

land had been purchased by speculators (from the half-breeds to whom and other crops, the lands were originally granted), who were holding over for better prices. Most of this land is not only admirably adapted for farming, for stock and raising of the highest class, but is well watered, and contiguous to railway stations and elevators. It is, moreover, in direct communication with the big city of the West, Winnipeg, and within easy reach of such thriving towns as Brandon, Regina, and Calgary. Besides which, there are plenty of excellent settlements, well supplied with stores and every convenience, such as Elkhorn, Wolseley, Indian Head, Moose Jaw, and Moosomin. A great deal of the soil is of a deep black vegetable mould. In other parts it is a different part of deep rich loam, sometimes approximating to clay, at others to sand, and is usually capable of bearing heavy crops. Between Winnipeg and Regina these classes of soil are constantly found, and they extend through the physical in all directions, being sometimes bisected by thinner soils, or soils of England, where a less fertile description, sometimes too dry for successful farming, at other times too wet. Naturally, the richest lands contiguous to towns and railway stations are first taken up; nor can it be expected that farms should be easily obtainable in these positions. Those who occupied the best lands in the early days were the pioneers, who are now reaping their reward; similarly, new settlers are taking up land in other parts of the provinces, and, as the population increases, they in their turn will have profited by obtaining remunerative results. It appears to me that, directly a few settlers set up their camp in a suitable district, they are followed by storekeepers, hotel-keepers, livery stable keepers, post offices, and the rest; and this system of the aggregation of people, and the building of towns in the wilderness, will probably continue until the whole earth is settled by man. If the new settler is determined to farm in a district which has been occupied, he must pay a relative price for his land, or wait his chance; and his best plan is to "homestead" as near to the district he has chosen as possible, and to seize the first opportunity which is afforded. A young Englishman hailing from my own town took up a section a few years ago, and at a considerable distance from a town or station. He accustomed himself to the life of the Manitoban farmer, and paid his way, keeping his eyes open to the chances which occasionally occur. He was in due course rewarded. An excellent farm, in a thriving and important district, near the railway, came into the market; the occupier, as I understand, having failed to complete the conditions upon which he took it up. Such chances constantly occur, and the very best land is sometimes obtainable for a mere song, but at all times good farms can be purchased, if the buyer is willing to pay market price, which is simply a fair sum in payment for value which competition has enhanced. With regard to the soil, then, we may conclude that it is better than the soil of England—although, of course, it cannot always remain so—and that there are probably millions of acres of land of very high quality still unoccupied; but that, as in other countries, such land is practically all occupied in the vicinity of centres of population, and of railway stations. The new-comer must be prepared to go further afield, and this he will only be able to do by following the example of those who have preceded him.