this region I saw more waste territory than on all the rest of my journey from Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains and back. It may be described, indeed, as one monstrous swamp of very rich black loam, and a few ridges of fairly-drained soil traversing it from east to west. The last of those ridges strikes the trail about four miles south of Edmonton and its width extends all the way to the river bank opposite the village.

About the Village of Edmonton, on the north shore of the Saskatchewan, and west of it nine miles to the Catholic Mission at St. Albert, and I believe