

way. This rapid increase of growth is favoured by the high fertility of the lands around Portage la Prairie, which maintain this good character for some considerable distance. I have not, as yet, gone up the North-Western Railway, but report speaks well of much of the land through which it runs, and into which it is about to be extended. Another evidence of popular favour is shown by the fact of the land being so largely settled in advance of the railway. This is explained in some degree by reason of the very general expectation that the Canadian Pacific Railway would take that direction. If the early settlers have in this respect been disappointed, there is reason to believe that the help recently rendered by the Dominion Government, in the shape of a large land grant, will enable the North-Western Railway to be pushed forward with rapidity. Similar assistance has also been granted by the Dominion Government for the extension of the South-Western Railway, westward from Manitou City, through the Souris district. I drove through much of this district in the autumn of 1883, and am not at all surprised at the large number of settlers who have gone into that part in advance of the railway. Everything tends to show that settlement is now going on very vigorously in Manitoba and the North-West territories, not waiting for the railway to pioneer the way, but dashing on in advance, ready to welcome its approach. The progress which is observable in the more extended occupation of land during the past twelve months is simply astounding. With the rapid increase of railway accommodation which is now being provided, the inflow of settlers will be greatly encouraged, and in two or three years' time there will be a wonderful scarcity of free homestead and pre-emption lands within reach of any existing railway. Even now some districts are already very completely taken up. The moral is obvious: that those who desire Government or Company lands should not needlessly postpone the time for securing them. I have hitherto been very much like one who has inspected and reported upon a rich banquet, of which he has voluntarily pledged himself to remain a disinterested observer. On the issue of this report I shall feel that I am no longer bound to deprive myself of advantages which I recommend others to make use of. I am encouraged in doing so because professional men residing in England can now as easily enjoy a colonial estate as a country seat or a shooting box in a distant country. One very marked difference, however, is observable, for the one would be a source of income as well as of pleasure, whilst the latter have now become very expensive luxuries.

On my way through Winnipeg, I was very pleased to visit Silver Heights, the property of the Hon. Donald A. Smith. Here, on the 13th. September, 1884, I saw Indian corn—Yellow Dent variety—growing on his land, over ten feet in height, and well loaded with corn, which was rapidly ripening. The potatoes were literally crowded in the soil. One plant, which was raised for my inspection, gave twenty-nine potatoes, all of good size for table use, some being of large size. Three plants were always enough to fill a peck measure, and sometimes two. One-eighth of an acre yielded seventy bushels of excellent potatoes. The adjoining crop of cabbage was marvellously good in quality and very large in yield. I am glad to find that Mr. Smith is having a large breadth of the adjoining land brought under cultivation. The Silver Heights Farm cannot fail to be one of the objects of interest in future years, situated as it is on the rich lands by the side of the Assiniboine. In the gardens around the house I found grapes growing on trellis work, cropping freely and ripening rapidly. Tomatoes were exceedingly abundant, and had been gathered ripe for the three previous weeks. White and red currants, as well as raspberries and plums, had been most abundant. Peas, beans, cauliflowers, celery, asparagus, custard marrows, &c., all kinds of root crops, such as beets, carrots, parsnips, all flourished under the conditions of soil and climate. In fact, it was one of the most productive gardens for high quality produce I ever visited. As we returned to Winnipeg, from which Silver Heights is distant about five miles, I saw crops on the land of a successful market gardener growing in great abundance and perfection, showing very clearly that the conditions of growth throughout the surrounding district were most favourable. My visit to Silver Heights forcibly reminded me of the words used by