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◀NOTES OF A TRIP▶

—TO THE—

◀NORTH-WEST & TERRITORIES▶

BY

ADAM BROWN.

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These hurriedly written notes are printed in fulfillment of a promise made to some of my fellow travellers, the object being mainly to preserve a record of our journeyings.

A. B.

Hamilton, Sept., 1882.

NOTES OF A TRIP

--TO THE--

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES.

THE Directors of the Ontario and Qu Appelle Land Company decided to send a deputation from the Board to visit the Manager of the Company at Qu Appelle.

The delegation consisted of Mr. Wm. Mulock, President of the Company; Mr. E. B. Osler, Managing Director, and Mr. Adam Brown, who took the place of Mr. William Hendrie, the latter gentleman being unable to go. The following gentlemen accompanied the party: Mr. Jos. Cawthra, of Toronto; Mr. Arthur Armstrong; Mr. J. Nesbit Kirchoffer and Messrs. C. J. McKenzie, W. J. Dundas and Spencer Thomson; the two former Directors, and the latter Secretary of the Standard Life Assurance Co'y, of Edinburgh; also Mr. W. M. Ramsay, General Manager of the Company for Canada; Mr. Muirhead, Secretary of the Scottish and Manitoba Land Co.; Mr. Samuel Gunn, of Glasgow, a Director, and Mr. Robert Anderson, an extensive manufacturer, and largely interested in the Manitoba Company. We were a very happy party, and I am sure that lasting friendships were formed during our journey.

We left Toronto on the 29th of August, 1882, by the Credit Valley Railway, the Northern and Northwestern Railway Company placing at our disposal their elegant and commodious official car. The train left the Union station punctually at 12:30 p. m., arriving at St. Thomas on time, where the party had a most comfortable supper, the general verdict being that the Credit Valley was a first-class road. We had to wait at St. Thomas an hour for the Canada Southern train, a very unusual occurrence. On arrival of the train our car was attached and off we started, reaching Detroit in good time to connect with the Michigan Central Railway.

After securing good sleeping-berths for those of our party who could not be accommodated in our car, we proceeded on the journey by the night express, reaching Chicago about 8 o'clock on the morning of the 30th.

Here I had the happiness of meeting my son Fraser at the station, but, as we were making a somewhat close connection, our stay was short and we had not much time for conversation.

As the car was being taken around the city to the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul station, I started off in a cab to lay in a stock of ripe fruit for the journey, making quite a sensation in the spot "where fruit men most do congregate." I bought an abundant supply of peaches, California pears, grapes, plums, melons, Vienna bread, etc. When the rest of our party reached the station, their delight at seeing the luscious fruit was indescribable. James, who had charge of the car, and whose civility and attention to our comfort cannot be forgotten, having safely placed the fruit where it was not likely to spoil, we all got settled down ready for a new departure on our long journey. I may mention here that an official of the railway very politely addressed me, and said that he would be glad to be of any service to myself and party. Some of us availed ourselves of his politeness, and he showed us through all their magnificent station, some of the rooms of which are perfectly palatial. On our return from the Northwest I saw the same gentleman again, and felt sufficiently interested in him to ask him his name and his antecedents, and he then told me that he had recognized me as having seen me in Hamilton, when he was stationed there as a private in H. M. Rifle Brigade.

Leaving Chicago by St. Paul, M. & M. Railway, we almost immediately entered upon a splendid country; on either side of the track we saw cosy homesteads, large fields with the wheat stacked ready to be gathered in. The corn and root crop looked most promising, the vast extent of "corn fields, green and shining," was a fine sight.

The cuttings on either side of the track for a hundred miles and more were simply beautiful with flowers; the wild hyacinth, the pretty wild sunflower and a yellow spiral plant like gorse, all reminded our Scotch friends somewhat of hedges at home. We arrived at St. Paul next morning, and laid in a further supply of bread and beautiful butter, and as we had a good deal of musical talent among the

party—of the sort who could sing almost anything if they could only remember the words—we settled that by laying in quite a collection of songs—English, Irish, Scotch, Negro Minstrel, etc.—and which did good service for the concerts in our car in the evenings. Having an hour to spare we had an opportunity of seeing something of this wonderful city, and were much struck with the solid and substantial appearance of the buildings, and the immense business done ; here we were at the head waters of the great father of rivers, the Mississippi, 2,000 miles from the sea. The station at St. Paul is a most substantial building, something quite different in design to railway stations on this continent, more like an English building.

We passed through Minneapolis with its wonderful elevators and flour mills, and went rushing on at a rate of 40 miles an hour through a splendid country with every evidence of great prosperity, now we were nearing, as Longfellow expresses it,

“In the land of the Dacotahs,
Where the falls of Minnehaha
Flash and gleam among the oak trees,
Laugh and leap into the valley.”

Passing St. Cloud we were reminded of the scene of the fearful Minnesota massacre years ago. Everything now, however, betokened civilization, peace and prosperity.

After crossing the Red river at Fergus Falls the streams flow northward. As evening came on one of the most glorious sights the eye could possibly witness was presented to our vision, the sun setting on the prairie in golden glory, “gleams of crimson tinging the braided snow of the clouds,” sheaves of wheat in thousands upon thousands as far as the eye could reach filling in the foreground of the magnificent picture.

Later on when the train stopped at Glyndon for supper, some of us were attracted by a bright light on the horizon, having the appearance of half-a-dozen stars rolled into one, and were conjecturing what it was, when we were informed that it was the electric light at Fargo station on the Northern Pacific railway twelve miles off. Here on the prairie we found an evidence of the progress of the age in the marvellous control of the very lightning for use of man for the purpose described. Those of our party who were billeted for beds in the car retired on leaving Glyndon station, while the others had comfortable quarters in one of the palatial sleeping cars of the St. Paul, M. & M. Railway.

We reached Winnipeg between six and seven o'clock on the morning of the first of September, and were at once struck with the bustle at the station. Discarding omnibuses, we all preferred to walk to our hotel—the Potter House—at the further end of the city; thus having an opportunity of seeing the place better than if we had been driving. To most of us it was our first visit, and it seemed almost incredible to think that this large place had grown into such proportions in the short space of a few years. The Potter House, though not large, is a most comfortable hotel, having an excellent restaurant on the European plan.

We spent the day in seeing what was to be seen, calling upon friends, and in listening from one and another to the history of the progress of the place. We received a great deal of attention and were entertained at dinner in the evening at the club by Col. Osborne Smith and Mr. Howard. These gentlemen were most kind throughout, and even after we left Winnipeg, contributed largely to our comfort on the journey by telegraphing ahead of us providing for our comfort.

Every one of the party visited the Hudson Bay Company's stores, buildings which would do honor to the largest city in the world. The stock kept astounded our friends from the other side of the ocean, not alone as to the extent of the stock, but the character and quality of the goods.

Mr. Peebles, the manager, was most courteous and attentive, showing us all through the premises from cellar to top storey. The method and management of that large establishment demands great praise. The business they do is immense and it is growing every day. We met a great many old friends in Winnipeg; there was universal regret expressed that Mr. C. J. Brydges was absent, he being away in the West with Sir Alexander Galt. In Winnipeg we found all nationalities; besides our own countrymen there were Norwegians, Jews, Italians and Russians. Seeing some very fine fruit stores in the place, I was told the Italians had taken to that line of business and were doing it up splendidly. We saw as fine fruit there as we did in Chicago, brought of course by express from the South. There is a great deal of stir around Winnipeg, everybody busy, and we were all much impressed with the place. The buildings now going up are substantial; the club is a fine building, well managed, some of the churches are fine structures, and many of the stores, wholesale and retail are first-class. Our limited time prevented our visiting the colleges.

On Saturday, the 2nd, we started by Canada Pacific Railway for the North-West, there was a long train of cars well filled. As we journeyed along I met quite a number of friends whom I had known in Ontario. At Portage La'Prairie we were much struck with the great air of business about the station, and the evidences of the prosperity of the place. We had Mr. Kenneth McKenzie, formerly of Puslinch, on the train, who, as we proceeded on our journey, pointed out his farm, informing us that he had 2,000 acres under cultivation, and the most of the crop had been safely secured and was being housed or stacked for the winter. Mr. McKenzie was one of the earliest pioneers in that section, and that only a few years ago, and no one could possibly speak in more glowing terms of the county than he did, and assuredly he has reason, as he has been most successful in farming and his lands are largely enhanced in value.

The farms around Portage La'Prairie and Burnside, are very fine but not finer than many millions of acres in this almost illimitable North-West can and will yet become. Look at Minnesota and Dakota to-day and you can form some estimate of the future of our North-West. As we passed farms about noon—the mid day meal hour—we saw farmers coming in from the fields to their houses, in some cases suggesting home scenes where Burns pictures

"Th' expectant wee things toddlin', stacher through,
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee."

In due time we came to Brandon, a city, we were told, of four hundred buildings where fourteen months ago there was only one. It is the end of the first division of the Canada Pacific Railway, and here are workshops and a round house. The freight house has been made four times its original size and the company are building a fine new station. On the arrival of the train the platform of the station was perfectly crowded with people, making it difficult to move about. We were told it is the same every day. It is the present point of departure to the Souris district in Southern Manitoba; it is quite a distributing point and must yet be a good place for wholesale houses. At Brandon our party was joined by Mr. Kirchoffer, of Souris, a brother of our fellow traveller, of whom, and the settlement of which he is the head, more will be said hereafter.

Having thirty-five minutes to spare at this station we went through the town and called upon several prominent people. Great as has been

the progress of this place it would have been much greater if they had had building material earlier in the season.

The situation of Brandon is very fine, and the soil is of a character to ensure good clean streets at all times; the drainage is excellent. There are several good hotels, one very large one just about completed. The stores are good and well stocked. The streets were being graded and good sidewalks laid. A fine Episcopal church costing \$6,000 has been erected. It is said that the city is to be made a port of entry, not alone to relieve Winnipeg, but for its own importance, as well as for the district of which it is the gate.

After leaving Brandon, some distance up the line, we met the down train. Messrs. J. McAdam and Adam Cochrane, of St. Thomas, stepped off the train, exchanged greetings, got some cigars, and waving adieus parted from us.

We passed Alexandria, Virden, and a number of other stations, reaching Broadview at night, where we met with a great deal of attention from the representative of Mr. Howard, of Winnipeg, who supplied us with all the blankets we required to make the whole party comfortable in our own car for the night, some in beds, some on sofas, some on chairs, and the balance snugly wrapped up on the floor.

At Virden, a city of tents, and expecting to be made the county town, I met my nephew, Mr. J. H. Brown, well and hearty.

On the morning of the 3rd Sept. we found ourselves at South Qu Appelle, close by what is known as the Bell Farm, a very large area of which—about two miles—is already broken. Here we met our Manager, Mr. Myers and Mr. Duncan Campbell, who, with conveyances, drove us across the prairie to Fort Qu Appelle. The day was very warm, but we enjoyed the drive.

On reaching the Fort we found that Mr. Myers had a camp prepared for the party, of which all availed themselves excepting myself and Mr. Cawthra, who were most hospitably received by Mr. McLean, the chief trader of the Hudson Bay Company at this fort, and who, with his estimable wife and charming family, made our stay at Qu Appelle very agreeable. Col. Macdonald, Indian Commissioner, was most kind and attentive.

The Rev. Dr. McGregor's description of the scenery around Qu Appelle valley, viewed at the point at which Lord Lorne's party approached it, must be true to life, judging from what we saw. I quote his words: "And, when on nearing the Qu 'Appelle river, after crossing the great plain, from the summit of the ridge a new prairie burst upon the view—blue, far-reaching, level, and lovely, like the sea with its nearer borders grey, like the sands of a flat shore when the tide is out—the fancied likeness to many a home scene was still more complete. One almost expected to see the mansion house of the park peeping through the trees. It required an effort often to believe that this was 'no man's land.'"

The scene, as we approached from the southern slope of the hill, was quite picturesque, the panorama was magnificent. There were a number of Indian tents to the right, a band having visited the place to receive their annual payments. Between their camp and the road—a string of new tent stores and hotels, then the Ontario and Qu 'Appelle Co.'s camp—and on a lovely knoll on the opposite side of the river the barracks and camp of the mounted police, the red coats dotted here and there enlivening the picture, and then the substantial buildings of the Hudson Bay Company, with the sockade around, gave a sense of security to the whole. The Rev. Dr. Sutherland in his "Summer in Prairie Land," says: "We reached the banks of the Qu Appelle river, where we looked upon one of the loveliest valleys we had seen during the whole trip."

We rested during the day at this lovely place, and in the evening some of us attended an out-door service held by a missionary of the Methodist church. He preached on the bank of the river.

After a good night's rest we rose early, most of the party enjoying the luxury of a swim in the lake. It was a glorious morning, breezy and animating. Others of the party went off on a shooting expedition (on which they met with considerable success, bringing home good bags of duck and prairie fowl). Messrs Muloch, Osler and I, under the guardianship of Mr. Myers, proceeded to the end of the lower lake, and had a most delightful drive the banks on either side resembling the prettiest spots on the Hudson River.

We paid a visit to Mr. Lauder, an energetic farmer, the right type of a man for the settlement of the country. We found him very comfortably housed and greatly delighted with his property. He showed us wheat (of which we brought away a sample) all ready to be stacked, and which will yield 60 bushels to the acre. I must say his farm is an exceptionally good one; still that is a marvellous return for any man's labor, no matter how good the land. His good wife had, a few weeks before, presented him with a young son, the first child born on our estate, and our president put an appropriate gift in the child's hand, wishing him and his parents every prosperity and happiness. We had a most excellent dinner, and one of the good things offered to us in the way of dessert was black currant jam, made by Mrs. Lauder from the wild black currants of the country. It was perfectly delicious.

On the way to and from Mr. Lauder's farm we called at the Roman Catholic Mission station on the banks of the lake, and were very kindly received by the Rev. Fathers Hugonnard, De Corbie and St. Germain. We found here a garden adorned with flowers which would do honor to any garden in Ontario. I hurriedly made a bouquet of at least twenty varieties. There were also growing in the garden, cabbage, tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, carrots, beets, onions, vegetable marrow, cauliflower, etc., one and all of which were so fine as to lead some of us to say that they were as if grown to order for an agricultural show. We brought away with us a bag of potatoes as a specimen, as fine as the finest we ever saw in Ontario.

The government land in this locality, we hear, is largely taken up by settlers. Mr. Lauder was one of the men who went out with General Wolseley's force to quell the rebellion, and like a few of the wise young fellows of the party, he remained and took up the land he was entitled to. Our directors were more than satisfied with the quality of the Ontario and Qu'Appelle Co.'s lands; on all hands the verdict was alike as to their excellence as farm lands, and the proximity to wood and water, and the beauty of the scenery, added greatly to their value. Mr. McLean spoke in very high terms of the selection the Company had made—all fine rich soil.

We returned, some of us to the camp and others to the Fort, greatly delighted with the day's doings. I passed a very pleasant evening with Mr. McLean and his family. His daughters were home for their holi-

days from St. John College, Winnipeg, and charmed us with their music and singing. In the morning we were up very early, the principal portion of the party proceeding to South Qu Appelle, where we had left our car, while Mr. Osler accompanied by Mr. Kirchoffer of Souris, Mr. McLean and myself, took a western route to call upon His Honor Governor Dewdney, who was encamped a few miles south of Qu Appelle. After spending the best part of an hour with him, Mr. McLean drove us straight across the prairie, regardless of trails, and brought us out to the track within twenty yards of the station. In this drive we passed over some lands belonging to the Ontario and Qu Appelle Co., as fine as any farmer's heart could desire. There were quite a number of settlers shanties and improved farms between where Governor Dewdney was encamped and the station, which is to be called "Qu Appelle." We were told the C. P. R. were going to change the spelling to "Capelle"! Surely they will not do this and rob it of its historic name. A detachment of the Mounted Police, under command of Major Walsh, is stationed here. Major Walsh honored the party with a visit, and offered to do everything in his power to make our trip agreeable and pleasant.

We waited here for some hours, until the train brought up our car, and met several people who had settled in the country and who expressed their contentment and happiness with their lot. We had an interesting conversation with an Episcopal clergyman whom we met here. Here we met Mr. Fellowes, one of the Government guides who drove in with an emigrant to whom he was showing Government lands with a view to locating him. Mr. Long, of Collingwood, and Mr. French, M. P. P., also arrived at this point to take the train. With these gentlemen we had quite an interesting conversation, exchanging our impressions of the country each to the other; both these gentlemen had been for nearly a month at Long Lake—they were loud in their praise of the country. Mr. Casswell a clever enterprising man has a tent store here and is doing well.

An enterprising young Irishman has started a log hotel, and from morning to night he is kept as busy as a bee providing food for travelers. While waiting for our car we had an excellent meal in this humble place, of bacon, potatoes, bread and butter. There will undoubtedly be a fine settlement here, the country around being first-class.

As we drove across the country from Governor Dewdney's camp, we came across lots of game, but all our guns were with the balance of the party, and we had no chance for a shot. The whirr of the prairie fowl as our carriages approached and started a covey, was the first thing to indicate their presence to us—in the slews or lakelets there were lots of ducks.

On the arrival of the train we proceeded towards the future capital of Assinaboia, and which had been christened Regina; it was formerly known as The Pile of Bones.

We were up with the sun the following morning (the 6th of Sept.) and found a city of tents, several tent stores, a very large one used as a livery stable, besides another large one occupied by a baker. The most of the occupants of these tents had recently come there—going in with a rush when it was known it was to be the capital of the new Province. It is thought that by damming up the ravine four miles back, a large body of excellent water can be collected from springs, which it is to be hoped is correct. As to fuel, there will soon be abundance of coal from the coal fields from the north, and the C. P. R. is now delivering lumber for building purposes.

At this point we left our car and proceeded by the contractor's train to the end of the track, forty-two miles from Regina, about six miles beyond Moose Jaw and four hundred and two miles west of Winnipeg, where we witnessed what may be well described as a wonder of the world—the extraordinary speed with which the track is laid—the average being about four miles and a half per day. On the day we were there only three-and-a-half miles had been completed in consequence of a bridge having to be built in that portion. Nothing in the history of railway building has been known like it. We were struck with the wonderful method and the military discipline in the whole operation. No noise, no confusion of any kind; every man seems to know his individual work, and does it with the regularity of a soldier in the ranks. The overseers give their instructions as it were in monosyllables. Many of them are either on horseback or in buggies. Each train that leaves for the end of the track has materials necessary for a mile of the road, ties, iron, fish-plates, spikes, screws and bolts, and every car is so placed when the train is made up as to save double labor in every way. We were told that the track-builders were that

day sixty miles ahead of the track-layers. There is a heavy penalty on the track-builders should they be behind in their work for the track-layers, but so far it has never been exacted, for the good reason they have always been ahead. The telegraph line is strung every night as far as the track is laid.

When returning we timed the run of the train and found that we travelled with ease and comfort at the rate of twenty-five miles per hour over track laid the day before. Many people suppose that the track is laid on the flat prairie. This is altogether a mistake. There is a good road-bed made throughout the whole line, and it is in every respect a first-class road, reflecting credit on all concerned.

On our return to Regina we met Mr. Cockburn Kerr and Mr. Geo. Moffatt, with whom we had a very pleasant interview. They have both taken up land there and speak very highly of their future prospects as well as those of some other friends from Hamilton, Messrs Binger and Forsyth. All these young men have resolved to push their fortunes in this new country with all the energy they possess. At every station I met people whom I knew or who knew me, many from the Wellington, Grey and Bruce district.

I ought to have stated that before leaving Regina for the end of the track, we interviewed the baker, whom we found to be a Glasgow man who came out the previous year, took up land, worked on the railway and made some "siller," and this Spring brought out his family. We at once saw from the interior arrangement of the tent that the "guid wife" in coming out had taken the precaution to provide lots of good bedding and bed-clothes, and the whole place was a pattern of neatness and comfort. He, and all the others were expecting in the course of three weeks to have their tents enclosed by wooden structures, as the railway company was bringing material in from the Lake-of-the-Woods, to enable settlers to make themselves comfortable for the winter. Indeed there should be no reason why those now in tents could not be sheltered for the winter, the railway is conveying lumber now and coal will soon be brought from the West. Some of the Glasgow members of our party had a long chat with our prairie baker and his wife, and were much pleased. We found the wife had had a big washing that day, and was spreading the clothes on the prairie grass. She seemed with her bairns

about her as cheery and happy as any woman could be. We got a supply of bread from them, better than any we had since leaving St. Paul, and at a very reasonable price.

Well, as I have said, we started on our homeward journey at night, and on the morning of the 7th had an opportunity of seeing the territory which we had previously passed through in the dark. Before retiring we saw a prairie fire, a glorious sight—the thread of fire seemed to extend twenty miles—it appeared like a fiery serpent gliding over the vast prairie. Where trains were waiting at the sidings for us, we noticed that everything was new, new cars, new wheels, new engines, and from almost every manufactory in Canada, no old second-hand stuff on the Canada Pacific road.

Superintendent Egan had his car on the train, and we cannot express in terms too grateful our appreciation of the kindness and attention of that gentleman to the party. Throughout our journey, the good shots of the party provided us with sufficient game for our wants.

I had telegraphed ahead to Mr. G. H. Gillespie and was glad to find him at Fleming station early in the morning. Mr. Gillespie who was trained at the Agricultural College, Guelph, and has besides been farming for three years on his own account, went out in the interest of the Canada North-West Co. This company is now merged in the Canada North-West Land Co. Mr. Gillespie had, when we saw him, a staff of men busily engaged in hay making. Mr. Dundas, a friend of his uncle, Mr. John Gillespie, of Edinburgh, was greatly pleased to have a chat with our young prairie farmer. We had only a few minutes to talk before we went steaming off again. Mr. Muloch and the Messrs. Kirchoffer left us at Brandon to go to Souris, the former to enjoy a day's shooting. Mr. Muirhead and Mr. Gunn left us at Moose Main to inspect some of the lands of the Scottish, Ontario & Manitoba Company; they had some interesting adventures on the prairie, and can tell how they lost themselves, and had to sleep in a very large bed room with a very high ceiling, viz., on the open prairie.

We reached Winnipeg on the evening of the 7th of September, on time to the minute, and again proceeded to the Potter House, where we remained the whole of the following day. Mr. Anderson and I were interviewed by the newspaper reporters, details of which have appeared

in the press. Mr. Muloch joined us on his return from Souris, bringing with him twenty-three brace of fine ducks and prairie chickens ; he reported that the country between Brandon and Souris village was as well settled as very many parts of Ontario.

During the whole of our trip from Winnipeg to the end of the track, some one or other of us met with friends we knew at every station, but failed to discover any one who had settled in the country to express any other opinion than that of the most perfect contentment and satisfaction, and now that the railway has been pushed such a distance, and in the course of another year will be at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, there is no doubt the emigration from foreign countries will be very large. As we travelled for hundreds of miles on the prairie, it suggested the idea of an ocean, the settlers' houses here and there appeared like ships at sea.

On the morning of the 9th we left Winnipeg, homeward bound, and had the pleasure of travelling on the same train with a most estimable gentleman, Rev. Mr. Russell, of Philadelphia, his wife and children ; Mrs. Stimson, the wife of the Superintendent of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway, also Mrs. Eddy, of Minneapolis, they were travelling in the superintendent's car. Our party and theirs exchanged visits on our respective cars but the most of the time was spent in theirs, where for hours we enjoyed ourselves in song, story and pleasant intercourse, and when the time for parting at Minneapolis arrived, and their car was detached from our train each party cheered the other so long as they were within hearing distance. The day will be long remembered by the whole of our party as a most enjoyable one.

We had an hour or two to spare in St. Paul, and there was a general rush to the telegraph office to send off messages to Ontario. After supper we strolled about the platform till it was time to take our places in the car.

We arrived in Chicago, on the 10th (Sunday), at 5 o'clock p. m., three hours late, the train being a very heavy one. I went up to Fraser's lodgings, but he had gone to church, so I had to leave Chicago without seeing him.

Here our party began to divide up, the Edinburgh gentleman and Mr. Anderson remaining to see Chicago, and as we had left Mr. Muirhead and Mr. Gunn at Moose Main, our party was reduced now to those from Ontario.

Mr. Cawthra, who was somewhat unwell on our homeward journey, found a good health restorer in prairie chicken soup. He had a good many kind nurses who soon helped to bring him round.

I should say in passing through Wisconsin we had a splendid view of the Wisconsin river and the famous dells which ought to be, if they are not, a resort for sketching for those of artistic tastes.

We had a very comfortable run to Detroit, where Mr. Muloch, Mr. Cawthra and Mr. Armstrong went on to Toronto by the Canada Southern and Credit Valley railways, while Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Osler took the Great Western—I waited over a train to see my son John—all of us expressing our delight, each to the other as we parted, with the wonderful journey we had made, and the great future in store for what a few years ago was called the “Great Lone Land;” affording as it will do, homes for many millions of happy people, we felt that the prophetic words of Lord Selkirk, uttered three-quarters of a century ago, are only now beginning to be fulfilled, and the country is yet but upon the very fringe of its development. Again, quoting the language of the Rev. Dr. McGregor, we can all say, “Wonderful! that such a land should have remained so long unknown, millions of fertile acres crying out for the plough.” Or, as Principal Grant puts it, “Come, plough, sow and reap us.”

Well might Lord Dufferin say that Canadians “were the owners of half a continent of land of unbounded promise and predestinated greatness.” That the land in the fertile belt is good, is beyond a doubt. No one who has tested it questions the producing power of the soil; its glorious prairies stretching to the horizon like a sea, will, at no distant day, be the greatest grain-producing area on the earth. Nothing is wanted but people to possess the land. In with the men, say I, and out with the fruit of their honest labor, and send the grain to lands where the blessings of cheap food will gladden the hearts of the people; and while this is done, happy homes will be made for millions on our measureless prairies. Churches and schools will be erected to add to the blessings of a contented and prosperous people.

Let me mention a circumstance which was brought to our notice. Mr. Kirchoffer, of Souris, who joined us at Brandon, stated that during the troubles in Ireland he was boycotted, and having informed his

brother in Canada of the fact, the latter cabled him to come out at once, which he did by the first steamer, and the two went out to Manitoba with another friend to look out for a tract of land which they could colonize under the government plan. They saw what would suit them, and our friend returned to Ireland, and this spring he brought out with him 186 settlers, all of whom have settled around Souris, and are happy and satisfied that a prosperous future is assured to them. Mr. Kirchoffer feels that one of the best things that ever happened to him was that he was boycotted and led to look to Manitoba.

All of our party made a point of ascertaining the opinions of settlers in regard to the country, as we came in contact with them, and we failed to find one discontented individual—all were pleased with their prospects and with the action of the Government in its dealing, with them. That all is not a bed of roses is true, but as Principal Grant in his "Ocean to Ocean" says:

"Looking fairly at all the facts, admitting all the difficulties—and what country has not drawbacks? It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that we have a great and fertile North-west, a thousand miles long and from one to four hundred miles broad, capable of containing a population of millions. It is a fair land; rich in furs and fish, in treasures of the forest, the field, and the mine; watered by navigable rivers, interlaced by numerous creeks, and beautified with a thousand lakes; broken by swelling uplands, wooded hill-sides, and bold ridges; and protected on its exposed sides by a great desert or by giant mountains. The air is pure, dry, and bracing all the year round; giving promise of health and strength of body and length of days. Here we have a home for our own surplus population and for the stream of emigration that runs from northern and central Europe to America. Let it be opened up to the world by rail and steamboat, and in an incredibly short time the present gap between Manitoba and British Columbia will be filled up, and a continuous line of loyal Provinces extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific."

We returned to our homes greatly delighted with our trip, and thankful that this journey of between four and five thousand miles had been made without the least mishap. The arrangements made by Mr. Osler with the several Railway Companies for changing our car from one system to another, was arranged like clock work. The weather throughout

Here managed

our trip was beautiful. The clear exhilarating atmosphere gave us all good prairie appetites ; on all hands we were assured that the North-West was a most healthy country. We heard little of early frosts affecting the crops, and when we did the statement was always accompanied with suggestions how to escape them. Many said they preferred the North-West winters, though cold there was no humidity. The wheat grown is harder and heavier, and will command a higher price than the softer sorts further East and South. Vegetables grow to perfection, and we were told that it would yet be a great country for hops and flax. There will be a great dairy farming interest yet in Manitoba and the North-West. In many cases where people perhaps turn up their nose at certain lands, it is because the comparison of such with the millions of acres of faultless land simply makes it not as good as the best, yet capable with proper culture of being as fertile as any. No doubt there is plenty of land that will be passed over, but it is trifling compared with the great extent of territory.

In closing let me quote the eloquent words of Lord Dufferin in his speech at Winnipeg in relation to the future of Canada, as suggested to one's mind after travelling over this illimitable country.—“ From geographical position, and its peculiar characteristics, Manitoba may be regarded as the keystone to that mighty arch of sister Provinces which spans the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It was here that Canada, emerging from her woods and forests, gazed upon her rolling prairies and unexplored North-West, and learnt as by an unexpected revelation, that her historical territories of the Canadas, her eastern seaboard of New-Brunswick, Labrador and Nova Scotia ; her Laurentian lakes and valleys, corn lands and pastures, though themselves more extensive than half a dozen European kingdoms, were but the vestibules and antechambers to that till then undreamt of Dominion, whose illimitable dimensions alike confound the arithmetic of the surveyor and the verification of the explorer.

“ It was hence that, counting her past achievements as but the preface and prelude to her future exertions and expanding destinies, she took a fresh departure, received the afflatus of a more imperial inspiration, and felt herself no longer a mere settler along the banks of a single river, but the owner of half a continent, and in the magnitude of her possession, in the wealth of her resources, in the sinews

“ of her material might, the peer of any power on the earth. * * *
 * * * * * In a world
 “ apart secluded from all extraneous influences, nestling at the feet of
 “ her majestic mother, Canada dreams her dreams and forebodes her
 “ destiny. A dream of ever broadening harvests, multiplying towns
 “ and villages, and expanding pastures, of constitutional self-govern-
 “ ment, and a confederated empire ; of page after page of honorable
 “ history, added as her contribution to the annals of the Mother Coun-
 “ try and to the glories of the British race ; of a perpetuation for all
 “ time upon this continent of that temperate and well-balanced system
 “ of Government, which combines in one mighty whole as the eternal
 “ possession of all Englishmen, the brilliant history and traditions of
 “ the past, with the freest and most untrammelled liberty of action in
 “ the future.”



