

The Colonist.

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO
WESTERN CANADA.

Sixth Year of Publication.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1 A YEAR (4 SHILLINGS)
ADVERTISING RATES ON APPLICATION

Address: PUBLISHERS "THE COLONIST,"
WINNIPEG, MAN., CANADA.

WINNIPEG, JANUARY, 1892.

SETTLING WESTERN CANADA.

Who are to people our western prairies? is one of the leading questions before Canadian politicians to-day, and it certainly in point of importance deserves that distinction. Here we have a vast country with almost endless resources and natural advantages, offering many varieties of climate yet practically uninhabited save for a few wandering Indians and an occasional cluster of white settlers at long intervals apart.

The tendency of Canadians in the past has been to underestimate the value of that part of their Dominion which lies to the west of the Great Lakes, and to receive with incredulity all accounts of the richness and fertility of its soil, or the extent of its grazing lands. They would insist that such accounts were mere stretches of imagination or direct falsehoods told to suit some selfish purpose of the narrator. Even yet they are inclined to doubt the most modest statements regarding these or any other of its many features. Fortunately there are more settlers in the country now who have seen with their own eyes and proved in their own experience that its soil is rich and fertile and that its other resources are all and sometimes more than all that they have been represented, and the testimony of these given from time to time to the world is beginning to awaken eastern Canadians to the importance of developing those latent sources of wealth. They now understand to some extent what an increase it would make in the products of the Dominion if the west was populated and the available land under cultivation. But they do not understand even yet what an important factor that west will be in the building up of the future Canadian nation. However, it is enough for the present, that they are willing to do their share of the work of populating it and no doubt time will bring to them a full realization of fact that many and valuable as the pro-

ducts of eastern Canada are, the younger west possesses more substantial attractions for settlers.

The greatest wealth of the country lies its capacity for raising grains, therefore the class of people most needed is farmers. It would be a comparatively easy matter to populate the whole of western Canada if all classes and conditions of men were welcomed and encouraged to come to it, but they are or should not be welcomed or encouraged, as only farmers and stock-raisers have at present any certainty of bettering their condition by emigrating to it. The necessity is for people who are able and willing to farm and who would stay at that occupation in spite of an accidental disappointment or two at the outset, which would most likely be due to their own inexperience or mismanagement rather than to any fault of the climate or soil. Those who would under such circumstances become discouraged and leave the farm for the towns or cities are not wanted.

It would also be advisable to some extent to exercise care in the selection of the class of farmers encouraged. Those whose national prejudices or personal habits would prevent them from becoming socially and intellectually the equals of Canadians would not be desirable. The preference would under this rule be given to those from the British Isles or the northern countries of Europe. A comparison of the relative conditions of the Canadian and British farmer will show that in a great many ways the latter is not so well off as the former, consequently it should be an easy matter to get them to come to Canada. They are becoming dissatisfied with their present relations to the Government and aristocracy of Britain, and are eager for a change of some kind. The cause of this dissatisfaction is difficult to trace, but it is principally merely sympathy with the general desire for social changes which is manifesting itself in all the civilized parts of the eastern hemisphere. Canada although also in some respects sorely in need of social reform would afford them a happy relief from the old burdens and would not impose any new ones likely to weigh very heavily on them as farmers. This advantage would be only in addition to those which she offers of land ownership and increased freedom. As direct gains they would have individual liberty in the highest degree, equality with all men, eligibility for the highest positions the coun-

try has to offer, free public schools, and a host of advantages denied them in the mother country. Our educational system ranks as the best in the world, our form of government is good, we have no aristocracy or royalty to be kept up, no burdensome standing army, and no war clouds. The only capital needed is brains and muscle, with these and a reasonable amount of perseverance, it is possible in a few years to become independent and perhaps wealthy.

It is reasonable to expect that if these facts were placed before the farmers of the old country, the result would be a general emigration to Canada. But a great drawback to the carrying out of this plan is the lack of knowledge of its geography and physical features which exists across the Atlantic. They have after all the trouble that has been taken to enlighten them only a very hazy idea of what the country is like and how it is situated. Of our climate and products they know nothing, the prevalent idea of the climate being that we have winter all the year round with the thermometer ranging among the forties below zero.

With these facts in view can we wonder that more of the desirable classes of British and European agriculturists are not found on Canadian farms, or that they are tardy in accepting invitations to leave the familiar if it is distasteful life of the present for the uncertainties of a new one in a strange land.

It is gratifying to note that a start has been made towards introducing Canadian geography into the old country schools and it is to be hoped that still further advances will be made by the introduction of Canadian history.

The work before our Government then is to impart to these farming classes a practical knowledge of the geography, physical features, productions, resources and social conditions of Canada and especially the Northwest, and when as a result knowing these things they see that in Canada they would be better off, no difficulty will be found in inducing them to come and be among the first settlers in a country which is destined to be the home of the most prosperous and happy of the future nations.

CHRISTMAS IN WINNIPEG.

To thoroughly realize all the pleasures which belong to the Christmas season one must spend it in Winnipeg. Nowhere else is it possible to see both nature and