

world. From a cul-de-sac of travel, a blind alley of progress, Winnipeg has suddenly become an open window through which one looks, an open door through which one enters a domain of undreamed of beauty and fertility, covering nearly a quarter of the North American continent, and embracing within its vast expanse prairies wide and rich enough to yield the grain supply of the world; magnificent rivers, the longest on the continent after the Mississippi and Missouri, large and deep enough to float navies, and stores of mineral wealth whose undeveloped capabilities the boldest imagination almost hesitate to grasp. In this new relation, Winnipeg and Province of Manitoba, with all their historic interest and wonders of fresh, new growth, shrink under the eyes of the beholder in comparison with the vast regions stretching out before him in the north and west. The traveler of ten years ago saw Winnipeg and the Red River settlements with a certain curious interest, and turned his back upon them, blind to the wide domain of future empire beyond, hidden from him in the darkness of semi-barbarism and baleful trade monopoly. The traveler of to-day almost overlooks Winnipeg and the Red River settlements, albeit grown ten fold in area and population, as well as in political stature, in his astonished contemplation of the new empire beyond, which the political and commercial progress of the same ten years has redeemed from barbarism and opened as homes to the swarming millions from the older parts of the earth. Let me follow this natural impulse and postpone the usual tourists' observations upon Winnipeg and the surroundings until I try to give you some feeble and fragmentary notion of the New Northwest, to which it is the gateway.

The schoolboys' atlas gives the political boundaries of British America, but these are by no means those of the New Northwest, in the sense of the settler and husbandman. Nature has drawn narrower bounds than surveyors and treaty makers, and the habitable territory of Western British America, vast as it is, is hardly half of the land marked upon the maps. Beginning with the height of land north of the west end of Lake Superior, and stretching away northwestward to the Arctic ocean are the low ranges of the westward extension of the Laurentian hills, the oldest rock exposure in America. West of these, in a wide Silurian outcrop, lie also, in a northwestern chain, the great lakes