

it became, in 1884, a city of well laid-out streets, lit by electric light, with handsome public and private buildings, street railways, and all the principal characteristics of a metropolitan centre. To the west, towns of from 2,000 to 5,000 inhabitants, the centres of prosperous settlements, were to be found at intervals along the line of railway, and away to the north, on the great Saskatchewan River, several prosperous communities were established.

It used to be a theory in the old days that good water would be difficult to find away from the river, and this gave rise to the opinion that settlements could never extend over the prairies; but the theory did not happily hold good when put into practice, for it is now a well established fact that water can be found almost anywhere by digging wells from 10 to 40 feet deep.

Wood in some parts is plentiful, in others only sufficient for the actual needs of the settlers, and in several parts of the North-West it is wanting altogether. But a wise Providence has provided in the latter case for the wants of the people—great coal beds having been discovered in almost every direction. It is estimated that the coal area of the North-West, between the 49th and 50th parallels of latitude, is, so far as known, nearly 65,000 square miles. The coal found has proved to be suitable, not only for domestic purposes, but also for use on locomotives, and this must prove to be a very important factor in the successful and profitable working of the Canadian Pacific Railway across the continent. As settlement increased and the area of cultivation extended, the trade in the importation of food supplies from the United States became less and less, until finally it ceased altogether, and Manitoba found itself in a position to supply its own home demand. The continued influx of new settlers for some years created so great demand for farm produce of every description, that it was not till 1885 there was any important surplus of breadstuffs to export, and last year it is estimated that the surplus of wheat alone was between three and four million bushels.

There is but one opinion about the soil of the North-West—that it is good. In some parts of the country it is a deep black loam resting on a clay subsoil—in other districts it is lighter in character but extremely productive almost everywhere. The Canadian Pacific Railway passes through no desert, but all along the line from the Red River to the Rockies, a distance of over 900 miles, the country is more or less suitable