

THE GOLDEN LAND

THE TRUE STORY OF
BRITISH SETTLERS
IN CANADA

ARTHUR E. COPPING
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HAROLD COPPING

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FIGURE 1. A PASSENGER TRAVELING THROUGH CANADA IN A COLONIST CAR OF THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY, AS DESCRIBED IN CHAPTER II.

THE GOLDEN LAND

THE TRUE STORY AND EXPERIENCES
OF BRITISH SETTLERS IN CANADA

BY

ARTHUR E. COPPING

AUTHOR OF "GOTTY AND THE GUV'NOR," "JOLLY IN GERMANY," ETC.

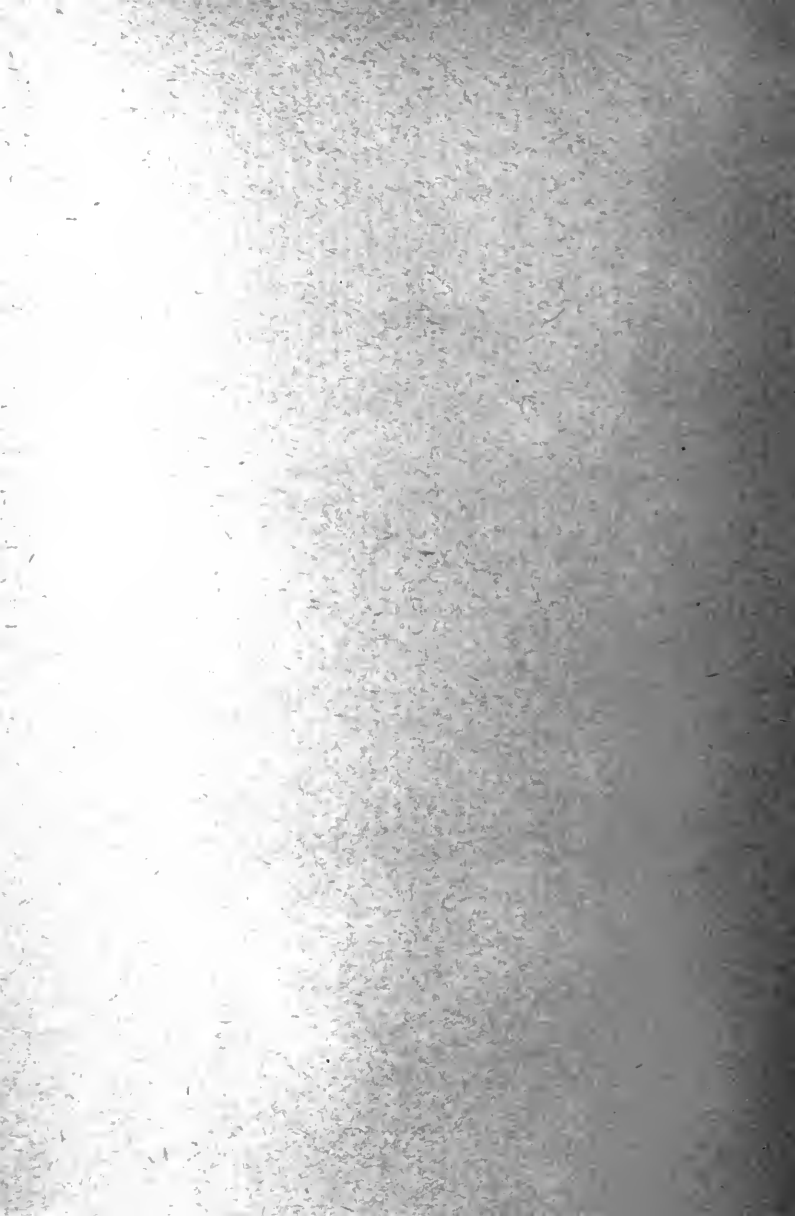
WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR BY
HAROLD COPPING

TORONTO
THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY
LIMITED

LONDON: HODDER AND STOUGHTON

Printed in 1911

TO
THE RIGHT HON. JOHN BURNS, M.P.
PRESIDENT OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD



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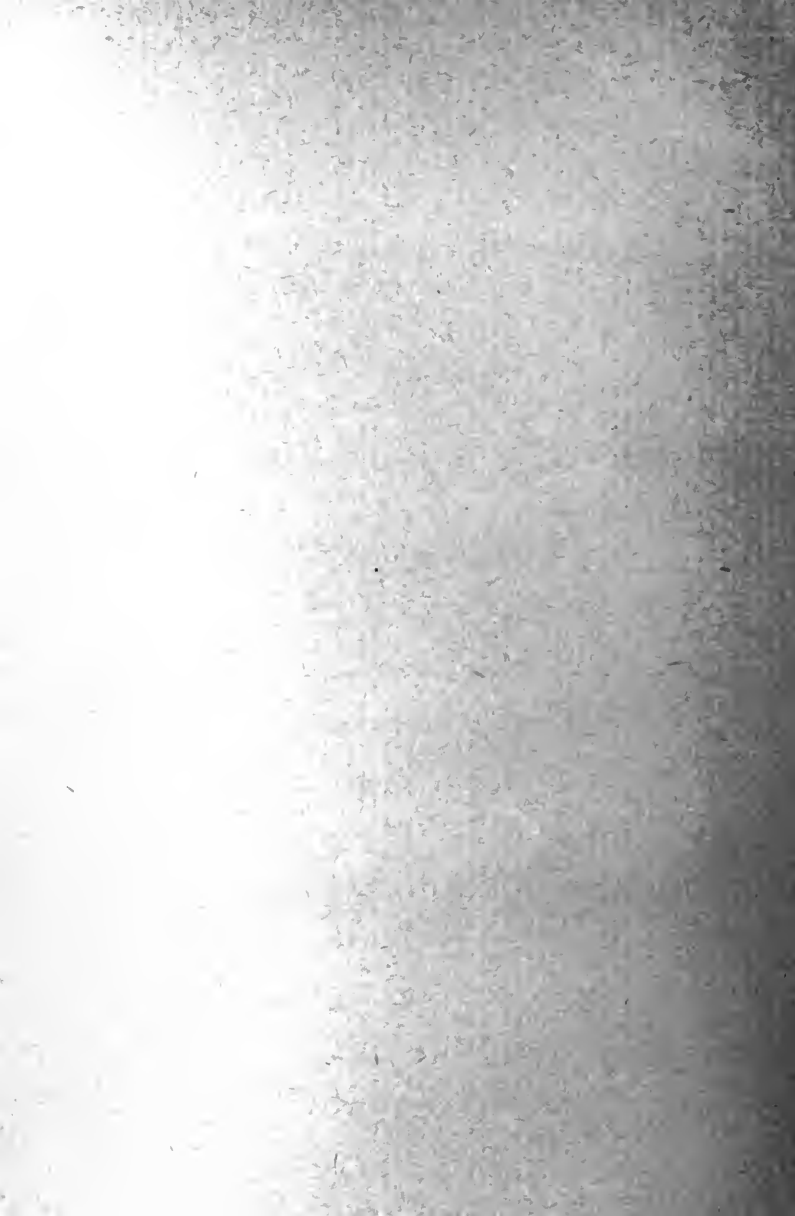
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CHAPTER I

IN THE STEERAGE

Leaving Liverpool—An examination of eyes—Our third-class cabin and its fittings—Pathetic last farewells—A bewildered multitude—The serene sand-pit—Our first meal—An epidemic of sea-sickness—Formalities of identification—Breakfast appetites and changes of the clock—Carrie toddles on deck—The sailor and the sugared biscuit—Granny's maiden voyage—A young mother's trials and hopes—The Manchester man and his concertina—Unseasonable emigrants—Heroes of the steerage—Visitors from the first-class—Goodbye to whales and porpoises—Vaccination ordeals—Chicken-pox and the yellow flag—Arrival at Quebec—Detention in the Immigration Hall—The routine described.

THERE are three great crises in human life—and sometimes a fourth. I was one of the nine hundred and odd third-class passengers with whom the *Empress of Britain* was racing across the Atlantic ; and, before the Welsh mountains had faded astern, I realised that emigration

is, among experiences, the fellow of birth and death and marriage. For the crowded steerage of a great liner, if she be bound for Canada, is a world where emotion masters convention, and man forgets to wear his mask.

Let me trace happenings from the time that graceful monster drew alongside the Liverpool quay and the gangways shot out. We had early proof that the *Empress of Britain* is not only a ship, but an organism—a complex organism adjusted to absorb two thousand graded human beings. How to get on board was a problem that long baffled my brother and myself. Standing in long queues, and elbowing one's way amid the throng of stricken relatives, proved fatiguing, especially as the English climate had lapsed into hot sunshine.

The mechanism of emigration was, at this initial stage, moving with cautious deliberation. Our first victory over circumstances lay in finding a gangway available for third-class luggage; whereupon we lost touch with our property, and paid the man with the barrow. Away aft the ship was slowly swallowing second-class passengers, and there, acting on the advice of constables in straw helmets, we took our stand and waited. At last

came the turn of our rank, though, alas! the order rang out: "Scandinavians first!"

I had already noted the group of foreigners with large, innocent faces, no collars, and ponderous bodies roofed by wide-awakes of formidable circumference. On the bridge those gentle, untidy aliens were carefully examined, one by one—men, women, and phlegmatic youngsters. Their heads were uncovered and tilted, uncompromising thumbs pushed back their brows, and vigilant doctors peered into the sockets of their eyes. For trachoma is a serious disease, and Canada wants no more of it.

At last we stood before the ship's doctor, who waved us on with the smiling assurance: "You are all right." But in my case one of the other doctors was not so sure. He bared my head and confronted me with searching severity. Then he returned my cap and I was free to emigrate.

The *Empress of Britain* was like unto a disturbed ants' nest of several stories, congested with bewildered inhabitants in moving masses of black confusion. Hillocks of luggage were the eggs, and already certain of the human insects had gone to the rescue. Each attached

himself to a labelled egg, with which he struggled down one of the crowded alleys, to secrete his precious burden in a niche of safety. To share in that labour was not our immediate impulse. We must first find our niche of safety.

Questions and shoving brought us to a spacious, pillared saloon, with a perspective of fixed chairs and narrow tables. Here, awaiting our turn in a multitude, we received from a busy official the number of a cabin, in which we soon were depositing our recovered possessions. Spotlessly clean, with washing facilities, straw-stuffed beds on springy bunks, and, for each, a life-belt bolster, a blanket, and a coverlet—the cabin represented everything that civilisation required and a simple taste could desire. And so, our own affairs in order, we went along corridors and up steps to the open deck, where men and women were waving hats and handkerchiefs, and trying not to think. The sobbing and the copious tears were less pathetic than the dry, straining eyes in blanched faces.

Lancashire was on the horizon when we returned below, there to renew acquaintance with babel and bewilderment. The *Empress of*

Britain had swallowed the population of a good-sized village, and the process of digestion was still in progress. They seemed inextricably mixed—those hundreds of men, and hundreds of women, and hundreds of children. But in the human maelstrom there was an island of rest. A stout wooden barricade protected a square arena that had a billowy basis of silver sand; and in that haven seven toddling emigrants, equipped with buckets and spades, were building castles and digging caves. To provide seaside facilities on the surface of the sea is a dainty act of thoughtfulness on the part of the C.P.R.

We wanted our tea, and stewards bade us join the patient throng that filled one corridor. There comes an end to all ordeals, and at last we moved with that living river into the saloon we saw before. Opportunity favoured our selection of two seats at a side table, where the sweet sea air entered from an open port-hole; and this gave us the greater satisfaction since, as our steward informed us, places taken by chance at that first meal were held by right throughout the voyage. It spoke well for an outlying portion of the Atlantic Ocean that all the ten at our table were hungry—a con-

tingency against which the compilers of the menu had made provision. A slab of corned beef—say six inches by four, and substantially thick—lay before each of us. Pyramids of hot rolls and slices of bread stood within reach, as did family teapots containing the evening beverage at full strength, and already blended with sugar and milk. Then there were masses of butter and plates of jam and marmalade, not to forget pickles, salt and mustard; so that, the immaculate tablecloth being set with an ample supply of clean, if homely, cutlery, it was not the fault of the C.P.R. were the appetite of any one unappeased. For my own part, I did not know that I approved of corned beef until I found myself accepting the steward's offer of a second slice.

Meanwhile the doors of the saloon had been closed, and we learnt that two-thirds of the passengers had been temporarily shut out. When we all had finished our meal, a second contingent filled our places, and after that still a third batch came in to tea.

We went on deck and gazed at the encircling glory of blue sky and bluer sea, varied in the south-east by a distant glimpse of the Old Country seen in a purple haze. But an appal-

ling circumstance that disfigured our immediate foreground affected the pleasure we took in the prospect. To my mind, the Atlantic was as docile as an ocean well could be, but the affliction of sea-sickness had broken out in a violent and infectious form. It came as a crowning calamity to men and women whose nerves were racked by the snapping of home ties. Pictures of infinite pathos were the mothers who, bending to the care of suffering children, were themselves overcome. Strong men fell victims with the rest, and many passengers, fearful of succumbing to environment, fled to their unpolluted cabins. Thus of the hale there remained too few to succour all who lay helpless; and the stewards and stewardesses knew no rest till a late hour. That night I lay awake listening to moanings and the plaintive bleat of many crying children.

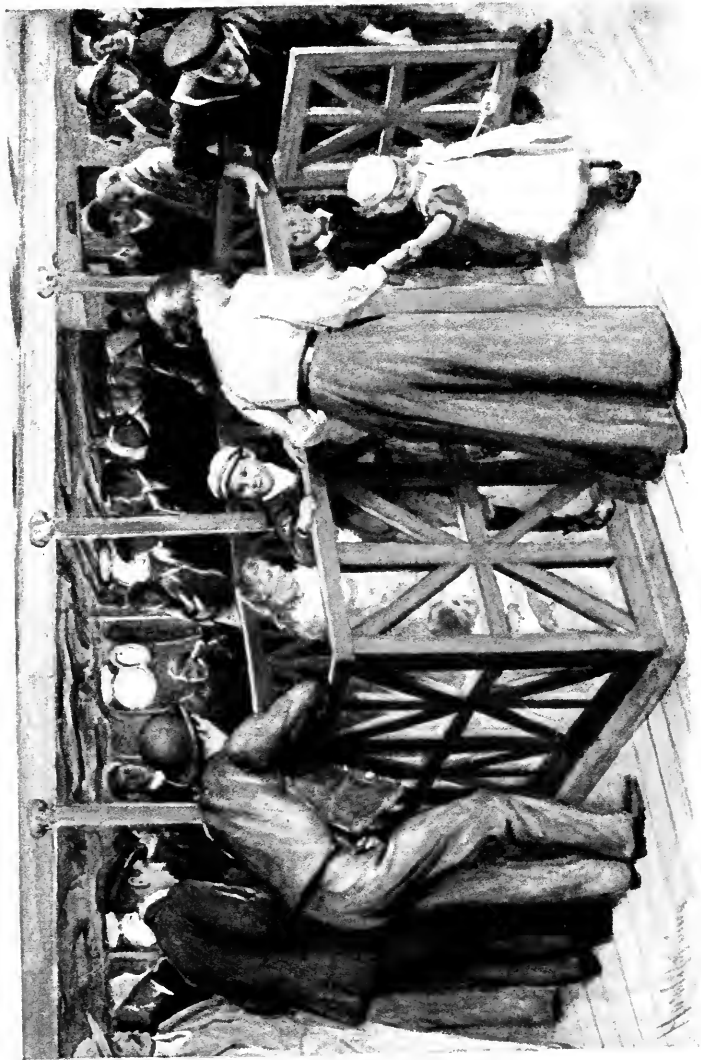
And all this while, as I say, the sea was calm. Such was also the case on the morrow, when the sun shone brightly from a sky of intermittent clouds, and our ship ran steadily on a sea of gentle billows. But the repellent trouble was still visible in our midst, and many were the vacant and vacated seats at breakfast.

Not yet had the *Empress of Britain* taken stock of her human cargo. During the morning an order came that we must all assemble in the saloon—male and female, old and young, well and ill. In the dense congregation there was tribulation.

We each received a printed form to fill up in testimony to age, religion, previous employment, and intended occupation. A combination of illiteracy and sea-sickness caused several bewildered girls to seek the assistance of my pencil and superior scholarship.

The chief purpose of massing us was revealed when at last we streamed slowly along the corridor and came one by one to the table where, under the observation of several officers, our passage tickets were surrendered and our individual identity established. For the majority, who intended to stay in Canada, the routine was now complete; but those bound for the States had to tarry awhile in the smoking-room, that they might comply with the more elaborate statutory requirements applying in their case.

Still the Atlantic was like a lake on the morning of our third day at sea; and already a quieter spirit reigned in the steerage. As



THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN IN THE DECK ON THE S. S. "COLUMBIA"

for my brother and myself, we awoke in a state of happiness only qualified by a grievance against time. For when, because of the salt air, one has a ten o'clock breakfast appetite by a quarter to seven, it is disappointing to find that, because of changing longitude, the hour of eight does not arrive until a quarter to nine.

Carrie was astride the anchor when—awaiting the bell that would ring us to coffee and porridge and broiled fish—I paced the upper deck. On the previous afternoon I first noted that sturdy emigrant in serge. She had been assisting four senior infants to scoop out corridors in a moated citadel; and after that, losing interest in an accomplished task, she left the sandpit. It was her method of departure that drew my attention to this particular morsel in the moving multitude. Ignoring the open gateway, Carrie climbed to the central horizontal bar in the substantial barricade; then, heading into a breach in the lattice panel, she wriggled her little fat body through the scanty aperture, and expertly emerged, upside down, on the deck. I followed that thoughtful three-year-old up the companion; for when seasick mothers lie about a ship in limp clusters, it

behoves the stranger to keep an eye on straying children.

Having tested the capacity of crane gear to serve as a trapeze, Carrie toddled across to a sailor with black ringlets and a broom. Her opening remarks were unheeded by the busy mariner, whose attention was, however, engaged when, on looking down, he found the offended young lady bellowing at his feet. Such was the beginning of a friendship which developed into constant companionship, attended by little acts of gallantry. One morning, when he thought no one was looking, I saw him give her a sugared biscuit.

Grandma, proud of her own immunity from sea-sickness on that her maiden voyage, agreed it was only anybody's duty to look after the children when their mother, poor dear, couldn't do a thing for herself, leave alone them. In her battered bonnet and old brown shawl, Grandma was not much to look at, but the hours of rapt attention she bestowed on the Atlantic Ocean, what time she stood against the starboard bulwarks, impelled me to make her acquaintance. All in a flutter on being roused from her reverie, she soon gave me

the leading facts about her son George. As a baker's assistant in London, things did not go well with him, but he was now doing nicely in Canada—so nicely, indeed, that, not content with sending for his wife and child, he had insisted that his old mother must also come out to him. "Did ever you hear the like?" was all she thought about it at first; but George persisted, and sent the money for her passage, so at last she made up her mind to go. For the rest, I gathered that cronies and neighbours had assembled in force to give Granny a fitting send-off; for it does not happen every day in her part of Poplar that an old soul sets forth alone to traverse the high seas.

Granny, of course, represented a minority. The majority was typified by the young mother from North London, who, when I saw her standing in the crowded saloon, was trying to fill up her identification card while she battled against sea-sickness, nursed her baby, and strove to comfort the weeping child who clung to her skirts. But now there were smiles on the young wife's face, and I knew she was counting the hours that divided her from a prosperous young farmer husband who, when

last she saw him, was an out-of-work 'bus conductor of Camden Town.

One afternoon, when some hundreds of us basked on deck in the sunshine, the young wife was comparing notes with an older mother in a tailor-made dress—a benignant woman who sat in the midst of her possessions, which included five bright-looking boys, a yellow cat, and a teapot.

There were many lusty children in the cabins near ours, and I often overheard their mothers talking of the homes of penury they had left behind, and of the homes of hope they were going to. Indeed, the Old Country did not figure to advantage in the general run of conversation, though, of course, it would never have done for our Manchester friend to give us "Home, Sweet Home." Nor was he likely to make that mistake with his concertina, since he was among the unseasonable emigrants who, thus late in the year, were going out with no plans more settled than, by taking such chances as offered, to make homes for the families they had left behind. Unseasonable emigrants I call them because this was the month of August, and a better time for their arrival would be the spring and early summer, when

farm lands of Central Canada offer all comers an unbroken spell of eight months' work.

Tortured by the memory of tear-stained faces, such men are the heroes of the steerage. And the young mothers are the heroines.

"Ah! This is all fine material—very fine material," was the complacent exclamation of Mr. W. D. Scott, Canada's Superintendent of Immigration, who happened to be on board. The wave of his hand embraced the steerage generally, but his eye rested, I thought, with special favour on the boys playing leapfrog, and the girls who were skipping. We had other distinguished visitors from the first class, including an active, elderly gentleman in a dove-coloured wide-awake. Having cross-examined several of us, he delivered an enthusiastic address, summing up our prospects favourably, and returning an emphatic verdict in favour of Canada;—every one being delighted to learn that the speaker was Mr. Justice Grantham.

After our day of sports, the dolls, bears, pipes, and other prizes were delivered by the Bishop of London, his lordship being accompanied by a dainty little dot of a girl who, standing

over the hatchway of the hold, gazed with wondering, kind eyes at all the rough men before her. Archbishop Bourne was another welcome immigrant from the West End of the *Empress of Britain*.

Having looked our last at the porpoises and the spouting whales, we passed into the great St. Lawrence, and presently witnessed a transition from the glorious blue sky of Canada to a downpour of rain that was pathetically suggestive of England.

Vaccination claimed a large slice of the following day. After our women and children had been massed in the saloon, we men were marshalled in single file before the ship's doctor. Most of us—those, that is, upon whom the rite had at some time been performed—doffed our coats, rolled up our sleeves, and received cards imprinted with the word "Protected," science making its incisions on the reluctant residue.

Next morning our painstaking medical man again reviewed us one by one, the protracted business being an outcome of the discovery, among the second-class passengers, of a case of chicken-pox. All of us proving innocent of contagious disease, the patient was sent off

in the pilot boat, and down came the yellow flag.

Thus when at last we arrived at our moorings, and Quebec figured through the port-holes as a blurred nocturne in grey, we of the steerage were not untrained in the art of patiently enduring long delays. This was just as well, for, huddled together in a chaos of luggage, we were required to tarry on board until the immense cargo of mails had been discharged—an operation that occupied hours. And when at last we crossed the gangway, it was to exchange one prison for another.

Not that the great Immigration Hall looked like a prison. With its shops, tea-room, information bureau, and labour exchanges, the place was one in which my brother and I at first lingered willingly, and, as we thought, voluntarily. But the Immigration Hall lost its charm upon the discovery that we could not get out of it. An hour went by ere we joined the dense waiting throng at the end of the building—a throng that melted by degrees as, with the occasional opening of a gate, batches of our party were received within a railed enclosure. Another hour went by before our turn came to enter.

The rest was a matter of comparatively quick routine. Being instructed to remove our hats and proceed down an indicated corridor, we were scrutinised and interrogated by four officials. One was anxious about our eyes. Another was bent on seeing our tickets. The third wished to learn what money we carried, where we were going, and how we proposed to gain a living. But the fourth handed us tickets to stick in our hats, in proof that, since we answered all conditions a cautious Government required in its future citizens, we were free to go whithersoever we listed in the great and growing Dominion of Canada.



"OPEN DOORS GAVE US GLIMPSES OF DOMESTIC SERENITY" (PAGE 34).
A LIVING-ROOM IN THE GOVERNMENT'S FREE HOTEL FOR IMMIGRANTS AT WINNIPEG.



CHAPTER II

BY TRAIN TO WINNIPEG

A street on wheels—Glimpses of French Canada—A good use for tree-stumps—Wistful immigrants—Meals in the restaurant-car—Sleeping in the Pullman—Cheaper opportunities tested—Feeding against time—Facilities of the tourist-cars—Trying to sleep in a sitting posture—Sharing the immigrants' quarters—Ingenious and excellent berths—Using one's boots as a pillow—A cooking stove free to all—Handicapped travellers—Why Salvation Army immigrants enjoy the journey—Through smiling Southern Ontario—Restless breadwinners—A beautiful rocky wilderness—Sunset on Lake Superior—Amid flowers and woodlands—Winnipeg's free hotel—At the inquiry office—200,000 homesteads to choose from—The demand for farm hands—Free board and lodging with substantial wages—Married couples in great demand—Work and good pay for everybody—Our sojourn at the Immigration Hall—What I did and saw in the kitchen.

THE Canadian train, after those of England, is more like a street—if you can imagine a street

gliding through delightful scenery at thirty-five miles an hour. Going for a walk, you get refreshing gusts of air in open corridors between the houses ; and during your explorations, besides passing through drawing-rooms, parlours, and lounges—each with its cluster of animated travellers—you will see kitchens and sculleries ; a stately dining-hall shimmering with silver, flowers, and glass ; a stall for the sale of pea-nuts, candy, chewing gum, and other things one can do without ; a post-office half full of bulging mail-bags ; and, perhaps, a barber's shop.

Glimpses of Canada, gained through the windows, please and surprise by their homely, pastoral character. One sees fields of golden grain, cows browsing on rich pasture, rivers sparkling in dainty woodlands, and farm homes embowered by fruit-trees and flowers. And all that landscape is alight with glorious sunshine.

A novelty to English eyes, and an evidence of thrifty ingenuity, is the form of barrier erected to divide field from field, and keep cattle within bounds. Great tree stumps and roots had to be torn from the soil ere the farmer could till it, and these black relics of

deforestation have been intertwined as effective barricades and boundary lines.

The train pauses at strange little towns where people talk French and smile.

We in the colonist-cars are a solemn, white-faced crowd, speaking several tongues; the seats a jumble of women, canvas-covered bundles, and fretful children. It is, indeed, a pathetic picture—this throng of newly-arrived immigrants, many so uncouthly and inappropriately clad, and bearing marks of the poverty from which they have emerged. For them the past holds a painful memory of severed ties, and the future is a blank. With the old life ended and the new life not yet begun, they are suspended in a void of destiny; and it humbles a man to know he has no home or status on the earth.

A railway journey in vast Canada is apt to be a protracted affair, embracing several dawns and sunsets; and thus one has to eat and sleep on the train. There are several ways of doing both, and, during my three months' stay in the Dominion, I tried nearly all of them.

The restaurant car is a marvel of travelling luxury. It has left me with fragrant memories

of roast turkey, chicken salad, and excellent coffee ; the unseen chef a paragon, the visible stewards scarcely less smart than naval officers. Then there is the Pullman car, of which I retain grateful impressions of a soft carpet under foot, a handsome curtain to ensure privacy, and a soft and springy bed furnished with the whitest of sheets and the warmest of blankets. On emerging in the morning from your cosy quarters, you confront the friendly smile and dapper grey uniform of the negro attendant, who has already blackened your boots, and is eager to brush your clothes. Indeed, against the restaurant and Pullman cars only one criticism can justly be levelled : the majority of mankind cannot afford to purchase sleep and food at the rates that rule in those parts of the train.

If you are clever at timetables, you may detect a tiny dagger against the names of certain stations that occur about four hours apart. At those stations the train lingers for ten minutes—in some few cases for twenty—to give passengers an opportunity to alight and nourish their bodies. I took part in some spirited competitive scrambles. As the train approached the station, old stagers would be

already on the footplate, poised ready to spring; and that gave them the advantage of several seconds' start. I am not a good runner, and—in my first experience of this sort of thing—the refreshment-room counter was crowded before I reached it. The equivalent of five-pence seemed a good deal for a cup of third-rate tea; but there was no time for moralising over the different value of commodities in different countries. I grabbed a small meat pie, another ten-cent piece being thereupon demanded. After that—for one had to take what one could get—I found myself hastily devouring a sweet cake; which brought my purchases to a total of thirty cents, or 1s. 3d. Before I had finished the cake, several passengers were hurrying to the door, and their nervousness proved contagious. No one likes to be left behind; and, as a matter of fact, I was re-seated in the train several minutes before it started.

Alighting for a twenty minutes' stop, some dozen of us set off at top speed across railway sidings and a stretch of waste land, down a stony embankment, over a barbed-wire fence, and up a grassy slope, so arriving at the restaurant where a man stood loudly ringing

a bell. A knowledge of Chinese would have served me in that crisis. I understood the Oriental waiter to say that a dish of steak and fried potatoes was actually ready. He must have meant to explain that it would be ready when it was cooked. By the time that meal was served, I was anxiously wondering whether my watch or the restaurant clock was the more reliable. To be on the safe side, I returned when others returned, though, as it proved, prematurely.

The advantage I derived from this repast, and from others swallowed under similar circumstances, was out of proportion to the cost. As for the briefer opportunities one enjoyed at refreshment counters, I gained some financial advantage by acting on the friendly wrinkle of a fellow-passenger. Instead of paying separately for each article of food, national custom allows you, on depositing a comprehensive fee of 25 cents (approximately a shilling in our currency), to eat and drink all you want, or rather, all you can get.

However, experience convinced me that the lightning method of feeding, besides being generally unsatisfactory, is open to the crucial objection of inducing indigestion.

One night I secured, for a dollar and a half, a berth in a tourist-car, where one sleeps under conditions as comfortable, if not quite so luxurious, as those that obtain in the Pullman. On another occasion I had some broken rest in company with the numerous first-class passengers who, indisposed to pay for a bed, pass the night in their handsomely upholstered seats. Unless you are a child under four feet in height, with a mother to swathe your recumbent form in a nice warm shawl, that sort of thing does not do. I wooed slumber in many attitudes, but achieved little beyond a cricked neck.

The immigrants are much better off, as I found on sharing their accommodation. In a Canadian train the seats are set at right angles to a central avenue, and they are so arranged that one pair of passengers sits facing another pair. At night a transformation takes place, sliding woodwork being drawn forward to bridge the space hitherto occupied by human knees. Seats for four thus become a couch for two. Nor are the other two passengers eliminated from the scheme of comfort. Overhead a great hinged panel has been shut back against the side of the car, and this is now

pulled down to form a shelf of similar size to the couch beneath it. The other two passengers climb into that second berth, where they can lie at full length—a necessary condition of easy repose. True, those wooden beds are hard, but one soon gets accustomed to that. I used my overcoat as a covering and my boots as a pillow; though the latter temporary expedient (adopted in imitation of a fellow-traveller whose head, apparently, was made of sterner stuff than mine) did not prove to my liking. For the rest, I slept like a top, and without rolling out of the upper berth I monopolised.

The unbroken journey from Quebec to Winnipeg involves only three nights in the train; and for those three nights, as we have seen, repose is ensured to the immigrants. But low fares and free sleeping facilities are not the only boons vouchsafed to them. Each colonist-car contains a kitchen range, with a quantity of fuel; the privilege of boiling water and cooking food, together with the responsibility for keeping in the fire, being common to all the passengers. And since, in these cars as in others, there are lavatory basins furnished with soap and towels, and a separate

supply of iced drinking water, the domestic interests of new-comers are, it would appear, studied to an extent that leaves railway enterprise no further scope for its ingenuity.

But schemes of public service are apt to require, on the part of the individuals, some measure of co-operation. I saw numbers of immigrants debarred from boiling a kettle only because they had no kettle to boil. The same remark applies to tins of pork and beans. Heated on a stove, they make an excellent meal; but the fire burns in vain if you have missed your opportunities to lay in such provisions. And for most immigrants those opportunities will have been fleeting, not to mention the difficulty of shopping under strange conditions and in an unfamiliar currency. All was well with those who, having had good advice to act upon, were provided with hampers of food and the necessary cooking utensils. But their ill-equipped companions were undergoing experiences which would doubtless affect them, for many a long year, with ugly memories of that first journey in Canada.

When travelling in a strange land, it is wise to have the aid of persons familiar with its

conditions. I was destined, during my investigations in Canada, to speak with many persons who had recently settled in the country, and I found that the railway journey had been to some an ordeal, to others a delight. But whereas the former had travelled on an independent footing, the latter had shared the benefits of co-operative organisation; and none testified more enthusiastically to the pleasures of the trip than those who had booked through the Salvation Army.

The second day on the train finds one in Southern Ontario—a region of pleasant farmyards, with apple-trees and hay-stacks and strutting fowls. Gazing at those pretty scenes, the immigrants forget their vague anxieties. Several times I saw the breadwinner rise from his seat and stride to the end of the car, to have a more intimate view of the outer world. In the aspect of the country, as I inferred, he read the confirmation of his hopes, while subsequent restless pacing seemed to mirror an impatience to begin work in the land of promise.

One sort of landscape gave place in time to another. Soon the train was racing, hour after hour, through an unpopulated country of

rock—of rock exposed in a wild disarray of cliffs, boulders, and splintered stone—a beautiful, undulating higgledy-piggledy of rocks, rocks, nothing but rocks. They have veins of delicate hues, in key with the tender tints of mosses growing on their sheltered surfaces. Yet larger vegetation was not held entirely at bay. Here and there a young fir-tree was dispensing with soil in compliment to the climate.

Presently on our left we saw Lake Superior, first in an environment of mauve mountains, then as a green expanse ending against the sky. Cumulus clouds, glowing high overhead, shed purple shadows on that inland sea. At a new angle the unscreened sun hung low in the heavens, enriching the water with an avenue of silver dazzle. We caught sight of sunny little coast-towns nestling in the bays. The sun set in a belt of gold that melted into the soft colours of a dove's wing. And now the water was blue, save where it tumbled in white breakers on the clean shingle shore.

Tree-tops figured as inky shapes against a cold grey sky, and already lake beacons were showing their warm points of warning, when the lamps were lighted in the colonist-cars and

mothers prepared to put little immigrants to bed.

Dawn found us running through fairy woodlands that were carpeted with flowers—the tent caterpillars marking the landscape with their drapery of gossamer, which clung like wreaths of smoke to many a tree. Later the train sped along the margin of lakes that were small only in comparison with the unbroken horizon of water we had seen overnight.

Ontario gave place to Manitoba ; there were preliminary glimpses of the wonderful prairie ; and so we arrived at Winnipeg.

In that city of noble thoroughfares and stately buildings, with its population of 135,000 persons, my brother and I stayed at two hotels—one in which we were accommodated for a dollar and a half a day, another in which no charge was made.

The Immigration Hall at Winnipeg astonished and delighted us. I have never seen a more striking illustration of paternal government at work. In that institution Canada offers a hearty, hospitable welcome to its new citizens.

Incidentally, as I have hinted, the Immigration Hall is a free hotel. But it is much more than that. For whoever heard of a hotel

which, in addition to providing for your temporary needs, will put you in the way of an income and a career?

On the ground floor is a spacious apartment containing maps, samples of grain, stupendous ledgers, and a staff of obliging officials. I mingled with the immigrants at the counter, and gained some insight into their affairs.

Several were endeavouring to make their selection from a list of over 200,000 free homesteads. One wished to be sure that his 160 acres would be near a school. Another seemed uncertain whether he would like his half square mile to include three lakes or only two. A third was anxious to hit upon a quarter-section that should contain only just as much timber as he thought he should need. Others desired to locate themselves in specific districts where they had friends.

But the majority of applicants sought, not land, but employment. A stolid-looking fellow, having explained that he had tended sheep on the Sussex Downs, asked as to his chance of obtaining steady employment. I forget how many thousand Canadian farmers—according to the official's way of putting it—were eager

to engage that stolid-looking fellow at £7 a month, plus free board and lodging. This satisfactory information was, however, accompanied by one qualification. The engagement would probably be for only eight months, since farmers were indisposed to pay a hired man during the period when, because the land was frost-bound, there was nothing for him to do. Should satisfactory service have been rendered, however, there was, it seemed, a probability that the free board and lodging would be continued during the cold months. "But before that time comes," the official added, "you ought to have saved quite a bit of money. You've brought out some clothes, I suppose? That's right, then you won't have to buy anything except tobacco—and that's cheap enough in this country—and perhaps a sheep-skin coat for the winter."

I was even more interested in a couple of middle-aged men who arrived together—one explaining that, after being in the building line all his life, he meant to take up farm work; the other announcing the same intention, and mentioning that he at least knew something about horses, having been a cab-driver for ten years. Both were assured of immediate em-

ployment on a farm—the former being told that, until he learnt his new duties, £2 a month was all he must expect, while the latter was encouraged to look for a commencing salary of £3 a month, the employer in both cases also supplying food and a home.

The immigrants were not demonstrative. They spoke with a sort of anxious politeness, but in their subdued voices there rang, I thought, a grateful and contented note. Before crossing the seas they must, no doubt, have given credence to the statement that out in distant Canada they would find ample openings for their industry and enterprise. But the human mind is prone to pleasant thrills when an abstract belief is confirmed by concrete knowledge; and what these new-comers now heard, coming on the top of what they had recently seen, may well have revealed the actual Canada as even more favourable to their hopes than the Canada they had anticipated.

The applicants who fared best at the counter, as it seemed to me, were an agricultural labourer and his wife. They expressed their readiness to take a joint engagement on a farm—she in domestic service, he on the land. It was explained that they could be immediately

suited with a situation in which, on a full twelve months' basis, they would have their own quarters, with all the cost of living defrayed for them, and the opportunity to save from £50 to £80 per annum out of their wages. Making my own inquiries, I learnt that the Government authorities, there and at other Western centres, were in a chronic condition of having several thousand more applications for farm labour than they were able to satisfy. In particular the demand for married couples was ludicrously in excess of the supply. The possession of young children, it seemed, while not a recommendation, was by no means a disqualification for employment.

A percentage of the immigrants were indisposed for farm work. General labourers were told of the constant and growing demand for men on railway construction throughout Western Canada. Then, it seemed, there were builders, engineers, painters and others who were bent on working at their trades; and for these also the Immigration Hall had no difficulty in finding satisfactory opportunities.

"You arrived last Wednesday!" I overheard an official say to one immigrant; "then where are you and your family stopping?"

“At ——’s Hotel,” was the reply, “and it’s pretty expensive for so many. That’s one reason why I’m anxious to get work as soon as possible.” “But why don’t you come here?” “Come here?” echoed the astonished visitor; and explanations proved necessary. Then away he joyfully hurried to fetch his family and belongings.

I was destined to meet, in the streets of Winnipeg, other new-comers who, little dreaming of the opportunities afforded by the Immigration Hall, had deliberately held aloof from it. After undergoing compulsory detention, and a searching inquisition, in the Immigration Hall at Quebec, they were indisposed to visit another institution of the same name.

There certainly seems room for descriptive variety in the nomenclature of these Government institutions. At the port of landing, where the detection of undesirables necessarily involves a rigorous routine, some such name as “Immigrants’ Investigation Hall” would apply. But the remarkable institution at Winnipeg deserves to have its value advertised as, say, “Immigrants’ Free Lodging House and Information Bureau.”

Arriving with our luggage, my brother and

I rendered assistance in conveying it downstairs to the baggage-room—a spacious apartment where hundreds of trunks and boxes were stored. It was explained that many departing immigrants found it convenient to leave some of their effects behind them, the Government making no charge for safeguarding such property and for afterwards forwarding it to the notified address. Then we were taken up in a lift to the second story, and ushered to our room, which proved large, light, lofty, and scrupulously clean.

It was furnished with a writing-table, two chairs, and a broom, in addition to certain strange iron mechanism clinging against the walls. The attendant showed us how, on the release of a clutch, each apparatus unfolded as a pair of bunks; whereupon we appreciated the forethought which had so equipped an apartment that, when serving as a parlour by day, it was redeemed from the aspect it wore as a bedroom by night. Blankets were neatly folded on the flock mattress that reposed upon springs.

Exploring the corridor, we found our way to lavatories and bathrooms that shone with cleanliness. Open doorways gave us glimpses



A GROUP OF BUSTLING HOUSEWIVES. (PAGE 15) THE KITCHEN OF THE WINNIPEG IMMIGRANT HALL

of domestic serenity—women busy with their needles, men writing letters or reading, the little ones at play on the floor.

While making us free of all the amenities of a home, the Government of Canada imposed a wise limit to its hospitality. It was concerned to foster self-reliance, and to discourage a slothful spirit, in its guests. The presence of that broom in our room was a hint that we were expected to keep the floor tidy. Then, too, we all had to cater for ourselves. My brother did the shopping, and I undertook the cooking. It was a new experience to find myself in a large kitchen as the only man among a group of bustling housewives. One was dissecting a rabbit, another was slicing the component parts of a stew, a third was rolling pastry. My own humble endeavours were directed to boiling a kettle of water and making a pot of tea—a task in which those ladies afforded me the assistance of their larger experience. Later, on returning to the kitchen, I deposited our tea-leaves in the receptacle for refuse, and washed up the utensils we had used.

I went downstairs to the well-equipped laundry and drying-room, where a number of

women immigrants, up to their elbows in lather, were rejoicing in the opportunity of getting a lot of washing done at nothing but the cost of the soap. Being wholly untrained in the dexterities of the washtub, I abstained from affording those experts a spectacle of masculine ineptitude.

I have often stayed in hotels of greater luxury and magnificence, but never in a cleaner or more interesting one. Its conditions suggest a middle-class home run on communistic lines.

CHAPTER III

WHEAT AND WEALTH

Jobs I was offered—Labour conditions reversed; the supplicant employer—Monte Cristos of Manitoba—In the Dauphin Valley—Beauties of the landscape—Society on the prairie—The ubiquitous telephone—Rich black soil—Quick methods of amassing fortunes—Typical experiences of Donald—Why Canadian farming pays—Its simple methods explained—How to gain capital and experience—Wealthy men in shabby clothes—From penniless immigrant to prosperous farmer—Initial years of toil and stress—The price of horses, oxen, and cows—Necessary machines, and what they cost—Crops and their value—Free homesteads *v.* cultivated land—A warning to the immigrant with capital—The story of Anthony—Old King Cole.

“LOOKING for a jarb?” shouted the bronzed man in the blue shirt and great floppy wide-awake; and, as the buggy drew up, I noticed that the woman’s face reflected her husband’s eagerness. Of course the people of Canada

are accustomed to good fortune, abundant and continuous ; but that optimistic couple were, I thought, rather presuming on the indulgence of Providence when, catching sight of my squatting figure by the roadside, they dared to hope that, incidental to a drive into town for groceries, they had happened upon the valuable and precious thing—Labour.

I was not looking for a job. I was not prepared to ride off with those good folk to their quarter-section, and lend a hand with their harvest and horses, with their cows and poultry, for ten or twelve shillings a day and all found. A curt "No" would have been in accordance, I think, with Canadian usage. But my negative reply was softened with polite expressions of regret. The fact is, I had not yet adapted myself to a remarkable environment, and offers of employment continued to flatter my self-esteem. I was still far from that state of independence which enables a man to tell his master exactly what he thinks of him, and which prompts a hotel waitress, in passing from the dining-room, to kick open the door with her well-shod foot.

Social conditions in Canada are, in truth, a delightful burlesque of those in England.

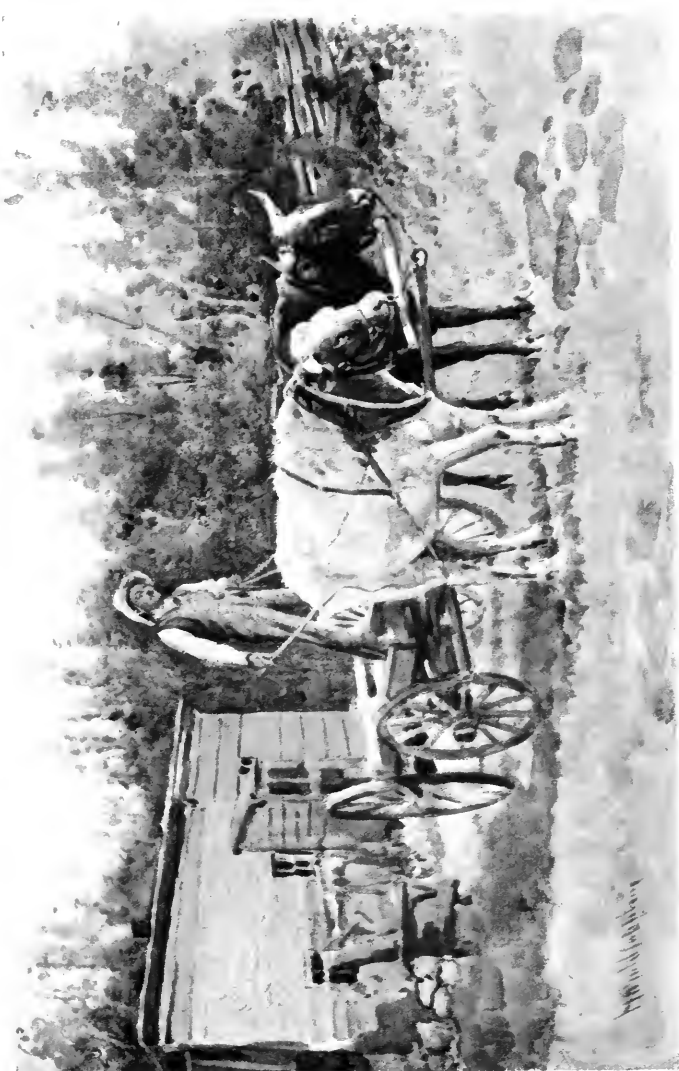
In my native land one has to plead and wait and scheme for opportunities to earn small wages. But I had not been an hour on Canadian soil before there came a tempting financial offer for my services as a house decorator. And this was but the first of many unsought opportunities to engage in remunerative toil. True, no one stopped me in the street and offered to hire me as a journalist or author; but at any moment I could have got my three dollars a day if only, in response to eager solicitation, I would turn over a new leaf and become a railroad navvy or farm hand.

As a matter of fact—though I did not delay the buggy for prolonged explanations—I already had a job. Nay, I was hard at work when that settler and his wife found me, alone and still, seated on a recumbent telephone pole with my hands in my trouser pockets, a writing pad lying at my feet. The business on hand was to think out a way of setting forth a simple matter concerning black soil and bright gold.

Perhaps I may best commence my modern story of Monte Cristo by saying what the landscape looked like. The road was an ebony

streak, and elsewhere the eye roamed over a sea of growing, glowing grain. And note that, though this part of the Dauphin Valley was a dead level, I could see eight human homes, each upon its own quarter-section, which, as I have already hinted, is an exact square, measuring half a mile on every side, and embracing one hundred and sixty acres. But the view was not an unbroken monotony of golden crops. White poplars and luxuriant undergrowth formed the near horizon beyond four quarter-sections on my right. Maple saplings and willow formed the nearer horizon across two quarter-sections on my left. And those verdant lines, as earlier exploration had taught me, marked the course of shallow rivers that wound, full of fishes, through fairy glens where hedges were on fire with clusters of cranberries.

But I want to insist on those eight visible dwellings, which so eloquently contradicted the general belief that farm life in Canada is lonely. To live within sight of seven neighbours is no very irksome state of isolation. Moreover, other conditions make for sociability on the prairies of Manitoba. Black roads bordering the sections extend like a net all over the



A BACHELOR'S SHACK AND HIS TEAM OF OXEN

1890

country—arched tracks of uncured earth, drained by ploughed ditches ; and since every settler has his broad-axled rig and team of trotting ponies, mileage out there has not much significance. Within sight as I sat writing were two buggies and one swift democrat, not to forget a picturesque wagon drawn by a pair of oxen. Then there was that useful institution which, expensive and occasional in rural districts of old England, is cheap and ubiquitous in settled areas of young Canada. The decision to instal the telephone throughout those cultivated prairies was a stroke of inspired statesmanship. One day I drove fifteen miles from the town of Dauphin, and only towards the end of that journey, where much of the land was still unbroken, did I find poles without wires—an omission that was being remedied by operators encamped in tents by the roadside. A comprehensive subscription of £4 a year enables the settler, without leaving home, to order provisions from town, summon the doctor when baby is ill, and chat at large with his neighbours.

My friend Donald, of those parts, maintains that the black ground is a black clay. I took a spade and had a dig at it, seeking evidence

in support of my rival theory that centuries of vegetable and animal decay, assisted in recent decades by prairie fires, have accumulated that deposit of rich soil. Nine inches down in that treasury of nitrogen, phosphates, and potash, rendered friable by an admixture of sand, I found the crumbling form of a prehistoric tree branch that now was nothing but humus. Whatever the precise truth of the matter, however, it is a fact that, because of this black soil, Donald is now worth over a hundred thousand dollars, or, as we should say, £20,000. And Donald arrived in the district ten years ago with nothing but a gold watch, a young family, and a Scotchman's determination.

He drove me to several of his quarter-sections, and I probed the secrets of his prosperity.

Canadian wheat farming is British farming simplified. There is no landlord to exact an increasing rent, no Church to insist on its tithe, no arduous distribution of farmyard manure and costly artificials, and no warring against persistent weeds. Though an occasional extra hand is convenient and usual, one man can farm a quarter-section.

Ploughing is the long job, and, first and last, it may occupy a month. "But," as Donald remarked, "a man must be doing something, and driving a team to and fro is not a bad way of passing the time." Whereupon he showed me one of his two-furrow ploughs, with its comfortable seat for the driver. There are three remaining processes—harrowing, seeding, and reaping—and each can be accomplished at the pace of twenty-five acres a day. As for the threshing, our farmer is only a looker-on when the machine is doing that, the charge being 3d. a bushel. Nothing then remains but for him to drive his wagon-loads of wheat to the nearest elevator, where he will receive prompt payment at the rate of about 90 cents per bushel. As the Dauphin Valley average is 25 bushels per acre, it is a mere matter of arithmetic that, where 80 acres are under cultivation and all goes well, the crop fetches £360—a satisfactory return from a freehold that may have cost anything from £2 to £800. And note that this figure takes no account of the yield from cows, poultry, and other live stock reared, practically without cost, on the pasture acreage.

Nor have I digressed from the story of Donald. It is wrapped up in that other story of the men who farm their own quarter-sections. But I began this last story at the second chapter.

In the beginning, lacking money and knowledge, the immigrant must hire himself to an established settler. Donald has a quick eye for promising new-comers, whom he plants on his quarter-sections with ample free food for the family, and an annual wage of 300 dollars, which the thrifty can save intact. He assists them through the novice stage by personal guidance and example; and the telephone is available for daily directions. After a year, or perhaps two, the farm hand has enough experience and capital to make a beginning on his own land.

Meanwhile Donald has been reaping many harvests, and as he fills in odd moments by selling land, buying horses, and running a store, his wealth surprises nobody. Moreover, he is surrounded by equally prosperous neighbours, who wear slouch hats and shabby overalls, looking to English eyes like men open to earn twopence by holding a horse. That is the way of things out in the West. So far

as dress has any significance, the sartorial clues have a reversed significance. The unshaven man with no collar and a patch on his trousers is pretty sure to count his fortune in six figures.

It was a fascinating theme—the automatic transformation of penniless immigrants into prosperous farmers; and I encouraged Donald to go into details.

“Let us,” I said, “take the case of a man who, having worked two seasons for you, has saved £100. Could he take up a homestead?”

“Sure,” replied Donald, “if he is steady and a good worker. We are all ready to give that sort a little help—yes, and credit, too. All he would have to buy at first would be three oxen, costing about £50, a plough (£15) and a disc harrow (£7). He could, if he liked, pay by instalments for the plough and harrow, and later on for fencing wire. Of course he would build his own shack and stable, the only expense being a pound or so for tools and nails and getting the timber sawn. Then there is the cost of living. They mostly find it worth while to get a few fowls and a cow. You can buy a fine three-year cow, after her first calf,

for £5 or £6—in fact, the poorest people about here keep three or four cows. It means a lot of hard work to break the land, and three months' residence on the quarter-section is, of course, compulsory. But the right sort of man would still find time to work for his neighbours and earn a bit of money that way."

"What would he have to buy in the second year?" I asked.

"The chief thing would be seed. For he could make do with his oxen for ploughing. If he worked hard the first year, he ought to have forty acres ready. He must make his first payment for a seeder, which costs £16. Sowing is done from the 15th to the 30th of April—sometimes you can go into May. By the middle of August he must get a binder (£30); and his first crop ought to be a thousand bushels, which would bring him in £160, less £12 for threshing. Meanwhile he will have been breaking more land, to be ready for a larger acreage in the third year. So now he must sell his oxen, which will be too slow for the ground he has to cover; and when the weather opens he must buy three horses. They will cost about £90; but it's no use shirking that expense—you must have

proper power. He has got to get through somehow until harvest, when he will receive about £300. From that time, you may say, he has turned the corner, for the debts on machinery will soon be paid off, and every year will see an increase in his acreage and live stock. Once he has got his quarter-section fairly going—well, he can buy more land, start a business, and go ahead as much as he likes, the same as anybody else.”

“And his homestead will have acquired a substantial value?” I suggested.

“It will be worth,” Donald explained, “anything from £800 upwards, according to the sort of house on it. And do you know,” he added, “that an unbroken quarter-section which costs nothing is a much dearer investment than a quarter-section under cultivation that costs £800? In the one case you have to face the early years of development, the terrible hard work, and the small returns; in the other case you get full harvests from the start—I have even known the first year’s crop to cover the total cost of the land. My advice even to the man who arrives with only a few hundred pounds is—buy; don’t take up a free homestead.”

“ But,” I objected, “ a few hundred pounds won't buy a property worth £800.”

“ Yes, it will,” contradicted Donald. “ The bulk of the purchase-money can stand over for payment by annual instalments. But,” he added, “ the man who comes with capital, be it much or little, is at one serious disadvantage compared with the man who arrives with nothing. He is almost sure to start farming before he understands Canadian methods, with the result that he frequently buys his experience rather dearly. The ideal thing is for a man to arrive with capital, but to put it away in the bank, forget he has it, and hire himself out for a season. That will give him the necessary knowledge for afterwards turning his capital to the best account. Again and again I have urged people to do that—but it is no good; in nearly every instance they will go their own way.”

The case of Anthony, who also drove me out to his properties, is much like the case of Donald, save that Anthony, being a Galician, employs Galician immigrants on his quarter-sections. Nor, to judge by what I saw, could a man desire more industrious, capable, and picturesque assistants.



“NOTHING THEN REMAINS BUT FOR HIM TO DRIVE HIS WAGON-LOADS OF WHEAT TO THE NEAREST ELEVATOR” (PAGE 43). THESE USEFUL, IF UNPICTURESQUE, STRUCTURES ARE CONSPICUOUS LAND-MARKS IN ALL SETTLED DISTRICTS OF THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES.

Anthony's fellow-countrymen arrive, as he arrived, poor. After a few years of patient, persistent toil, they become, as he has become, rich. It does not surprise me that in the town of Dauphin there are three banks to one grocery store.

I find one fault with the Canadian careers of Donald and Anthony. Having amassed so much substance, they should, it seems to me, give themselves a little leisure to enjoy it. But I fear they are so enslaved by the idea of becoming richer and still richer that they will persist in that pursuit to the end.

Of another philosophy is a fine old English gentleman who owns two adjoining quarter-sections in that district. He has a large, well-appointed house, and his abundant crops, produced by a succession of salaried workers, yield the means to maintain his family in luxury. It is his gleeful boast that, while enjoying all the good things of this life, he never does a stroke of work. His answer to all criticism is a great jolly laugh that echoes across the prairie. They call him Old King Cole.

CHAPTER IV

BARNARDO BOYS AND A BARONET'S SON

The titled lady, her son and the pig-sty—Music and literature on the prairie—A garden of perfumed prettiness—Jim recalls his past—Petty larceny and the training-ship—Assaulting a bully at sea—Homeless in London—A visit to Stepney Causeway—Sent out to Canada—From farm boy to landowner—The fruits of seven years' toil—My visit to Mr. Green—A workhouse boy grown prosperous—Wheat on low land : expensive experience—A Barnardo couple—Their children and the skunk—A housewife's philosophy—How to live free of cost—The way to make fowls pay—Exchanging eggs and butter for groceries and clothes—Why the Fishers have no butcher's bill—Co-operative production and distribution : the working of a Beef Ring explained—The Canadian winter : its delights and drawbacks—Concerning frost-bites—Children on horseback—Loneliness and the telephone—The far-away poverty—"Tell them to come."

RUSSELL'S main streets are not æsthetic, the eye taking small delight in wooden sidewalks,

roadways of mud, and flat housefronts of painted timber or galvanised metal sheeting. But on the outskirts of this new little town I found a small mansion standing amid its lawns and cultivated trees. And this is the home of Burroughs—a fine fellow with a past.

We talked of Canada, he and I, as we walked in the glow of the sunset, which put a warm splendour on young maples already touched with autumn gold. We talked of Canada as the land of equal opportunities for all. We talked of Canada as the country where privilege has no foothold, and wealth is only to be won by work. And presently, Burroughs' voice sank to a deeper note as his thoughts stretched back over an interval of two-and-twenty years.

There was a wise English lady of title who was anxious about her son's future. So she took him from Eton and sent him to Canada. Of what befel that lad of nineteen, now the middle-aged father of a family, I had some particulars from his own lips.

“Until then,” Burroughs gravely recalled, “I had been surrounded by servants. I even had a man to fasten my cravat for me. So you can understand that Canadian life felt

strange at first. I was placed with a farmer who would stand no nonsense. My first job was to clean out a pig-sty that ought to have been cleaned out six months before. My mother allowed me a little pocket-money for a few weeks ; after that, I had to make do with my wages. Fortunately, the hard work gave me an appetite for the coarse food. Of an evening the farmer would lecture me on how to behave. His wife was much put out about my pyjamas. She said she wasn't going to wash things like that. But they were a good old couple, and I often go and see them now, for they are still alive."

Burroughs soon turned farmer on his own account, and did well ; and now he is a prosperous merchant.

On my second day, at Russell he took me for a ride on his motor-car, for he was bent on introducing me to his friend Jim Gray.

We had a fine spin across the beautiful prairie, where we startled gophers and wild-fowl amid the tangle of golden-rod and bronzed foliage, and where, in the cultivated areas, farmers were busy with their binders.

" And you are quite contented with your

life out here?" I found an opportunity to ask—our acquaintance having ripened to the stage that allows of the personal note. "You never pine for the amenities of city life? You do not repent your self-banishment from the social centre—from the wider opportunities of culture?"

Burroughs did not at once reply, and when he did so he spoke in measured accents, pondering his words.

"Indirectly you have touched upon a matter," he said, "that has been much in my thoughts. No; I can say quite honestly that, on my own behalf, I have no regrets. Quite the reverse. After all these years, I like it more and more. The country, the life, the freedom—I simply revel in it. It comes to me as a new wonder and a new delight every day. Look at that glorious stretch of land, look at that sky and those wild flowers. For you they are just something pleasant and passing that you will easily forget. For me—well, it is no exaggeration to say I feel I could not live without them. London figures in my mind as a great, ugly, smoky place where people are cramped and lead artificial lives—though, happily for them, they don't know it. And,

mind you, I am not speaking from old and worn-out memories. I was in London eight years ago, having to go to England on family business. But in spite of my own people being there, whom I was very pleased to see, I felt half suffocated mentally in London, and did not recover my spirits until I had escaped from it. And yet all the time I cannot forget that London represents, as you say, something in which we out here are lacking—I mean opportunities of culture.”

“ You do miss those, then? ” I asked.

“ Personally I don't, ” Burroughs made haste to reply. “ Nor does my wife, who is a native of Canada. But I have several children, some of whom are growing up, and I have sometimes felt a little uneasy on their behalf. The Canadian schools are really very good, but of course they don't give the same facilities and stimulus as an English college. Please understand I am not regretting what one may call the ‘ social polish ’ side of the thing. God forbid that my children should grow up with any sense of class distinctions ! But I should hate the idea of their missing the solid part of it—the developing of their minds and the widening of their general outlook.”



GRAY'S HOME.

"Culture can, after all, be imported," I suggested.

"Exactly," he eagerly agreed. "That thought is my consolation. I do all I can to encourage them in reading. They have plenty of good books; and I try to keep in touch with the best modern work and have it sent out. Then, too, being extremely fond of music myself, though unfortunately a very poor player, I have been able to stimulate their interest in that direction also. In other ways one does what one can, and on the whole I am satisfied that, for them as well as for my wife and myself, the balance of advantage is with the life out here."

And these things that Burroughs told me about himself assumed the greater interest when I had met the friend to whom he was conducting me.

Gray's home is only a shack, but his garden is a dream. Picture wide sheets of pansies and mignonette surrounded by begonias, cannas, and phlox, by pinks, salpiglossis, and stocks, with walls of sweet peas and sentinel hollyhocks of mauve and cream and yellow.

Wandering beyond that haze of perfumed

prettiness, I reviewed orderly regiments of onions, beet, and carrots, of potatoes, tomatoes, and turnips ; and I came presently to sprawling vines of pumpkin and cucumber, rows of well-hearted lettuce, and great firm cabbages that looked like curling stones. Also in that well-stocked garden were long lines of the notorious wonderberry fruiting profusely.

Mrs. Gray stood at the gate with her two sturdy children. But she told me that she was not the gardener. Jim, it seemed, found time to do all that. And Jim had built the shack, and the log stables, granary, and other out-houses—a cluster of buildings looking home-like and picturesque with their background of sheltering trees. Jim's fowls and pigs were in sight, and we had already seen Jim's ten horses. For they had been grazing beside the lovely lake that skirts Jim's land on the south. But where was Jim himself?

Burroughs supposed that we should find him cutting his wheat. But no—Mrs. Gray explained that Jim finished his stooking a fortnight before ; and now he was helping a neighbour.

On an adjoining quarter-section we found our man—a thick-set young Saxon with curly, yellow hair, a cheerful countenance, and

a courteous willingness to become autobiographical.

After his father was run over at Streatham, little Jim had some difficulty in getting food ; and he still thinks it was hard luck to be taken before a magistrate for picking up a few potatoes in a field. However, he rather enjoyed his two years on a training-ship, and he left the *Cornwall* with some thought of following the sea for a livelihood. But during his first voyage Jim was so continually ill-treated by the mate that, driven at last to make reprisal, he struck that bully with a piece of iron—a circumstance that led to both being discharged when the schooner returned into port. Jim then had another spell of the London streets, where he wandered homeless and hungry with a companion in misfortune. Having heard of Dr. Barnardo's Homes, they went there one evening to beg a night's lodging—a boon that was not denied. Next day Jim's pal enlisted as a soldier, and Jim himself, when night came on, returned to the haven at Stepney Causeway. There he stayed until sent with a party of lads to Canada.

Recalling these details of his pathetic past, Mr. Gray smiled down at us from his seat on

the binder, brought temporarily to a standstill on the margin of the harvest. Burroughs maliciously suggested that Gray would be fined for the time he was wasting. Gray, with a laughing glance over his shoulder, guessed the other binders were still half a mile behind him.

It was instructive to see Jim and Burroughs on terms of hearty friendship and social equality. For there are only two classes in Canada—the one class that embraces baronets' sons, Barnardo boys, and everybody else who works hard and "makes good" (to speak in the vernacular); and the other class that equally embraces everybody, whether born in the purple or in the slums, who shirks work.

Jim went on with his story. He worked on a Canadian farm for "all found," plus accumulating wages, which, until he came of age, were banked with the Barnardo organisation. Then he bought a partly cultivated quarter-section, utilising his capital on judicious lines advised by his former guardians: so much as first payment for the land, so much for oxen, implements and seed, and so much for maintenance until crops rewarded toil.

Seven years have passed by. Jim has now completed the purchase of his land, and has

already refused to sell it for £800. For ninety acres are now under cultivation—and a full equipment of buildings, with ample barbed wire fencing, enhance the value of a homestead. Meanwhile, Jim's crops have enabled him to pay for a binder, a seeder, harrows, ploughs, and other machinery, while the number of his live stock increases every year. So the boy who once stole potatoes is now worth over £1,000, and is living with his family in growing prosperity on his own extensive and beautiful freehold.

As we careered over the stubble at twelve miles an hour, I ventured the opinion that Jim was an exceptional man. But Burroughs laughed sagaciously, and suggested that, after returning to Russell for dinner, we should take the old Indian trail to the south, then strike west and overhaul Tom Green and George Fisher. All of which we did.

Green's shack has been replaced by a good house—to all appearance a roomy English villa, but made mainly of wood. We found Green stooking the last of his oats, and singing over their excellence.

Finding me inquisitive, he spoke with manly candour of his early days. A workhouse boy,

of Margate, he was transferred to the Barnardo Homes at a tender age. He does not know how old he is, and lacks all knowledge of his parentage. For the rest, his Canadian experiences have been Gray's in duplicate, even to the possession of a wife and two children. His land also is beautiful, prolific, and paid for, and he scorned my offer of £1,000 for the farm as a going concern.

"I must say," said that healthy, smiling young man, "I was given a good start. First they apprenticed me to a farmer, and after that I had a spell of work on the Barnardo Industrial Farm. Then one day Mr. Struthers sent for me and offered me this quarter-section at six dollars an acre, which was very cheap when you remember that quite a bit of the land was broken. I had got four hundred dollars saved, so I paid a hundred as an instalment on the land, and most of the other three hundred went towards implements. It was terrible uphill work at first, and I hadn't turned the corner in 1907—that awful year when everybody's wheat got frozen. But we're all right now, thank God, and if there comes another failure of crops, well, it won't matter much. I sent my last instalment for the land

three months ago, and before that I was clear with everybody else, and a nice sum put by in the bank. So now, as I've got this place in good order, I'm going to buy another quarter-section."

"Well," I could not forbear to remark, "if your new quarter is as beautiful as this one, you will indeed be a lucky man."

"Yes, isn't it fine!" exclaimed Green, as he gazed at his property with sparkling eyes.

It was gently undulating ground, giving the spectator a new vista at every turn, and with here and there a pretty little coppice—relics of the prairie left to supply timber and fuel.

"If you are interested in farming," he went on impetuously, "come along with me and I'll show you where I made a big mistake."

I hurried after that nimble-footed enthusiast; and we descended to a large stubble field that lay low.

"Early frost," he explained, "cut off the wheat here for several years running. I lost it all every time, and I could not understand the reason. Everywhere else the wheat got through, and graded splendidly. Then last year I tried oats here. A bumper crop! Of course I did the same this year, and with the same

result. It is quite a simple matter—wheat does best on the high ground; oats do best on the low ground. But, you see, I had to learn by experience, and pretty expensive experience, too! for I figured it out the other day that, if I'd known this wrinkle at the start, it would have made a difference to my savings of three thousand dollars."

Even if Green had never been a poor little workhouse boy, it would have done me good to hear him talk so airily of such a loss.

But it was our third visit that provided the most memorable revelation. Not only was Mr. Fisher a Barnardo boy, but—by a pretty coincidence—Mrs. Fisher was a Barnardo girl. They fell in love on meeting by chance in Canada.

Their five children were the most winsome little rogues I had seen since leaving England. No sooner was I seated in the cosy parlour than Eric and Daisy clambered to my lap, and with wide blue eyes told me about the naughty skunk that burrowed last Wednesday into their cupboard.

Mrs. Fisher insisted that we must stop to tea, and I never sat down to a finer banquet than that bountiful spread of salmon, new-laid

eggs, and cream, with choice butter, bread, cake, and preserves made by our gracious young hostess.

The land and all upon it, including that substantial eight-roomed house, belongs to George, who owes no man a cent. Nay, the revenue from his crops now goes almost intact to swell his banking account. For he is blessed with an efficient and painstaking helpmeet, and the surplus eggs and butter cover the cost of groceries and clothes.

“ So you see,” she explained, during our confidential chat, “ we live free of cost, and always have plenty of the best. Of course, it means a good deal of work, but I don't mind that, because it is all so interesting. I simply love looking after the fowls, and the dear things certainly do repay all the trouble you take over them. My birds always have their warm feed in the morning. That's very important. I wouldn't let them miss it if the weather was a hundred below zero. You'd be surprised how well they lay, and we get a good lot of eggs right through the winter. Of course I sell those, because they fetch such good prices. In the summer I always pickle enough to last us during the winter. Come and see.”

The pantry was indeed a picture. Large, airy, and spotlessly clean, it contained not only great earthenware pots in which eggs were preserved, but basins of cream, dishes of butter, two sides of bacon, and an immense reserve of home-made jam.

“Of course,” the vivacious young house-keeper rattled on, “in this country we are like the bees—we have to lay up stores for the winter. If you just arrange things carefully, nothing is a bother, and there is always plenty of everything. Some people tell me their fowls don’t pay. But can you wonder, when they just throw them a few handfuls of corn, and it’s nobody’s duty, to clean out the roosts? The woman ought to see to these things. Her husband has his crops and cattle to look after, and that’s quite enough for one person to do. Making butter and attending to the fowls are just as much a wife’s duty as looking after the children and keeping the house tidy. . . . We’ve just got a cream separator, and it’s a wonderful saving. . . . In this country a man has to work very hard, and he can’t get on properly unless his wife does her share.”

Knowing that provisions are expensive in central Canada, I was disposed to place a

liberal construction on Mrs. Fisher's assertion, made earlier in the conversation, that she and her family lived free of cost. The butcher's bill for so many, I suggested, must be an appreciable item. Her reply but served to throw new light on domestic economy in the Prairie Provinces.

"We certainly do have a quantity of meat in addition to our own bacon," she smilingly admitted, "but there is no butcher's bill, because we belong to a beef ring."

I did not know what that was.

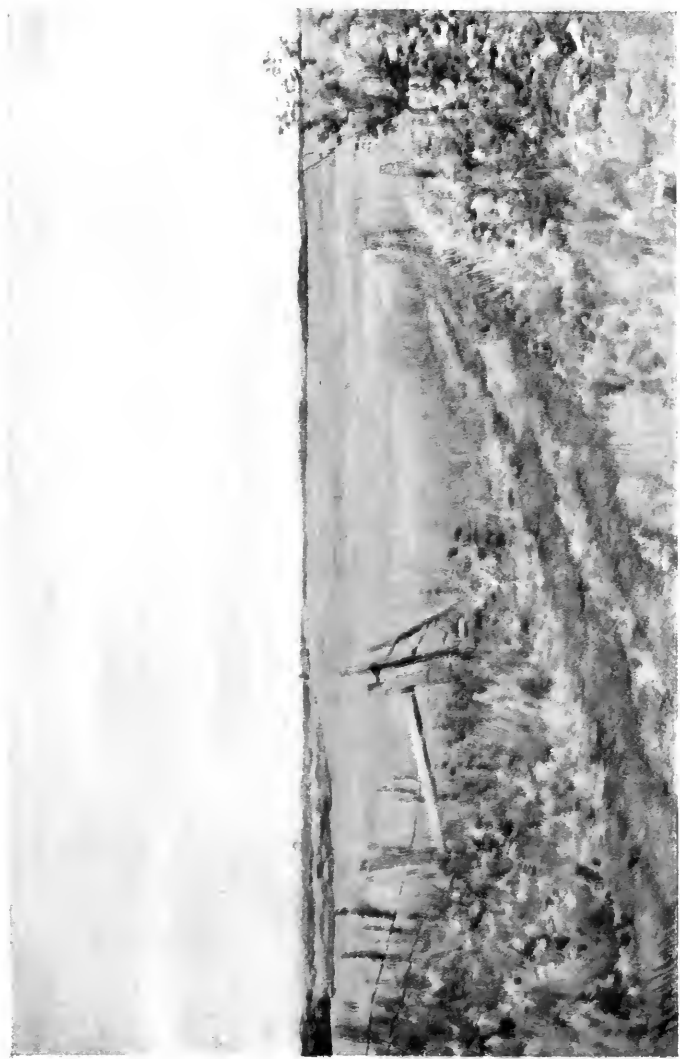
"Oh, it's a splendid thing," exclaimed the enthusiastic little woman. "They ought to have one in every district. There are twenty of us in it—ourselves and nineteen neighbours; and each member contributes one beast a year. Of course large families require more meat than small families, so the way we arrange is this: whatever we have every week is set down against us at six cents a pound, and when we put in our steer the weight is put down in our favour at five cents a pound. That leaves one cent for slaughtering and for waste. Then at the end of the season one total is balanced against the other; and in our case we have had several dollars to receive each time. And

you may say that the steer costs us nothing to rear—only a little of my husband's time in looking after it—because we have plenty of pasture. The members deliver the meat themselves, and they are divided into four delivery groups. So one week my husband fetches our supply, and goes round to our three nearest neighbours. Then for the next three weeks they take it in turn to do the delivering. Our beef ring is really a great success."

We had wandered into the kitchen—the kitchen of a model housekeeper, with its orderly rows of cooking-pots and crockery, and everything bright and clean.

I remarked upon the pail of meal steaming on the stove.

"That is for one of the mares," the lady explained. "George told me she seemed a little out of sorts, and there is nothing like a nice warm feed to put them right. That's a good example of what I was saying. Some women would tell you they had enough to do without bothering to cook for the horses. But I don't look at it like that at all. Never mind the bother. How can a man see to a thing like that, when very likely he has to be out ploughing half a mile away? It may make all the



FIELD OF GRAIN NEAR RUSSELL, MANITOBA

difference between saving or losing a valuable horse. So I say a woman *ought* to do it!"

I asked her how she liked the winter.

"The winter, of course, is beautiful," she answered simply. Then, in a ripple of merriment, she went on: "Oh, I forgot you live in England, and very likely have heard the dreadful stories about the Canadian winter—how everybody has his nose frozen off, and the houses are buried up to the chimney-pots in snow! It is very, very, different to that. Of course the ground is covered with snow, but such nice, dry, sparkling snow! And the air is so clear, and the sky so bright, and the sun shines so warmly, that it is all just lovely. Of course when there's a wind blowing, and the weather is cloudy, or when there's a blizzard on, then it's best to keep indoors, or you might get a frost-bite. Not that a frost-bite is a very serious thing—it soon goes off. But most of the time you can't think how splendid it is to be out of doors. The children have great fun tobogganning and skating—and so do we older ones—torch-light processions on snowshoes, and I don't know what all. There is only one time when the winter isn't nice at all. That's when thaws begin to come and the

snow is half melted, and the ground is all sloppy. We feel the cold much more than when the thermometer is right below zero. That's the only time when one of the children might take a chill. But it doesn't last long. The snow is soon all gone, then the flowers and leaves seem to come out by magic, and the beautiful summer has started once more."

Her reference to the children prompted me to compliment her on their health, intelligence, and high spirits.

"They certainly have a good time," she admitted. "And Henry is getting to be such a fine horseman! He is my eldest boy, you know—just turned ten. The other day he rode twenty miles! I used to be so nervous when he was on horseback; but my husband said it was quite safe, and it certainly seems to be. One thing I'm very pleased about—they are all fond of school. In fact, they are quite upset if the weather is bad and I won't let them go. We are very lucky in having such a good school in this section—and less than a mile away!"

"You never," I asked (not because I thought it likely, but to continue investigations along

the line of popular assumptions)—“you never feel lonely?”

“Lonely!” echoed Mrs. Fisher in amazement. “Lonely? What, when we are surrounded by such nice neighbours, and I’m always driving round to see them, and they’re always driving round to see me! And when we have so many whist parties at this house and musical evenings at their houses! Lonely—no, that’s quite impossible out here. I pity anybody trying to be lonely with five children about. And if they might be at school, and there was nobody at home, and I wanted to talk with somebody but hadn’t time to go out—well, there is always the telephone. I don’t mind telling you, I often have a chat with my friend Mrs. Knight—when I’m waiting for the bread to rise, and she’s doing the same three miles away.”

When Mr. Fisher next came in—to join us in the pretty parlour—I found myself regarding him with a new interest. For I now had a clue to the smile of placid contentment that seemed never to leave his face.

Dimly, and without full understanding, that happy young couple know themselves to be, in their origin, children of poverty. Vaguely

they hear rumours of people short of food in the far-away Old Country. "Is it true—is it really true?" was Mrs. Fisher's eager question. And when I told her the facts, her eyes filled with tears.

"Oh, tell them to come here," she entreated. "There is room for them all in this beautiful country. They can easily do the same as George and me. It is so terrible to think of them like that, and us with more than plenty. Oh, please tell them about Canada, and just *make* them come!"

I promised to try.

CHAPTER V

THE BARR COLONY

A seductive scheme—Its weak spot—A long, arduous, and costly trek—Living in tents—Keeping animals at bay—Lloydminster then and now—A butcher's adventures—Dr. Amos and the axe wounds—Mr. Barr's withdrawal—The remaining leader—A loyal leader—How the log church was built—Its stately successor—Arrival of the first train—Miriam and her birthright—Mr. Hill's farm—A Cockney's triumph—Memories of tribulation—An abortive beginning—Hindrances, bad luck and debt—The turning of the tide—Piling up the dollars—Canada as a cure for worry—Value of the Hill estate—Achievements of Lloydminster men—Their town analysed—A widespread aspiration.

DURING March, 1903, the Rev. I. M. Barr, assisted by the Rev. G. E. Lloyd, founded a British Colony in Canada at 14, Sergeant's Inn, London, E.C. Every adult male was to have his free grant of 160 acres, under sanction of the Canadian Government, in the beautiful

and fertile Saskatchewan Valley. The whole thing was arranged in advance with a masterly regard for detail. Mr. Barr even provided a scheme of medical insurance, with the use of a hospital and trained nurses, on the basis of a small annual subscription. In a word, the prospectus was a pressing invitation to the Promised Land, and some 1,500 names were enthusiastically enrolled.

There was a flaw in the scheme. The colony was established 200 miles from the nearest railroad. Thus those English families, after voyaging across the Atlantic and travelling two-thirds across the American continent, were faced by two terrible problems: first, how to get to their land; secondly, how to live when they had got there.

At great expense—for kites are attracted by a drove of pigeons—many procured horses, oxen, and wagons for the long trek over the rough ground, which for the most part had been left black and desolate by recent prairie fires. A number of those poor immigrants expended the last of their scanty savings on food for the journey. Some tramped wearily on foot. Purged of the faint-hearted few (who would not leave Battleford and civilisation),

that noble procession of resolute men, staunch women, and plucky children passed on to their goal. It proved nothing but a beautiful wilderness.

And there at first they lived in Government tents—the men in some, the women and children in others; representatives of both sexes taking night watches in rotation to feed the fires that held timber-wolves and prairie dogs at bay. Poor Barr colonists! They were isolated from the world. They were a society without the machinery of existence. One is tempted to emphasise their plight with a grim suggestion drawn from the realm of historic irony. Their one possible means of livelihood was to take in each other's washing.

I stayed in one of the fine hotels of the prosperous town of Lloydminster, which has its own weekly newspaper, six places of worship, two banks, two large schools, a range of Government offices, three grain elevators, several musical societies and athletic clubs, and a large electric plant that illuminates its broad thoroughfares. Vainly I strove to realise the momentous fact that, on the site of this prosperous town, only those Government tents were standing seven years ago. For in their

fight against Fate the Barr colonists won. They have built Lloydminster, and to-day they are rich, contented, and triumphant. The case has no parallel, I believe, in the history of modern Canada, full as that history is of romance and of swift and amazing developments.

I spoke to Mr. Johnson, the butcher. "Ah!" he recalled, "Mr. Barr arrived with only two beasts, and I had the killing of both. I bought one carcass and retailed it. The last pound of flank was soon gone, and for days I walked to and fro, pondering the stubborn problem, where could I get some meat? One day from nowhere there arrived a wandering, wondering Indian. I gave him my full attention. He had picked up a few English words from Hudson Bay men. But we communicated mainly by signs; and the end of it was that I set off with him on a long journey to the north. He had understood! We came to a place where there was a herd of cattle. I bought a steer; the Indian produced a rig; and we brought my beast back in triumph. I decided to reward the Indian at the rate of two cents per pound. He was satisfied with this payment, and in a few days, when that meat was all gone, we went off to fetch another

carcass. So the supply was kept up; and soon I had built a little hut—our first butcher's shop."

Meanwhile some of the men had gone out with guns and shot wild ducks and prairie chickens. Others, establishing themselves as merchants of the community, drove back to Battleford and returned with wagon-loads of provisions. Some fetched timber, so that a beginning could be made with building operations. The women and children set about growing vegetables. A number of men journeyed some hundreds of miles away to work for wages.

I spoke to Dr. Amos. "Nothing," he explained, "came of Mr. Barr's medical scheme. At least, members presented their subscription cards, but the hospital and nurses proved as theoretical as my salary. Of course we all helped one another, and monetary considerations scarcely existed. My work was constant and pretty monotonous—every day I was stitching up axe wounds! You see, the men were strangers to that most useful tool."

Unfortunately Mr. Barr did not remain sufficiently long with his colony to witness the turn of its fortunes. Why he withdrew I found

it impossible definitely to ascertain. Some think that, alarmed at the plight in which he had unwittingly involved his trustful following, he lost his nerve. Concerning that interesting figure, the rest is silence. Whither he went, and whether he be alive or dead, no one seems to know.

The case of Mr. Lloyd is different. He remained with the colony, sharing the stress of those early days ; and the town's name is a memorial of the affectionate regard in which he is held.

As the Principal of Emmanuel College (Saskatoon), Archdeacon Lloyd has duties which, at the time of my visit to Lloydminster, detained him elsewhere ; and thus I missed the pleasure of meeting a remarkable man of whom Canada has cause to be proud. But in the centre of the town I saw the little " log-cabin " church—so picturesque without, so restful within—that he built. At least, he and all the others built it jointly. For nearly every colonist assisted according to his or her ability—some contributing a three-dollar log, some a two-dollar log. And already—the needs of the community having outgrown the accommodation of that little pioneer edifice—a stately

brick and stone church, costing ten thousand dollars, was arising to gladden the heart of Lloydminster's popular rector, the Rev. C. Carruthers.

An early beginning was made with the growing of grain, primitive means being available for grinding it. Then at last came the news that, miles and miles away, the railway line was approaching. Thus was opened up the new community's first outside market. For the railway gangs had many horses, and were willing to pay well for oats. The Canadian Northern Company pushed on the work with all possible speed, incidentally providing, in the construction of the road, a welcome outlet for Lloydminster labour. One man told me that the most beautiful music he ever heard was the whistle of the first approaching train. When the great locomotive appeared in sight, the Barr colonists sang and wept for joy. The days of tribulation were over—the era of prosperity had dawned.

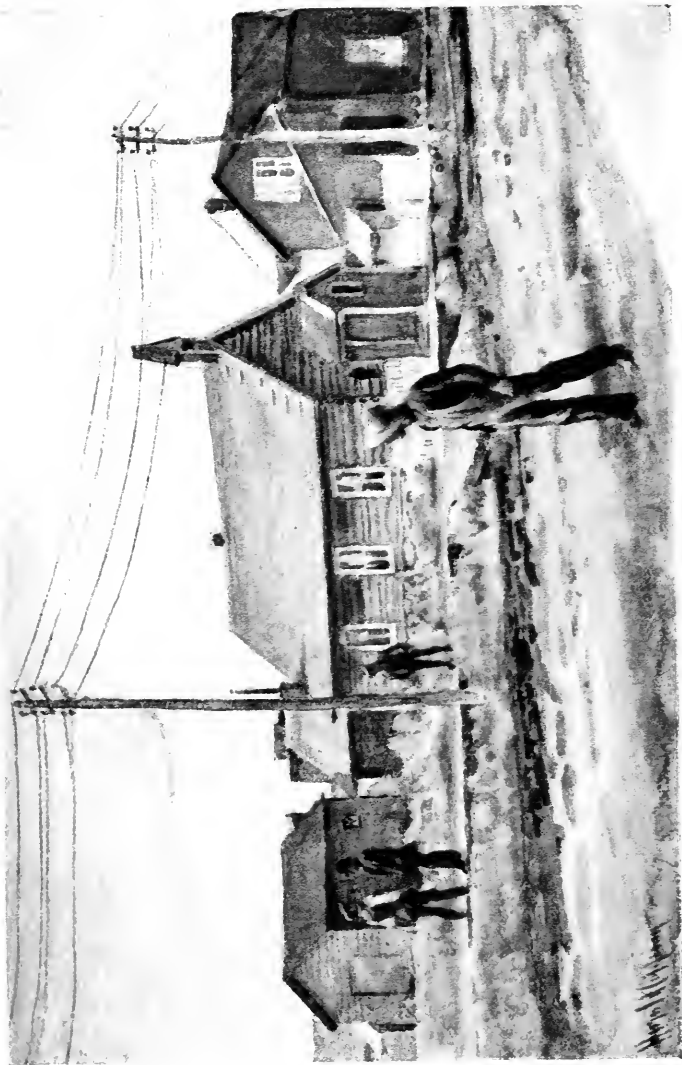
I strolled into the suburbs of the town and, passing through a pretty garden with its inviting tennis-court, I entered a charming bungalow. For I had a fancy to see Miriam, the first child born at Lloydminster. And that

merry little girl, who would soon be seven years old, introduced me to her dollies and her great big Teddy-bear.

From the juvenile prattle, confirmed and elucidated by a delighted mother, I learnt that, under the terms of a picturesque Dominion statute, the Government had just granted Miriam a valuable town site in Lloydminster—birthright of the first native inhabitant.

I drove out to see Mr. Hill and his family, who came from Woolwich. Since there are three grown sons, the joint estate is a square mile of rich land, beautifully wooded here and there, and enclosing two lovely lakes. The youngest boy was herding their large "bunch" of horses and cows, his brothers were harvesting the wide expanse of wheat and oats, and the old man was keeping an eye on his twenty score of hogs.

"Yes, yes," chuckled Mr. Hill, "my oats scored 95.5 out of a possible 100 at Brandon Winter Fair, averaging 86 bushels to the acre and 50 pounds to the bushel. Not bad, eh, for an old Cockney who, until he came out here, had never done any farming? But those early days! You cannot imagine what we went through."



THE "LOG-CABIN" CHURCH, LLOYDMINSTER.

I asked him to try and give me an idea of that black time.

“ Well,” he said, “ we had a terrible setback at the very start. It was in June, 1903, that we arrived, and at once my boys and I got to work on the adjoining quarter-sections allotted to us near the Battle River. For several weeks we were at it from morning to night, getting along famously. We had built a fine log-house, and we had broken a lot of land ; then a letter came to say there had been a mistake, and we must surrender two of the quarter-sections, as they had been previously allotted to some Swedes. As we had determined to have our land all in one piece, that meant surrendering the entire section. But the loss of our time and labour was the least important part of it. The terrible thing was that, while we could have scraped through pretty well with the start we had got, there was no money left for beginning all over again. The long trek had made too heavy an inroad into the savings I had brought out with me.”

“ So what did you do? ”

“ There was nothing for it but to take my wife and young children back to live in the

colony tents, while my three boys set off to tramp 70 or 100 miles and work for wages. By the end of the fall they came back with 200 dollars, which enabled us to provision ourselves for the winter. Then, when the spring came round, off they went to earn more money to keep us going. Not till June was I able to start on our new quarter-sections—this land we now occupy. Single-handed I couldn't do much, especially as my two horses died and I only had oxen to break with. Getting a house built was the biggest thing done that year; so you may say it wasn't till 1905, when a nice bit of land was broken, that we made our start. That means we didn't get our first crop till 1906, by which time I was heavily in debt. It looked as if we'd be all right the next year, but early frost played havoc with the wheat. It was like that right through the country—1907 is remembered as the black year. Of course there was nothing to do but hang on—to emigrate back to England was out of the question, because we had no money to pay our passage, leave alone pay our debts. Well, the 1908 crop not only cleared off every penny we owed, but left me with a bigger balance than the

money I came out with. As for last year and this, it has been just a case of piling up the dollars."

"There is nothing like sticking to a thing," I observed.

"That's true," Mr. Hill heartily agreed. "And look you here: if there was no way of getting to the position we've got to, except by going through what we've gone through, I'd say it's well worth it, and I'd advise others to come out and do the same. But it's not like that at all. People who come out now don't have to go through a twentieth part what we had to go through. They've got to work, of course, and they don't have much to show for it in the first two years; but after that everything is plain sailing. And so should we have found everything plain sailing after two years, if we hadn't had that long trek and then found ourselves two hundred miles from a railway. Don't think I'm complaining, for I'm not. I feel too grateful for that. When I lived in Woolwich, what with low wages and slack work it was no light matter feeding so many and keeping a roof over their heads; and there was always a nasty feeling about what would happen when I got too old to work.

But now—well, my three eldest boys have got their future already made for 'em, and it'll be every bit as easy for the others when they grow up. As for me," added the old fellow, with twinkling eyes, "if I never did another stroke of work, there would still be plenty for the wife and me. I tell you, the word 'worry' has been taken clean out of my life. That's what Canada has done for me."

"And you have no desire to go back to Woolwich?" I asked.

"Yes, I have," was his emphatic reply. "I should like to go back; but not to stay—only to have the chance of telling people about this country and persuading them to come out. It seems such a pity for all those thousands in Woolwich—and in plenty of other places, for that matter—to be dragging along in the old way, out of work nearly half the time, and never able to put anything by for a rainy day or old age, when, if they only knew, they could come out here and soon be comfortably off, and never need worry about money for the rest of their lives."

Making my own inquiries, and taking "improved" land at its lowest local value, I found that the Hill estate was worth £3,200—a sum



WHAT A PRAIRIE TOWN LOOKS LIKE. A CORNER OF LLOYDMINSTER.

H. H. H. & Co.

which, of course, left out of account the family's herds and houses and machinery. Since their annual revenue from grain alone is over £1,000, the property is not, however, likely to come on the market.

And Mr. Hill is but one of the numerous Barr colonists prospering on the land in the district. His near neighbours include two University graduates and an ex-costermonger. Lloydminster men took twenty-seven prizes for grain at the Regina, Edmonton, and Calgary fairs during the six months preceding my visit. In the previous year, Lloydminster men bought agricultural machinery to the value of 155,000 dollars, or, approximately, £31,000.

In that district I found 27,000 acres growing wheat, oats, barley and flax. This year (1911) the area under cultivation will be 34,000 acres. The town's population was 1,500 persons, including five clergymen, four doctors, two lawyers, one dentist, two druggists, three auctioneers, one veterinary surgeon, and two members of the mounted police force. Lloydminster also possessed six large general stores and two hardware stores; two bakers, two butchers, two tailors, two blacksmiths, two jewellers, and two laundries; one shoemaker,

one saddler, one musical instrument maker, one clothier, one furniture dealer, one telephone office, one telegraph office, one printing office, and four fruit and candy stores.

And Lloydminster, in its aspect, wealth, and rapidity of growth, is typical of the numerous towns that have sprung up along the railway routes of the Prairie Provinces.

Thus we see that Canada pours forth her immeasurable wealth for those who will till and toil; and it remains to be said that the desire of Lloydminster is for more new arrivals who will work on the land, and thereby help to populate the district and swell the general volume of prosperity.

I heard the same wish expressed in every district that I visited.

CHAPTER VI

NIGHTINGALE IN IRRICANA

Stereotyped method of colonisation—Sir Thomas Shaughnessy's innovation—The concession of territory to the C.P.R.—Why they took land they previously refused—Irrigating 3,000,000 acres—1,600 miles of canals and ditches—An Irishman's experiences—Raising cattle without trouble or cost—The efficiency of branding—Profits from irrigated land—How Mr. Buckley began farming—Terms of land purchase—What he bought, and the prices—His phenomenal wheat: a story of brilliant blundering—The rudiments of irrigation explained—New way of coping with prairie fires—Finding live fish on ploughed land—The Strathmore expert and his experiments—Driving to the "Ready-made" farms—A tethered black bear—Nightingale and its citizens—Their former callings—A happy, hopeful community—Benefits of co-operation—Opening of the first store—An idea that may mark an epoch.

TEN miles from Strathmore, Alberta, is a baby town that has been christened after a great Englishwoman who recently passed to her

rest. And Nightingale is founded on two simple ideas—one as old as Egypt, the other sensationally new. I will deal first with the second.

In human affairs the desirable end is apt long to remain associated with a circuitous means. But one day the seer arises who demonstrates that, in order to secure roast sucking-pig, it is not necessary to burn down a house containing young swine. He hits upon a short cut, which is what Sir Thomas G. Shaughnessy has done at Nightingale.

The history of Australia, Africa, and the United States, equally with that of Canada, is identified with a method of colonisation that has become so stereotyped as to seem inevitable.

The settler arrives upon his empty, virgin land. Wrestling with Nature and unfamiliar trades, he builds himself a dwelling and digs himself a water supply. Then, rood by rood, he clears his ground, and ploughs it, and puts in seed. Greatly are his pluck and patience taxed by these slow, laborious preliminaries, which, as I say, have always been regarded as unavoidable. But why—it occurred to the C.P.R. president—should not house, well, and

stabling be constructed before the settler arrives? Of that idea, so brilliantly obvious when once it had been thought of, the ready-made farms of Irricana and elsewhere are the first-fruits.

The foundation of Lloydminster, described in my last chapter, was a grim illustration of colonisation, old style. The foundation of Nightingale, to be described in this chapter, is a delightful illustration of colonisation, new style. But before dealing with the affairs of that little community, I should mention that it is independent of rain. And this brings me to the venerable factor on which the new town's future will be based.

Crossing Canada eight years ago, I was depressed by a deserted stretch of rolling prairie between Calgary and a point about thirty miles west of Medicine Hat. Out on that grey wilderness, clothed so meagrely with vegetation, the only life I saw was a gaunt coyote racing away in affright at the train. Nor was I the only person who did not think much of that country. When the C.P.R. undertook to span Canada, it was agreed by the Government that, to make it worth their while, they should receive 25,000,000 acres of land within a

twenty-mile radius on both sides of their line ; and, since they were allowed to pick and choose, they declined to accept, as part of their real-estate bonus, the questionable territory on which I afterwards saw that lean and lonely prairie dog.

Two things happened that caused the C.P.R. to change their minds. Canadian interest was aroused in the fine crops insured by irrigation in the United States ; and the Ottawa Parliament passed wise laws controlling the Dominion waterways. So the C.P.R., with an eye on the gushing torrent of the Bow River, said they would have those 3,000,000 acres after all. They decided to spend £1,000,000 in irrigating the area, which is one-eighth the size of England and Wales. For no scheme is too large or too small, nothing is too modest or too magnificent, for that versatile and conscientious corporation to undertake.

They have already spread their network of artificial watercourses over a third of the country—the western section. Besides providing a reservoir 3 miles long, half a mile wide, and 40 feet deep, they have constructed 17 miles of main canals (120 feet wide and 10 feet deep), 150 miles of secondary canals,



A C.P.R. IRRIGATION CANAL NEAR GLEICHEN.

and 1,433 miles of distributing ditches—works that have involved the removal of 8,250,000 cubic yards of earth. Then, too, the industrious C.P.R. have made, as necessary adjuncts to this scheme of irrigation, a number of spillways, drops, flumes, measuring weirs, and highway bridges.

I drove inland from Gleichen, and, calling upon several farmers of the irrigated land, I asked them how they were getting on. One was a middle-aged Irishman who, four years before, arrived from his native land with £715, a large family, and no knowledge of farming.

In Ireland Mr. John C. Buckley was making a bare living, and there were no prospects for his boys; in Canada he is already a man of substance. Beginning with 320 acres, this genial enthusiast already owns a square mile. The difference between what he paid for the land and the price at which he could sell it represents over £6,000. But he would not dream of realising; first, because all the irrigated land of the western section has now been taken up, largely by speculators, and its value is rising every day; secondly, because his bumper crops yield a rich revenue.

“Next year,” he mentioned, “I shall have 600 acres under wheat and oats.”

“You don’t go in for stock, then?” I innocently remarked.

“I’ve made a beginning,” was his puzzling reply. “I’ve got between sixty and seventy head of cattle, and the number is increasing every year.”

“Then do you rent some of your neighbours’ land for grazing?”

“Lor’ bless you, no!” he answered. “I do what every one else does—turn my cattle out on the prairie. They are all marked, for each of us has his distinctive, registered brand. A man doesn’t trouble to fence his holding until he cultivates it, and as thousands of acres hereabouts have been bought only as an investment, there are wide areas on which anybody’s cattle can roam. But of course they get away thirty or forty miles from here, where, in the absence of railroads, the land is still Government property, and free, not only to wandering herds, but to human beings who care to appropriate quarter-sections of it.”

“But how,” I asked, “do you keep in touch with your cattle?”

“Keep in touch with them!” he laughed.

“ Why, I don't give a thought to them for six or eight months in the year. I know they're as safe as if I saw them every day, grazing on my own land. When I want them, off I go on horseback. If you know where the rivers and lakes are, you don't as a rule have much trouble in locating your bunch, for they are pretty sure to keep near water. Then you have the satisfaction of seeing what a fine lot of fat beasts they have grown into without costing you five minutes' attention or five cents for feed.”

And I thought of the stock-raisers in England, and what it costs them for land and labour. It really does not seem fair.

“ As for irrigation,” testified this prosperous Irishman, “ its value, when you have learnt how to use it, can hardly be exaggerated. Of course, we all have areas which, because of the levels, are outside its influence, and for which, therefore, we do not have to pay the annual water rental of fifty cents per acre. I and others have done splendidly on this non-irrigable land, and experience shows—for one or two men have been farming in the district for twenty years—that, in eight seasons out of nine, the rainfall is sufficient to ensure a

good paying crop. But it is well within the mark to say that, where irrigation operates, the yield of grain is more than doubled."

Concerning Mr. Buckley's success, I had the evidence of his vistas of growing grain, his acres of potatoes and sugar beet, his herds of swine, and flocks of fowls and turkeys. Concerning the stages of his evolution, I desired more information.

"Well," he explained, "I arrived from Ireland with my wife and seven children on May 8, 1906, and two days later I had bought my first half-section—320 acres. For 259 acres that were irrigable the price was 25 dollars an acre. For the remaining 61 acres that were non-irrigable the price was 15 dollars an acre. Those figures work out in English money to a total of £1,539 11s. 8d."

"And your available capital was only £715?"

"Exactly. But the terms of purchase merely required me to provide one-quarter of the money, or £384 17s. 11d., the remainder being payable in four equal annual instalments, with 6 per cent. interest on the outstanding balance. As a matter of fact, the C.P.R. give even more liberal terms nowadays,

for only one-tenth is payable in cash, the rest of the money being spread over nine years."

"Having secured your land, and disbursed more than half your capital, what did you do next?"

"I set about getting a house built; and in the meantime the C.P.R. lent me one rent free, with coals and light. My house and a stable (30 feet by 28 feet) cost £125, the price being so low because my boy and I did a lot of the work. Then I paid £135 8s. 4d. for four horses, £13 15s. for harness, £11 5s. for a plough, £16 13s. 4d. for two cows, £5 8s. 4d. for a drag-harrow, and £7 14s. 2d. for a disc-harrow. By that time I had less than £150 left. But I was ready to begin farming."

"Of which," I interpolated, "you had no previous experience?"

"Practically none," said Mr. Buckley. "I knew something about animals, having been a cattle-dealer in Ireland. In an amateurish way, I had also played about with a piece of land. But now, of course, I was taking up the business seriously, and I did not make the mistake of fancying I knew what I did not know. I find it a good plan to ask questions.

One picks up a wrinkle here and a wrinkle there."

"And how did the early crops come out? A neighbour of yours told me you made a phenomenal hit with your 1908 wheat."

"So I did," the blushing farmer admitted. "It graded extra number one northern at Fort William, and fetched 1 dollar 4 cents a bushel, which was half a cent above the highest Winnipeg quotation of the season. It weighed $65\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. to the bushel, and I was dumbfounded to see it described as the finest wheat ever grown in North America, if not in the world. When it became known that I was just a beginner, so to speak, and had only been farming three years, the journalists and magazine-writers came along to ask me how I did it. But the facts I had to tell them sounded more humiliating than impressive."

"Indeed?"

"That wheat was grown on a fifty-acre field which, in the previous year, had yielded me a first crop that came out at 25 bushels to the acre. But when the time arrived for seeding it again, that field wasn't ploughed, because I hadn't the necessary horses available. So, following the advice of some neigh-

bours, I drilled in the seed (red Fyffe) on the stubble—a very improper proceeding, of course. I didn't even disc the land. But I did harrow it after sowing, and in that operation I blundered badly. I harrowed in the direction I sowed, instead of crosswise. The pin of the harrow naturally ran in the groove made by the disc of the drill, the firmer ground on either side keeping it in that course. An inevitable result was that much of the seed was rooted up, and the crop consequently worked out at only 20 bushels to the acre, compared with the 40 bushels secured by neighbours all around me. But, you see, in spite of my mistakes, or because of them, the quality of the grain was remarkable."

"A case of brilliant blundering," I suggested.

"Ah!" confessed my contrite companion. "I haven't yet told you about the worst blunder of all. I had made the grievous mistake of breaking that bit of prairie at the end of July and the beginning of August, instead of in June, which is the proper time for the work."

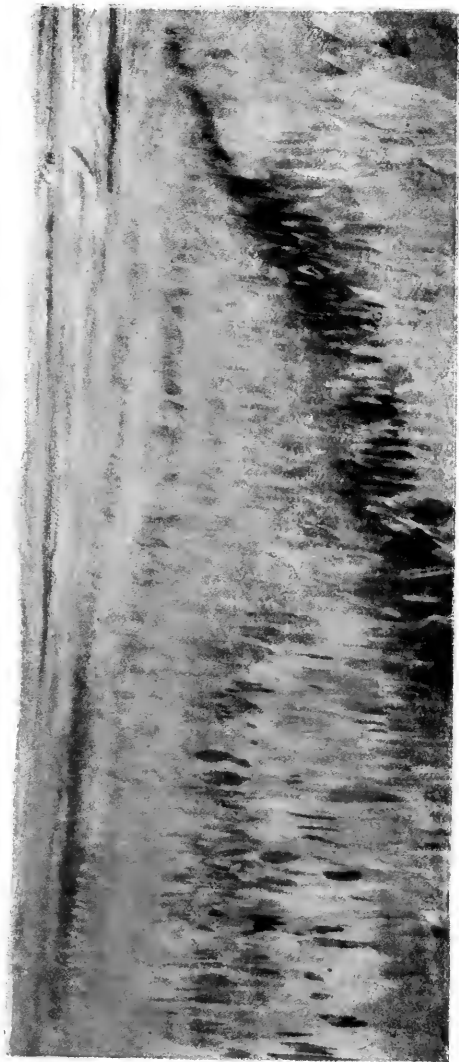
"Then the moral of the whole affair would apparently be," I said, "that the more mistakes one makes the better."

“ Oh, no, no,” cried the horrified farmer. “ You must not forget that, compared with my neighbours, I lost over £150 on that crop. Besides,” he modestly added, “ I have since found how, by avoiding mistakes, one can combine a heavy yield with a good position on the prize list.”

So far as prosperity went, there seemed nothing to choose between Mr. Buckley and such of his neighbours as I interviewed. I found one rejoicing over the fact that, from an irrigated area of forty acres, he had just harvested such superb wheat that it had already sold for seed at a dollar and a half per bushel, at which price that fraction of his year's crop represented a profit nearly as large as the cost of his quarter-section.

The rudiments of irrigation were explained to me. At the highest available point on each quarter-section there is an adjustable exit from a C.P.R. distributing ditch. Using discretion, the farmer makes minor ditches, with radiating plough furrows to distribute the water by gravitation all over his irrigable land.

My inquiries brought to light two incidental advantages of the system. In the previous year a prairie fire broke out, and as the grass



A BUMPER CROP ON IRRIGATED GLEICHEN LAND (THE DARK LINE BEING AN ARTIFICIAL WATER-COURSE).

was dry, it threatened to spread far, and involve valuable crops. The water-gates were opened and the fire was promptly extinguished.

It was an appreciative housewife who first told me of the other unforeseen boon provided by artificial watering. The Bow River is full of toothsome fishes, many of which are swept down the long mileage of canals and ditches. Thus the farmer, having opened his water-gates overnight, is apt next morning to find, flopping about in his furrows, a welcome change in the breakfast dietary.

"I've picked up some five-pounders," one agricultural gourmand assured me.

Taking the train from Gleichen to Strathmore, I visited the C.P.R. experimental farm, where Professor W. J. Elliott, besides testing the neighbourhood's suitability for various kinds of grain and plants, is ever at hand to solve the agricultural doubts and difficulties of C.P.R. settlers. I found him besieged by newly-established farmers eager for guidance; but he spared time to take me rapidly through his plantations, where I strove to share his enthusiasm over some white hull-less barley and a new field pea for hogs.

My drive to Nightingale took me past many

simple homes established on the undulating prairie, where clusters of white tents—camps of the railway constructors—were also visible. For Nightingale was soon to have a station and two lines of its own. Approaching one of these canvas villages, I saw, on crossing a stream, my first musk rat. The gang, it seemed, had just captured a fine black bear. Tethered to a post, the philosophic creature showed no resentment of restraint.

Ten minutes later found me among the trim little homes of Nightingale; and soon I was lunching with Mr. and Mrs. Carlton, the unofficial mayor and mayoress of the new community. He was a poultry farmer of Lowestoft, and I learnt that his hundred fellow-citizens include a butcher, a veterinary surgeon, a pig breeder, a coal merchant, two engineers, a Scotch gardener with a large family, a clerk, a marine surveyor, a retired Indian Civil servant, a schoolmaster, a rural innkeeper, a mate of the Merchant Service, a Norfolk farmer, and a piano tuner. That, at least, is what they were when, six months before, they left Great Britain. Now they had all become farmers.

But their farming is not to be of the familiar Canadian kind—landscapes of grain. Their

properties average eighty acres. Growing wheat and oats for an easy beginning, they will gradually work their way to the more compact industries of dairying, poultry farming, pig raising, and market gardening, producing only as much grain as they themselves will require. For it is felt that this irrigated land affords a fine opportunity for mixed and intensive farming.

I visited about a dozen of Nightingale's citizens, and found them all busy, hopeful, and jolly. A Cambridge M.A. was digging a cellar and whistling. One engineer was intent on the community's flour-mill. The other was wrestling with a costly petrol machine that will plough ten acres a day—a luxury to which the community had just treated itself. For Nightingale has already perceived the wisdom of co-operation. It saves twenty cents a bushel by buying its seed in bulk. On the day of my visit it had just opened its co-operative store, and, as the first customer from without, I made my historic purchase of an ounce of tobacco.

But I have not yet explained how far Sir Thomas developed his idea. When these British settlers arrived on the ground, each

of the twenty-four families found, not only their home and outhouses built, and their well sunk, and their fences up, but forty of their acres ploughed and already green with a growing crop.

It was stipulated that each family should possess at least £200 wherewith to buy implements and tide over the initial period of no returns. The cost of land, buildings, &c., was to be met by ten annual payments, the first not being due until a remunerative crop had been harvested.

Colonisation by means of the " Ready-made Farm " is to-day an idea in its infancy. It may mark an epoch in the development of Canada.

CHAPTER VII

IN A LOGGING CAMP

Climbing into a forest—Butterflies and burnt trees—
The various climates of British Columbia—Asleep
on a log—Our arrival at the camp—Exploring the
skidway—Disconcerting experiences—The falling
tree—An invitation to supper—A strange and silent
meal—"Pass the carrots"—A race of semi-wild cats
—Ten fluffy black kittens—Furtive philanthropy—
Sleeping on the floor—An early-morning toilet—
My personally-conducted tour—The terrifying cable
—Meeting a rushing log—Preoccupied toilers—
Shrieking donkey engines—Opening up a new road
—A sorely tried hook-tender—Buckers and snipers
—How I nearly broke my spine—Tree-felling des-
cribed—The gold-miner's story—A backwoodsman's
shack—An arrival of venison—The logs' last
journey.

CROSSING to West Vancouver in a petrol
launch, my brother and I climbed into the
forest on a mammoth ladder two miles high.
That, at least, is what it felt like to be tip-

toeing from sleeper to sleeper up a cable railway that ascended the mountain at a precipitous gradient.

There was no side space to afford one's feet the relief of even ground. Only to the breadth of the sleepers had that avenue been carved through the timber jungle, which was aglow with the bronzed and golden foliage of autumn, the vivid greens of cedar, fir, and hemlock, the silvery mosses on fallen trunks that protruded amid sub-tropical undergrowth, and the towering black relics of burnt trees standing stark against the sky—gaunt monuments of a forest fire which swept the mountain-side some thirty years ago.

It was hot summer, with butterflies about—a matter the more noteworthy to us since, two days before, trudging through a foot of snow, we were in a region where icicles two feet long hung from trees and rocks, and where, amid the clouds, I found a little frozen lake, which was a picture of dainty loveliness in the white solitude. And, standing in a garden not many miles away, I afterwards saw branches assisted by more than one prop to sustain their burden of large red apples, while roses and sweet-peas, in a medley of other familiar flowers, were

blooming in June perfection. For in marvellous British Columbia the seasons are a matter of altitude rather than of the calendar. Climbing a few miles of mountain, you can always find hard winter at midsummer ; basking in the southern plains and valleys—a district destined to world-wide fame for fruit-growing—you enjoy sunny summer far into the winter.

But to return to the physical ordeal, so distressing to one's instep, of labouring up that timbered height overlooking the Gulf of Georgia. After about an hour of it, limp and perspiring, I lay on a stupendous log, and fell asleep—to awaken anon in better shape for resuming my ascent of that pathway of irregular stairs, which tapered to a remote incompleteness in the overhead perspective.

At last we came to a little wooden hut, though it proved to be unoccupied, and with the door shut. Going still higher, we came to another little wooden hut—also deserted, but having a reassuring clothes-line with socks and a shirt hung out to dry. A little later the vista opened on a clearing in the forest, where the railway ran through a scene littered with timber and untidiness. In the yellow confusion of

logs and bark and chips, a number of rough shanties stood inconspicuous. For they were fashioned out of split cedar, unplanned, unpainted, and of a common hue with the chaotic surroundings.

A sturdy old greybeard was at work with an adze on the line. Elsewhere another veteran was slowly chopping wood. A bull terrier, fortunately chained, demonstrated hostility at our approach.

We had arrived at the logging camp. But where was the foreman, to whom I bore a letter of introduction?

The greybeard pointed to where the railway disappeared in the lofty jungle—the foreman, he said, was away up there. So we applied our sore feet to further mountaineering. Nor had we climbed far into the forest shadows before we found the track obstructed by strange machinery on wheels. We edged past the great black thing, and promptly came to the end of the rails. But, what was of more moment to us, here was another wooden structure, whence came sounds of human shouting, and of blows struck upon an anvil. Indisposed for detailed explanations were the half-naked toilers in that busy forge. I

gathered, however, that the foreman was higher up.

The railway was succeeded by a log-way, felled trees being sunk in the ground to form a gigantic gutter. Along it lay a stout steel cable, and on one side, a few feet from the ground, ran a wire loosely hooked to tree-stumps. We plunged on through the narrow avenue, made treacherous by moss and mire and running water.

Presently there occurred an incline so steep that, to avoid falling backwards, we had to clamber on all fours. This was followed by a corresponding declivity, down which we went floundering at an accelerated pace. Below, among the rocks and ferns, I heard a tumbling torrent, which proved to be spanned by a bridge of huge tree-trunks.

It was a slow, steep, and stubborn climb up the opposite side of the ravine ; and at last we came to another piece of machinery, not inert like the last, but snorting, steaming, and whistling, with grimy men busy about it—though the purpose of their activities and shouting was by no means clear to me. It was enough that, according to such curt directions as they vouchsafed, the official I

sought was somewhere still farther along the avenue, which now branched at right angles into a denser region of forest. Here also was the raised wire on our left, the stout steel cable lying at our feet, and a second cable, of inferior girth, stretching through the bushes on our right. But this avenue had no floor of sunken logs. The way was rugged with stones and hillocks and the stumps of newly-cut trees.

For long we floundered on and up through our slit of sunlight in that realm of shadows and green transparency. But soon I paused irresolute at the head of a second ravine; and, peering down the abrupt slope, we saw the parallel lines of another bridge spanning a waterway—great trunks in reality, but looking mere sticks in the distance. Voices arose from out the depths, and we heard the echoing blows of an axe. A minute later, high up I saw a moving tree-top, while the tiny figures of men were visible below as they suddenly scurried. Following a shrieking crescendo of tearing branches and splitting wood, a tree went crashing down with a report like thunder. And behold! it had fallen with precise accuracy to form the sixth section in that bridge of logs.

The sequel was tame. All the men, now with their coats on, and carrying tin cans, came helter-skelter up the slope. In the procession that filed past me so rapidly I soon had picked out the foreman. Crunching my letter in his pocket, he bade us follow him ; which we did, wondering what so much expedition might signify. Floundering and slipping, but escaping the expected fall, we were hot on his heels upon reaching the camp, now growing dim with evening shadows. A big timber structure had swallowed the procession of returning toilers. The foreman was on its threshold when, noting that we had paused, he shot over his shoulder the terse invitation, " I guess there's room for you."

The interior was bare as a large wooden building can be. Some thirty dirty men sat silently eating at a long trestle table. By gesture, the foreman directed us to fill empty places that occurred in one line of feasters, he himself going to the other end of the opposite bench.

In stepping across the meagre area of vacant seat, I was so unfortunate as to give my right-hand neighbour a gentle, but muddy, kick. At my apologies, his blank astonishment,

unaccompanied by comment, confirmed a misgiving that, without preparation or premeditation, I had blundered into a society ruled by an etiquette of which I did not know the rudiments. So I glanced about me with the anxious eye of a novice. Nor, as I soon perceived, was there any need to scrutinise my surroundings by stealth. No one heeded the strangers; all, with gaze fixed on their plates, gave full attention to the meal that in Canada is known as supper. A plate and cup and saucer, with knife, fork, and spoon—all of iron—were before me. The table was crowded with large metal pans—of which the contents varied from baked meat to stewed prunes—supplemented by large metal jugs.

For half a minute I was uncertain how to begin. Then I had my clue from a near neighbour, who abruptly put out an arm and captured a slice of beef with his fork, assisted by his thumb. I put out my arm and my fork, and soon had acquired selected samples of the food within reach. For long the only sounds were those incidental to eating. But occasionally the silence was broken by an uncompromising "Pass the carrots" or "Pass the tea."

On leaving the dining-hall, I introduced myself to the camp storekeeper, whom I discovered in the act of nursing a little black kitten. Under examination he reluctantly told me how the mother cat came to be there.

Last year a man was seen walking to the waterside and carrying a wriggling sack. Following an exchange of personalities, pussy was rescued and brought into camp; and in this connection I heard of the race of semi-wild cats which, originating from pets that stayed behind when logging parties moved on, now roam the forests of British Columbia, to the detriment of partridges and other game. With that strain in the parentage, what wonder that, as the storekeeper mentioned, he can catch only one of the ten little kittens that live under his floor?

After an awkward pause, the storekeeper stepped to the adjoining shed, and, having suffered his nursling to depart through a hole in the wall, he drew from his pocket a plentiful supply of meat and placed it on the ground.

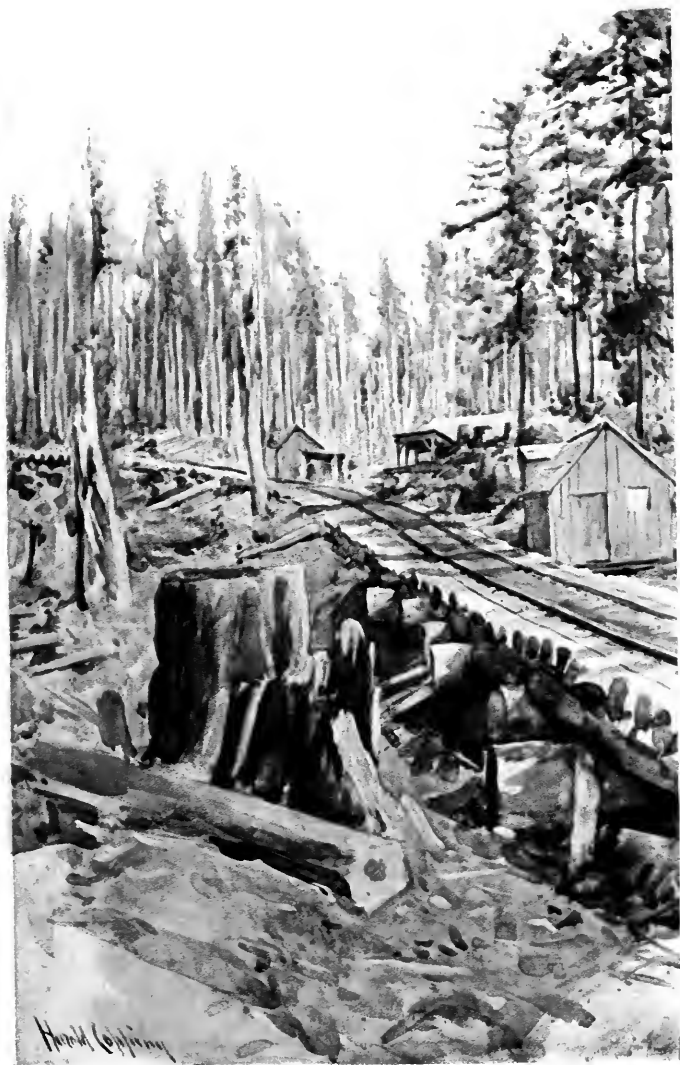
"Some one's got to feed them," he apologised, "and as they live at my place the job falls to me."

Here the storekeeper was called away to

supply a customer with tobacco, and it chanced that I took a temporary seat within the shadow of a wood pile. Unseen myself, I presently witnessed the slow and casual approach of a man who, on reaching the shed, went in hastily and threw something down beside the entrance to the kitten's covert; which done, he lost no time in absconding.

Presently there came loitering to the scene another man, whom I recognised for one of my neighbours at the supper table. He paused at the shed, and turned to glance behind him. Then that rough old lumber-jack stepped inside, and he, too, made his contribution to the breakfast of ten little fluffy black kittens. How many other furtive philanthropists came that way I cannot tell, for, when the coast was clear, I emerged from my seclusion with the guilty feeling of one who has stolen a secret.

That night my brother and I lay on the floor of the store, amid apples, boots, and canned salmon, having first availed ourselves of permission to help ourselves, so far as blankets were concerned, from the stock of the establishment. The foreman and store-keeper, who occupied wooden bunks in the same apartment, warned us before turning out



"WHEN MY BROTHER WAS SKETCHING THE CAMP" (PAGE 111).

the light that, if we wanted any breakfast, we should have to rise when they did.

Dawn was competing with night when, opening a sleepy eye upon an unfamiliar scene, I found the foreman sluicing his face over a metal basin set upon a box—which done, and to prepare the way for some one else's toilet, he emptied the basin through a crack in the floor.

Thus at chilly daybreak, re-entering the large wooden shed, we broke our fast with the same thirty silent men in whose company we had supped overnight. But not till two hours later, when my brother was sketching the camp, did I accept the storekeeper's invitation to go with him and see the men at work. That he found himself at leisure was due, it seemed, to a special state of affairs. In addition to running the store, he had to measure the logs. But to-day there were no logs to measure, the men having recently been engaged on the arduous task, always rich in perplexing enigmas, of extending their sphere of operations across a ravine—which circumstance doubtless explained a certain terseness that had been observable in the foreman's conversation.

“Getting the first logs to run along a new skidway is-always a job,” said the storekeeper, as we ascended the treacherous avenue I trod on the previous evening. “Be careful how you go. Keep out of the way of the cable. It might stun any one if it hit them.”

Ever since we passed the donkey engine, my eye had been on that cable. Last night it had lain passive in the slime and mosses. This morning it was possessed by a spirit of feverish unrest: now leaping on a quick tension, to sway and shudder in the air; now jerking higher or lower, without the hint of a warning; now thumping back to earth, perhaps wide of where it rose.

“And suppose it broke?” I protested.

“That does happen sometimes,” said the storekeeper. “You see, when it is hauling a ten-ton log at full steam and the log fouls with a rock, something’s got to give, and it’s usually the cable. Then the broken ends fly back, and it wouldn’t be nice to be hit by one of them. But of course the men know when it’s best to stand clear.”

I could picture the possibility of standing clear. What worried me was the impossibility of keeping clear whilst moving. The trees,

upright and fallen, barred one's way outside the narrow width in which that steel cord was performing its treacherous stratagems.

But the storekeeper's words hinted at a development of which we were now promised an illustration. On a sudden the cable, without ceasing to leap and sway, became a flashing line of undefined coils, and we perceived that it was travelling rapidly in a contrary direction to ourselves.

Simultaneously there was a rustle of leaves and twigs, and I noticed that the cable of inferior girth was tearing its way through the jungle on our right.

"They are connected, you see," said the storekeeper, "and they run through a winch half a mile from the donkey engine, which hauls one in while it pays the other out."

"And what is this for?" I asked, pointing to the thin wire that ran within reach on the left of the skidway.

"Don't touch it!" said the storekeeper. "That's the signalling wire by which the men on ahead communicate with the engine behind us. . . . Here! Follow me."

Heedless of thorns, moss, and dignity, I scrambled after him into the jungle—and only

just in time. Part of a tree, huge and heavy, went thundering and blundering along the pathway we had just vacated. Then we resumed our journey.

After patiently facing danger for half an hour, my natural optimism induced me to believe that twenty yards ahead, where we saw human figures and another donkey engine, safety awaited us. But the storekeeper said:

“Of course this part is all right. It’s when we get on to the new skidway that we’ve got to be a bit careful.”

I never felt more like climbing up a tree to get out of the way. But there are times when it is best to disguise one’s emotions; and, making no comment, I pushed doggedly on.

We spoke to the men when we reached the head of the skidway; but, apart from muttered irrelevancies, they made no reply. Their minds and muscles were engaged by a log that was openly defying the shrieking donkey engine.

There being nothing to detain us, we continued our journey into the newly-carved avenue. The last I heard of the busy toilers was one of them shouting that we had better

be careful or we might get our necks broken—an admonition that failed to serve as a nerve sedative.

Half way down the new skidway we met the overwrought and gesticulating foreman; and it was from behind a stronghold of Douglas firs that we saw a gigantic log come jerkily and drunkenly up the incline, butting at boulders, colliding with trees, ploughing up fountains of earth and stones, rolling far out of the appointed course, and smashing and crashing its way through the thicket.

To see such work on hand, such stupendous forces in play, makes a man feel insignificant, feeble, and helpless. At least, I am speaking for myself—certainly not for the foreman, whose eyes were on fire with self-reliance and a determination to win against all odds and hazards.

“Now that’s gone through,” commented the storekeeper, “he’ll feel ever so much more comfortable in his mind. The road will soon work all right now. Every log makes it easier for the next. I daresay, though, we shall find the hook-tender pretty sick.”

Five minutes later, when we had come to the end of the avenue, the hook-tender figured

prominently in a group of men—known in the profession as chasers—who were toiling, perspiring, and shouting. They had taken off their coats, they had taken off their shirts, and they were prepared, I do not doubt, to rid themselves of any other garment, if only that would assist matters.

Once get a log on the skidway and, as we have seen, the cable can do the rest. But you must first drag your log from among all the other logs that cumber the ground.

The hook-tender connected his tackle and bade the donkey-driver put on full power; but the engine advanced towards the log instead of the log advancing towards the engine.

It seemed unkind to be looking on; so the storekeeper and I journeyed forward, crawling and sprawling from one felled tree to another in that area of mangled forest.

Should I ever belong to a logging camp, I should wish to be either a buckler or a sniper. The work of both is free from heart-breaking hindrances. Into convenient lengths the former saws the trees; then the latter chops round the extremity of each log, to facilitate its progress on the skidway. We came across two mossy snipers who, without desisting from

their invigorating toil, gave us complacent greetings.

I admired the sure-footed way in which my companion leaped from one recumbent tree to another ; but attempted emulation nearly cost me a broken spine.

“ I ought to have told you,” murmured the sympathetic storekeeper, “ that our boots have spikes in the soles.”

Finally we came to the felling, which proved a test of one's nerves and faith. There is a first feller and a second feller ; and, seated on a mammoth cedar, we saw how they earned their four dollars a day.

One would suppose that the solid earth was the place for a man to stand on while cutting down a tree. But no ; the fellers of British Columbia begin by providing themselves with perches. A few deft blows with the axe cut a notch in the tree several feet from the ground. That notch receives one end of a short length of wood a few inches wide and very tough and elastic. Standing on those projecting spring-boards—of which the position can be altered, within a limited radius, by expert feet—the two fellers, with alternate strokes of their axes, make a wide, gaping incision in the trunk.

This is the "under-cut," to control the fall. Precisely where it will be most advantageous to lay the tree (it must not fall across a log, for fear of fracture) the first feller has already decided. Note him insert his axe in the "under-cut" and spy along the handle. He is "sighting," and, if this observation show the need, he will slice more deeply on one side or other of the yawning chasm.

"Are you quite sure it won't fall over here?" I asked the storekeeper; for the tree looked sixty feet high and we were not ten yards away.

"We're safe enough," rejoined the storekeeper. "That man always knows to half a foot where he will throw a tree."

Already the two toilers were sawing through the trunk from the opposite side to the "under-cut." They stopped; and the first feller, sweeping back his black locks, and putting an open palm to his cheek, bawled:

"O-ho! Look out down hill! O-ho!"

The echoes died away, and we all listened to the silence of the forest.

"Is any one there, do you think?" I whispered.

"There might be a swamper," said the store-

keeper. "I think I heard one a few minutes ago. Swampers, you know, go round cutting things out of the way."

The sawing was resumed. It continued for several minutes. Then once more the first feller shouted his solemn warning down into the maze of trees.

Three more strokes of the saw and it was swiftly withdrawn. The fellers had leaped to the ground, and were beating a quick retreat. The tree was moving, and in the expected direction, but how slowly, silently, and calmly! Within the measure of the next three beats of my pulse, what din and havoc were caused by the law of gravitation and that thirty-ton column of timber! At the awful thud, I felt the crust of the earth shudder beneath me.

The experience affects one with a sense of man's power—and presumption. Nature is occupied through many a decade in slowly up-raising those magnificent trees, strong to withstand the sternest tempest. But here was that feller, with his axe and his saw and his bottle of oil, heeling them over, one after the other, like ninepins.

I was glad to return into camp. It came

as a gracious relief to be seated on a rock in the sunshine, listening while the old greybeard told me the strange story of his life.

It seemed he had been a gold-miner, off and on, ever since he arrived as a lad from England, nearly fifty years ago. He had kept single for the sake of the gold, on which his dreams, his ambition, and his energies had focussed. He had worked for long spells in logging camps; he had endured privations on protracted railway and Government surveys; he had spent solitary seasons trapping the mink, the beaver, and the silver fox. But logging, surveying, and trapping had been but means to an end. With the savings he accumulated in those vocations, he would go back to the gold-fields and try yet another claim.

"Always with the same result," deplored the old man. "Others would do well; but never me. I could name men worth their hundreds of thousands who have worked next to me in the creek. They struck it; I missed it. Of course sometimes I arrived too late, when all the best claims were taken. I arrived too late at the Klondike. But mostly it has been sheer bad luck. The stuff might pan out just to keep me going for a few months, but sooner

or later I always went broke, and had to begin all over again to get a few hundred dollars together, ready for another start. It's been lumbering I've turned to for the last fifteen years. For when a man's over sixty, he's not so ready to take things rough as when he was younger. In these camps you get your victuals cooked for you, and a roof over your head. A man appreciates such conveniences when he's getting on in years."

"Surely you won't bother any more about gold-mining?" I suggested.

The old fellow did not at once reply, and when he did so his head was hanging and his voice was low.

"It was my seventy-third birthday," he said, "when I gave up my last claim. Not that I had any thought it was to be the last. But when I came in here—well, well, they meant it kindly—they wouldn't let me do my share on the skidway. So my job is to stay in camp and sharpen the saws—out of harm's way. It set me thinking that perhaps it's time I gave in. Then I've had another thought—if I'd only kept all my savings, I'd be a rich man to-day. But all my life I've been pouring gold into the gravel, instead of getting gold out of it.

No ; I won't go back to the creek. When I've done here I'll have a bit by me—enough to get half an acre of land somewhere and keep a few hens. They'll maybe see the old man through to the end."

For several minutes he filed at his saw without speaking. Then, looking up with a smile, he said :

" If I had my time over again, do you know what I'd do? Why, just what I have done. There is nothing to equal a life in the woods. As to the cities—ugh ! Sometimes I'll go and stay at Vancouver. But after two days of it I get fidgety and have to come away. Why, there's nothing to do there ! Out in the woods a man can always find something to occupy him, if it's only putting a patch on his trousers, or turning to and washing his shirt. Come and see an old backwoodsman's cabin."

He led me into his cedar shack—a simple interior with a stove and two bunks, one for himself and one for his dog.

I noted the weapon lying across his pillow.

" Yes," he said, " I always have my gun in bed with me."

Hearing a sudden commotion, we both went



"LASHED INTO A GIGANTIC RAFT" (PAGE 123)

hurrying to the door. Two strange sights competed for my attention.

The storekeeper, as I knew, had recently gone forth in quest of game. He had just returned, triumphantly dragging a slain deer that looked as large as himself.

My view of the sportsman and his quarry was, however, soon obstructed by an ugly roofed locomotive—clearly the great black machine I had passed overnight—which was slowly descending the railway, and hauling a procession of twenty enormous logs.

Bidding the old man a hurried farewell, I walked down the two miles of sleepers in the wake of that remarkable train. The engine came to a standstill on the picturesque little pier, but the logs were side-tracked into the water. With many others, they were afterwards lashed into a gigantic raft, which a tug towed away to a Vancouver sawmill.

My outline of life and work in a logging camp (and in a logging camp situated on unusually difficult ground) will illustrate one never-failing opening for labour in British Columbia, Northern Ontario, and other districts of Canada.

A man who has taken up land may find it

necessary, during early stages of development, to devote part of his time to wage-earning. He has his opportunity in the logging-camps. Lacking previous experience, of course he will not be engaged as foreman, hook-tender, or feller. But, if he be not afraid of work, he will be welcomed into the fraternity of lumber-jacks, and be paid from ten to twelve shillings a day.

CHAPTER VIII

FRUIT GROWING IN B. C.

A nonagenarian immigrant—The hand of destiny : a remarkable story of derelict orchards—An outlaw and his plush frame—Why Mr. Johnstone's visitors stayed to dinner—The smothered apple-trees—Pioneer work at Nelson—A rescued plantation—The unknown genius—A mining town in a new character—Sir T. Shaughnessy and the challenge cup—Apples of juicy sweetness—My lesson in fruit-packing—"Back-to-the-land" enthusiasm in B. C.—Orchard of an English lady—From four lbs. to four car-loads of prunes—Overburdened trees, and how they are treated—The testimony of the forests—My feast of blackberries—Lofty raspberry-canes—Settlers from Cornwall—Their stages of evolution—Fruit ranches in exquisite scenery—Searching for the best location—Profits from orchards—What the beginner may expect—Hints to intending immigrants—The minimum capital necessary—Average price of cleared land—Blasting the roots—Cost of a modest house—How to succeed with fruit and poultry—A warning.

PROBABLY Canada's oldest immigrant is the Rev. Mr. Johnstone, who arrived at Nelson,

in British Columbia, at the age of ninety-seven. He had been there five years when, talking with me, he stretched forth a hand of benediction towards the red and golden orchard, where his youngest grandchild—Baby of the laughing mouth—was picking peaches. Often in mid-winter, the old minister told me, he is out upon the veranda ; for he has a Scotchman's appreciation of sunshine. A generous enthusiasm for the land of his tardy adoption is, however, kept within the bounds of common sense : " Aye, sir, Canada's a glorious country, *but it isn't Edinburgh.*"

All of which has to do with the growing of apples. For, after his successful adventure out West, the son tried to live with his father in Scotland. But the call of the fruit and the freedom was not to be withstood ; and the end of it was that the father came out to live with his son in Canada.

And note how curiously a love of horticulture has moulded the mining career of Nelson's fruit pioneer. Having won his spurs at railway construction in British Columbia, James Johnstone accepted a tempting offer to cross the border, and try his hand at that business in the mountainous region—infested by bandits

who objected to trains—where East and West Virginia abut on Kentucky and Tennessee. That he succeeded where others had failed was due to his tact, of which I will give a startling instance.

The chief of the outlaws was human enough to take a pride in the photographs of five relatives he had been inhuman enough to slay. Johnstone presented him with a plush frame having five apertures of suitable size for displaying those grim mementoes, and thenceforth the young contractor had nothing to fear from the miscreant and his minions.

Meanwhile Johnstone was devoting spare time to the garden that supplied his table with small fruits and vegetables, and thereby assisted him to win a singular reputation. Occasional visitors to that backward region, and notably the wealthy owner of its mineral resources, got into the habit of seeking hospitality at the only house where a civilised meal could be obtained. And one day, in a spirit of reciprocity, that guest granted his host the free choice of a coal concession.

Johnstone rode out to make his selection, and on coming to a ruined shack, and liking the look of the land for a garden, he wan-

dered in the scrub, and was amazed to find the half-suffocated relics of a long-forgotten orchard. That settled it; the adjoining territory became Johnstone's remunerative mine, and the fruit-trees blossomed again. And in time, having recrossed the border a well-to-do man, he made his home in beautiful Nelson, then merely a mining town.

People said Johnstone must surely be crazy when, having bought land on the other side of the lake, he announced his intention to grow apples there. But to-day, when Nelson is almost hemmed in by thriving orchards, Johnstone is honoured as fruit pioneer of the district—a title that sets him shaking his head. And certainly there are, among his productive trees, many obviously older than his occupation of the land: of which state of things the explanation is identified with a coincidence almost uncanny. For ere he bought the property, he found there another derelict hut and another buried orchard.

Of the veritable pioneer, Johnstone knows only that he was a Swiss and a genius. Pomological experts have just proclaimed the discovery that, to ensure adequate pollination of Spitzenberg, it must be planted in close

association with the red-cheeked pippin. Now, therefore, Johnstone understands why he has taken so many first prizes with his inherited trees of the former variety, each of which he found growing next to one of the latter. Now, also, he understands why, in every hollow of the old orchard, a McIntosh was planted—experience revealing that kind as peculiarly sensitive to wind.

I tell this story of cultural beginnings at Nelson because it is typical—in essence, though not, of course, in detail—of cultural beginnings elsewhere in British Columbia. At first there has been local scepticism for the pioneer to face. Later there has been outside scepticism for the locality to face.

“I thought,” cried Sir Thomas Shaughnessy—when pressing persuasion had brought him to Nelson’s first fruit show—“that it was all a joke about your gardening. Why.”—as his eye roamed over the stages of glorious apples—“these are more interesting than your ores”; and, to excite emulation in local orchards, he straightway went off and ordered a silver challenge-cup—forgetting in his enthusiasm, as he afterwards confessed, to place any limit to the cost.

Nelson certainly came as a delightful and almost droll surprise to me, who spent three days there some eight years before. For on re-visiting a mining town one is unprepared to meet boys bearing superb bouquets through the streets, and to see real estate offices aglow with large red apples, not to mention suburban gardens full of laden fruit-trees and magnificent flowers.

But the appeal to the eye is, comparatively speaking, of small importance. Visiting orchards in various districts of British Columbia, I tasted snobs and spies of a juicy sweetness that my memory positively gloats over. There may be finer-flavoured apples in the world, but I have never tasted them; and, owning an English orchard of commercial dimensions, I can at least claim to have a palate of some experience.

I watched Mrs. Johnstone pack the carefully graded apples for market—a privilege I wish some of my fruit-growing friends could have shared. In conscientious Canada fruit-packing ranks as an art; and for proficiency in this art that lady has won a gold medal. The boxes are of regulation size, and are sold in parts to be nailed together. A supreme

obligation is so to place the unblemished fruits, wrapped individually in paper, that they completely fill the receptacle, without undue pressure of upper rows on lower, and with the requisite outward curve on the elastic top boards to compensate for shrinking in transit ; the proof of efficiency being that, on arrival at their destination, all shall be free from even the smallest bruise.

At hotels and on trains, the bulk of the talk is in eastern Canada of dollars, in central Canada of bushels, and in western Canada of orchards. When I previously crossed the Dominion, British Columbia was glorying merely in its unrivalled timber, fisheries, scenery, and mineral resources. To-day fruit is a fifth feather in its cap.

A " back-to-the-land " enthusiasm is spreading through all classes. The merchant has discovered the delight of living with his family in choice rural spots amid mauve mountains and beside lovely lakes ; his joy springing from a knowledge that the new home, with its surrounding plantation, is not merely pleasant but profitable. Thus you may overhear a boot manufacturer debating questions of pruning with commercial travellers, while the banker

buttonholes the ship's purser to ask if late strawberries do well on a western slope. And note, as belonging to the genius of Canada, that clever men in that country successfully engage simultaneously in several different lines of business.

At Port Haney and Port Hammond I visited several fruit farms, including one of sixty acres planted fifteen years ago, and now owned and managed by an English lady—widow of the original proprietor. Concerning her orchard of prunes, the enthusiastic testimony of a fellow-passenger gave me, as I was approaching the district, a preliminary inkling.

One certainly could not hope to see a finer lot of healthy, shapely trees. The lady bore witness to their progressive fruitfulness in vivid language.

“They looked such skinny little sticks of things,” she told me, “when they were put in the ground. It needed quite a lot of faith to believe they would produce anything; and I remember how excited we all were when we actually got four pounds of fruit from them. We also thought it rather fine when we picked four crates. There was less notice taken when the four crates became forty; and by the time



A CROP OF "NORTHERN SPY" IN AN ORCHARD NEAR PORT
HAMMOND, B.C.

we were able to ship four car-loads of prunes nobody took any notice at all." (Goods are "shipped" by rail, I am sorry to say, in Canada.)

It was in that lady's other orchard that I first saw crimson trees—that is to say, apple-trees so densely and universally covered with fruit that their leaves and branches were practically hidden. Besides apples, all one saw were the palisades of posts that strutted up the overburdened branches. It was a sight with which I was destined, during the next fortnight, to become very familiar; and in this connection I may mention that a fruit farmer of British Columbia, judging by what I saw, needs to be something of a blacksmith. When a tree shows signs of splitting in two from the weight of its crop, a wrought-iron collar is clamped round the bole; cases of fractured limbs being treated with screw-bolts and nuts. As an alternative, I pointed out, the burden might be adjusted to the tree's carrying capacity; but this suggestion was laughed aside as involving an unnecessary loss of revenue—as amounting, indeed, to a gratuitous rejection of the bounty of Providence. There was general testimony that these bumper crops

were of constant recurrence, and that the trees took no harm from the rude expedients adopted for holding them together.

At first I was not merely surprised, but a little perplexed, by the facility with which British Columbia grows all the familiar fruits in abundant quantity and of superb quality. But the phenomenon ceased to seem strange when I remembered the forests I had seen in the province, notably some near the city of Vancouver and on the island of that name. From a country that produces those immense Douglas firs, 300 feet high, many of them, and more than 12 feet in diameter, and produces them, moreover, quite close together, and amid a labyrinth of tall and luxuriant undergrowth—from such a country anything might be expected. It manifestly represents a combination of soil and climate capable of supreme results in the domain of vegetation.

And, talking about supreme results, I must not forget to mention the blackberries on which I feasted in the orchard of Mr. Pope, of Port Hammond—an ex-Cornish miner who combines the nominal duties of district constable with the lucrative delights of fruit-growing. We think ourselves very fine people in this

country, but we can't grow blackberries like they grow them in British Columbia. When, from a little distance, I first saw Mr. Pope's long rows of cultivated bushes, I thought they were draped with crape, so densely did the black clusters hang. To be eating those great juicy berries was to have discovered a new joy in life.

"But why haven't you gathered them?" I asked in surprise. "They are fully ripe—in fact, I should have thought you had allowed them to mature too fully for successful marketing."

"We gathered them several weeks ago," laughed Mr. Pope. "A very large crop it was, too, and brought in quite a bit of money. Of course the bushes go on bearing, but the fruit is no good now—it has quite lost its flavour."

What, therefore, those blackberries tasted like when, according to Mr. Pope, they did have a flavour, my imagination fails to conceive.

"We also did very well with these raspberries," my complacent companion added, as we strolled to another part of the orchard. I looked at the regiments of new canes in astonishment. It was the first time I had seen

raspberries growing to a height that called for the use of a ladder in picking the fruit.

It seemed that, from another end of the plantation, Mrs. Pope had noted my appreciation of the blackberries, and she was so gracious as to bring the unknown visitor several fine bunches of her out-door grapes. They do that sort of thing in Canada. How it would fare with the complete stranger who casually walked into an English orchard, and started to ask questions and eat the fruit, is a point on which I prefer not to speculate.

That contented couple told me they work hard and pretty continuously on their land—cultivating, spraying, pruning, and picking. In some seasons they have been visited by grubs and caterpillars that played havoc with certain crops. But I never found two human beings who rejoiced more heartily in their conditions and surroundings.

“The life is so bright, so varied, and so healthy,” testified the enthusiastic lady. “I simply could not put up with a town after this.”

They left England more than ten years ago; and in their case emigration did not involve severance from friends and neighbours. For they were followed to Canada by a congenial

group of their Cornish acquaintances, several of whom are now fruit-farming in the Haney and Hammond district.

“Of course you all had a little capital to start with?” I suggested.

“Did we!” replied Mr. Pope, much amused. “Who ever heard, I’d like to know, of a Cornish miner who was able to save money. No, sir; we all own a bit of property now—some more, some less; but at the start everybody had to work for wages. Some went mining, others got work in the logging camps, several joined the railway gangs—there were plenty of openings. And the pay was so good it was easy to put by a few dollars every month. Once get a fair start like that, and the rest follows naturally. You buy a bit of land. You get a couple of cows and some poultry. You put in a few hundred fruit-trees and a few thousand strawberry runners. Very likely you won’t know much about growing things at first, but you pick it up as you go along, if you’re not too proud to be taught by your neighbours. Then after a time your stock increases and you have some crops to gather. Very likely you see your way to do a bit more planting—perhaps buy a bit more land. So it goes on. Ah!

if those millions in the Old Country only knew ! If they could be made to understand what life in Canada really means ! Why, they'd come pouring over here in shiploads."

I travelled hundreds of miles through the fruit districts, and visited ranch after ranch situated amid exquisite lake scenery—some on irrigated, some on non-irrigated, land. Each rancher, not having seen the other districts, was exulting over the fact that his own was incomparably the best. Kelowna pitied Kaslo ; the glorious Kootenays seemed positively sorry for the Okanagan Valley. One fine young fellow had certainly paid for the right to believe that his house looked upon the fairest view in all Canada.

" I spent £200 travelling all over British Columbia," he told me, " to find the best location. Having discovered this place," he jubilantly added, " I consider the money was well invested."

And certainly the west arm of the Kootenay Lake is a paradise. There are, however, others.

My investigations left me no room to doubt that the matured fruit ranch, when run by a capable and industrious man, proves a fine in-

vestment. I came across one Englishman—a very clever Englishman, by the way—who paid £2,000 for his large and well-stocked ranch, on which he has constructed a number of glass houses; and his present annual gross returns precisely tally with his original outlay. I visited several growers who had cleared over £100 per acre from apples, from strawberries, from cherries, and from other fruits. Nay, one experienced expert had, for several years in succession, made a net profit of £200 from less than an acre and a quarter of his orchard.

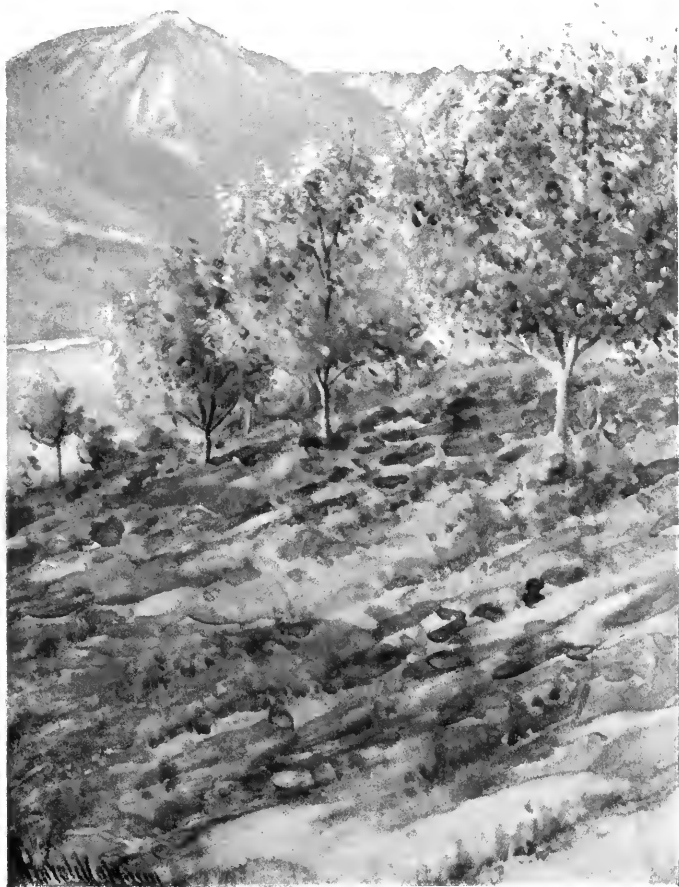
Of course the intending rancher, who has everything to learn, must not base his calculations on any such figures as these. Average experiences justify him in hoping no more than that, after the preliminary years of learning and development have elapsed, he will derive an annual profit of about £25 per acre from his trees.

Fruit farmers by desire, if not by training, scores of English families are thinking of migrating to superb British Columbia. By all means let them go, but allow me to fortify them with some facts I gathered on their behalf.

To begin with, each family—unless some

members thereof are prepared at the outset to work for wages in other callings—should have at least £1,000 at their command. The average price of good, cleared, accessible land is between £50 and £60 per acre, and ten acres will be desirable, especially if the family propose to work their way to the economy of home-produced eggs, butter, milk, and bacon. But a beginning may be, and usually is, made with, say, three cleared acres; and, of course, the seven uncleared acres will be purchasable at a price much below the average I have mentioned. For upheaving great tree roots is a slow and costly business, usually done with gunpowder and donkey engines. And after the roots are up, sometimes there are numerous stones to remove.

In the second place, a house must be provided and furnished, a modest wooden building (costing about £150) being customary. Moreover, trees and tools have to be purchased. Finally the family must be maintained until such time as marketable crops are produced; and the cost of living, when one has to depend on the stores for everything, is rather high in that country, where, however, substantial savings are effected under two



A FRUIT RANCH NEAR EARL GREY'S ORCHARD ON THE WEST ARM OF THE KOOTENAY LAKE, B.C.

heads. Expensive clothes, however necessary in West Kensington, would be out of place in British Columbia; and doing without servants is part of the fun of living in Canada.

Where knowledge is lacking, there must be a humble willingness to learn from neighbours. Fruit culture is an art that can be acquired only by practice wisely directed. The same is true of poultry keeping—a pursuit in which the cocksure novice, who relies on haphazard reading, is almost sure to lose money. But where plantations are the main interest, and poultry is a minor one, the necessary guidance, muscle, perseverance, and patience will result in an ample annual revenue, the owner's equanimity being assisted by a knowledge that the value of his property is constantly increasing.

As a last word of warning, let the land-seeker beware of the silver-tongued stranger. Many new arrivals suffer grievous injustice at the hands of certain real estate agents who, by their misrepresentations, shed discredit on an honourable calling.

In dealing with the Government and the C.P.R., a settler's interests are safe. But if, as may very likely happen, he contemplates making his purchase through a private channel,

let him act under the advice, sought and given in confidence, of some member of the local Board of Trade—an association of leading citizens formed in every urban centre to further public interests.

CHAPTER IX

AIDED IMMIGRANTS FROM ENGLISH CITIES

Public funds and emigration : a movement in its infancy
—Chief cause of delayed repayments—Visit to Earl's Court, Toronto—Turning shacks into villas—Experiences of a West Ham man—An early set-back
—Buying his piece of land—What can be done with £2 a week—Building the house—The delights and profits of gardening—Another reason why remittances fail—Strange case of X., the chef—Why he lost two jobs—On the Athabasca trail—Cooking strange meats—Six months' illness—Turning the corner—An Edmonton investment—Unadaptable Englishmen—Y's quarrel with the farmer—Salvation Army emigrants—How to collect repayments : a suggestion—Z. and his employers.

RECENT years have witnessed the beginning of a movement which, aiming at direct benefit to the individual and the Empire, is both philanthropic and Imperial. I refer to the use of public money in enabling citizens of Great Britain, without loss of personal independence, to remove to Greater Britain.

The movement is in its infancy. During 1909 the Central London Emigration Committee and the provincial committees (including that of West Ham), contributed only some 600 individuals to Canada's total of 52,901 British immigrants; while—to show that contribution in the perspective of comparison—the Dominion received, in the same year, 3,911 persons through the Salvation Army, and 901 boys and girls from Dr. Barnardo's Homes. But five years of experimental work afford a basis for criticism; and during my travels in Canada I endeavoured—by visiting families who had been officially transplanted—to test the value of semi-Government emigration. More particularly on one point did I seek enlightenment, and in a somewhat anxious spirit.

Assistance had been rendered on an understanding that, following an interval of grace, the emigrant should return the cost of his transportation in monthly instalments of ten shillings. How came it—I asked myself—that, of the total sum due to be returned to the Committees, only about 20 per cent. had actually been received? Such, at least, was the figure given in the latest printed returns available

when I left England, though it is but fair to mention the assurances I received from responsible officials that, since the date of those returns, the ratio of repayment had considerably improved, and was still improving.

Those assurances closely tally with a fact which, understood in a general way in England, is brought home with special force to an investigator in Canada. During the industrial depression that affected the American continent in 1907 and 1908, Canada suffered a check in its galloping development, and great workshops near Earl's Court, as elsewhere, were temporarily closed. Now, Earl's Court is a remarkable Toronto suburb that has sprung up during the past year or so, and is mainly populated by mechanics and labourers from London and other English cities. It happens that a majority of the Committees' emigrants came under the influence of that depression; and, as my inquiries at Earl's Court convinced me, there we have the chief cause of the disappointing 20 per cent. ratio of repayment.

When I was at Earl's Court, its 2,000 inhabitants had, almost to a man, outlived the consequences of that serious setback. The interesting process of transforming shacks

into substantial brick or timber houses was proceeding apace. Nay, the "Shack Town" of a year before was already a town of villas, if of villas strangely mingled with nondescript wooden structures. And here and there the visitor is amazed to see part of one of those magnified fowl-houses projecting from an unfinished villa; for Canadian example encourages a skilful incorporation of the old home with the new.

A West Ham man made me acquainted with local usage as it affects land tenure, his testimony being confirmed by several neighbours and by the Rev. Peter Bryce, who labours enthusiastically in that happy, and prosperous community.

"Ain't it all right bein' yer own landlord? My! that's a change from two rooms at Canning Town, and no nearer ownin' a brick of it after payin' seven bob a week for ten years and more. Only, mind yer, we was a long way from buying our own place at the start. Why, I hadn't been workin' more than a month, and jest beginnin' to think I was nicely fixed, when—bless me, if the foundry didn't close down, and all 'ands was thrown out. I tell yer, we 'ad it pretty rough for a time—but that's all



THE TWO STAGES OF SETTLEMENT AT EARL'S COURT, NEAR TORONTO : A SHACK (THE FIRST HOME) BEING SEEN TO THE LEFT ; A VILLA (BUILT LATER) BEING SEEN TO THE RIGHT.

past and forgotten now. Only when the shop opened agin, and I'd been took back, me and the missis figured it out that we'd be money in pocket if we bought our bit, same as everybody said we ought to. So I give the bloke five dollars for a start, and after that it was two dollars a month till the land was paid for.

"What's two dollars to a man when e's liftin' forty? That's what they pay me down at the foundry, and it works out two pound a week by our money. You've got to earn it, let me tell yer, but nobody wouldn't mind puttin' in a bit of graft for two pound a week. It's not gettin' the charnse of a job, more than mightbe an odd day a fortnight, and dog's wages at that—that's what takes the heart out of any one in the Old Country. A man can turn round, as you may say, on two pound a week—nice warm clothes for the nippers, a bit of finery once in a way for the missis, and a good bellyful all round.

"As soon as the land was paid off, 'Now it's time,' I says, 'to 'ave a nice 'ouse over our 'eads, same as others.' We'd made do up to then with jest a two-room shack—small, of course, but wonderful snug in the winter, and a lot more comfortable than you might think.

By livin' quiet, and puttin' away a bit every pay-day, I'd saved pretty nigh half enough money to buy the stuff, and me and two others got to work on it, evening after evening, and very often an hour and a 'alf in the morning. But the lath and plaster and all the paintin' I didn't want nobody to 'elp me with. The rest of the money we're payin' off same as we did for the land, only five dollars a month instead of two; and be through with it, we shall, by next Christmas twelvemonth. Only me and the missis was puttin' our 'eads tergether to arrange if we couldn't pay 'em two months at a time, and so be through and done with it in jest over a year from now. Then it'll all be our own, and no rent to pay or nothin', and Sir Wilfrid Loreyer 'isself couldn't take it from us. I tell you, the missis don't half begin to fancy 'erself—goes to church of a Sunday, she does, with the best of 'em; and if I might 'appen to step into the parler, and forget to take off my boots, there's a pretty 'ow-d'yer-do over me spoilin' 'er nice noo carpet."

In the present trend of his life, that man represents hundreds of London labourers now settled in the eastern cities of Canada. The

testimony of another West Ham enthusiast was typical of a new human interest that has been awakened.

“ What d’you think of this? ” he asked, with blushing pride, as he drew from under the table a clothes-basket full of small and rather muddy carrots. “ Not bad for a beginner, eh? Before I come out here, it’s a fact I’d never seen what vegetables look like whilst they’re growing in the ground. I was jest a baby at it; but this year I’ve grown two sacks and a ’alf of pertaters—for we’ve got a nice bit of garden; and you ought to have seen all the cabbages and one thing and another we’ve been having. Then there’s a nice lot of parsnips I’ve got to dig up before the frost gets hold of the ground. It’s a hobby with me, more than work—I quite look forward to my couple of hours in the garden of an evening. Then, again, it’s a big saving not having to buy vegetables, especially when you’ve got a lot of youngsters. And that’s another thing about Canada—it suits the nippers. Our lot’s got twice the go in ’em they used to have, and as for red cheeks and getting fat, why, you’d hardly know them for the same. I’ll tell you, Canada’s all right. For I’ve altered my opinion

from the idea I had soon after we came out, when the big shops shut down, and there was a few months when jobs was as difficult to find, pretty near, as what they are in the Old Country. But we haven't had another spell like that for two years—and if we should cop it again at any time, well, I'll be better prepared, with house and land paid for, and a dollar or two put by."

Meanwhile then we have, in that depression of 1907-8, one reason why the assisted emigrants were backward in their repayments.

I now come to an auxiliary cause of this disappointing element in the results of an interesting social experiment, and an experiment that has otherwise been attended by a most encouraging success. This auxiliary cause is, in a word, the absence of effective machinery in Canada for collecting the money.

Born to small opportunities of education and culture, and nurtured in toil and penury, the British working-man nevertheless possesses qualities of heart and will which, to persons of other classes who meet him on terms of friendship and mutual understanding, are a constant source of amazement and inspiration. But human nature is human nature ; and time, cir-

cumstances, and an intervening ocean are apt to lessen the force of an honourable obligation. One or two instalments will be conscientiously remitted; then, in many cases, the ear heeds silly, but sedulous, whisperings—that the money is not expected, that it is not needed, and that it is not a just claim, since both countries have been sufficiently benefited (such is the seductive argument) by the transfer of labour.

There is need of agents on the spot—discerning agents. Banks and debt-collecting organisations are ineffective. It is a case in which business routine must be qualified by human discretion. Cases of illness and bad luck occur.

I found X—— as the respected and well-established caretaker of a large drapery store at Edmonton, Alberta.

“Funny work for a chef, isn’t it?” he remarked, with twinkling eyes. “Oh, well, I was no good at my own profession out here. I got a job as cook to a club, and at the end of a month they fired me. What for, do you think? I didn’t know how to cook! I tell you, I couldn’t help laughing when they said that—me having been chef at several West End London clubs, and afterwards at William

Whiteley's. It took me a fortnight to find another place, and hang me if that didn't end the same way. I didn't laugh this time—it was getting too serious. Talk about puzzled, though—I was regular dumbfounded. But I've found out all about it since, and it only shows what different ideas you'll meet with in different countries. If you've stopped in many hotels, you must have noticed how the meat out here is cooked almost to a piece of leather. I served those clubs with nice thick steaks just done to a turn according to English ideas; but I can see now that those poor gentlemen, after what they'd been used to, must have fancied I was giving 'em raw meat to eat.

“It was lucky I'd saved a bit of my two months' money, because winter had come on. That makes everything a bit slack out here, so if you haven't got a steady job before the cold weather sets in, you very likely won't find it easy to get one. However, I put in three weeks at an hotel, while the other man was away ill, and when the fine weather came round I struck a queer sort of job. I joined one of those Hudson Bay gangs that work their way up-country along the rivers and across the portages in open boats they call scows. Our

trail was along the Athabasca River through the Grand Rapids to Fort McMurray—more than 200 miles, and it took us three weeks each way. There were 140 of us in the party, but only three other whites, all the rest being half-breeds.

“ We took miscellaneous goods going up, and came back loaded with furs. It kept me pretty busy cooking for that lot, but, one thing, there was always a full larder. Those half-breeds are very handy, with their guns and snares and hooks, and I found myself boiling and broiling no end of queer truck—ribs of elk, hindquarters of moose, great big fish—in fact, there I was skinning and cooking a whole menagerie of creatures I had never seen before, unless it might be at the Zoo. Every now and then they'd bring me a bear, which tastes very like beef. It was good money—eighty dollars a month, and I could have got bigger pay still at a job they offered me up at Fort McMurray. But I heard that the last cook committed suicide, and that turned me against it.

“ After being nearly five months with the Hudson Bay party, I fell ill, and was on my back with dysentery for six months. That was

a rough time, I can tell you, and if I hadn't belonged to the Sons of England, I hardly know how the wife and young 'uns would have pulled through. When I got my strength again, I struck this job, where I'm very comfortable. Of course that illness put me back a lot, but I reckon we're just beginning to turn the corner now. I've invested in a nice bit of land across the river—50 feet by 185—and it cost 275 dollars, which I'm paying off on the instalment plan at 8 per cent. interest. We've got a good shack on it, 20 feet by 12 feet, and another one 13 by 10, with a lean-to 10 by 8. Then there's a good well, and a shed in which I do odd jobs."

The immigrant must, of course, adapt himself to Canadian conditions; and some Englishmen waste a little time in the process, as is shown by the experiences of Y——, who experimented with many opportunities before settling down to the carman's job by which he now supports his family.

"A friend of mine," Y—— mentioned in the course of his disclosures, "was always on to me to go in for farm work. That was the best way to earn money, he said, if you didn't mind having it rough at the start. I wasn't quite so

sure about it myself, only I thought I'd give it a trial just to see. So off I went to a farming job."

"And how did you get on?" I was curious to learn.

"Well, the farmer seemed a good enough sort, and at first I fancied we might hit it together all right. But on the third day, what do you think he wanted me to do? There was a bit of a swamp on his farm—pretty near a pond, it was—and he'd got the idea in his head to plough it, if you please, only first of all I was to go slopping about to get the roots out. I told him there was no sense in bothering about a place like that when he'd got better land all round. But he was regular obstinate about it, and said I'd got to do it. Got to, mind you! I pretty soon let him see he'd mistaken his man. If he wanted those roots out, I said, he'd better get 'em out himself—I certainly wasn't going in up to my ankle to please him or anybody else. With that I took and left him. And you won't catch me back at farming in a hurry, I can assure you."

On a list of sample names with which I was courteously furnished by the Central London Committee, X—— and Y—— figured as emi-

grants by whom, up to the time of my departure from England, no portion of their loans had been repaid. Nor in either case is the temporary failure (for I think it will have proved only temporary,) very surprising.

The problem of the recovery of these loans is one on which analogy may throw some light. It may not be generally known that the Salvation Army has become the greatest emigration force in the world. Of the thousands of British families who go to Canada every year under those auspices, the great majority are not otherwise connected with General Booth's organisation, to which, moreover, they lay themselves under no financial obligation. The Army's Emigration Department is a sort of Cook's Agency run in the interests of humanity, those who book through that channel being assured, along the line of travel, as well as at their destination, of uniformed friends who save them from discomfort, hindrances, and loss of money. But one comparatively small branch of the Army's work is associated with assisted passages, and the instructive fact must be recorded that the Army has secured a much higher ratio of repayments than have the Committees. Every

settled part of the country has its local corps, and wherever the new-comer may go, and however often he may shift his location, the uniformed friends are at hand to keep him in touch with his better self. Little wonder, then, that, with increasing experience and improving organisation, the Army's satisfactory results under this head tend to become still more satisfactory. Where remissness is inexcusable, Colonel Lamb's department does not hesitate to invoke compulsion. So far, however, no defaulter has been brought into court, the starting of the legal machinery having had in each case the desired effect.

The London and provincial Committees have at present no organisation of their own in Canada, and it is impossible that they should ever have an organisation so widespread and effective as the Salvation Army. The conclusion, therefore, to which I came, when pursuing my investigations in Canada, was that efficiency and economy would best be secured by joint action on the part of the Committees and the Army. Since returning to this country, I have made the agreeable discovery, on reading a booklet called "The Surplus," that

General Booth's organisation has already acted for the Committees, and other local authorities, in connection with the recovery of the loans those bodies have made to emigrants. It appears that the Army did not secure so high a ratio of repayments in these cases as in its own cases ; but since this result was traced to causes that are capable of removal (and which, I imagine, would not survive half an hour's fraternal conference between the parties concerned), the public may surely count on seeing an important social experiment go forward on the lines of greatest promise.

Since I have given typical cases of postponed repayment, it is but right I should give a typical case of prompt repayment.

Z—— also figured on my little list of Central London names.

“ Yes,” said the Canadian Northern foreman at the Saskatoon office where I made my inquiries, “ I seem to know that name. Ah ! ” —on consulting a pay-sheet—“ here he is. Been with us over eighteen months. Good, steady worker, evidently. You'll find him on bridge construction, thirty miles along our road. Never, I see, earns less than fifteen dollars a week. That's the type of man we are always looking for.”

CHAPTER X

A PLEA FOR TRAINING GROUNDS

Objection to communities—"Sparrow" and "Broncho"—Interviews at cross-purposes—Mr. Bruce Walker's story of the loafer—Criticisms from Mr. W. D. Scott—Case of magisterial indiscretion—Canadian opinion explained—Unwise emigration during recent years—Wholesome effect of present restrictions—English wastrels in Canadian cities—The improvement in 1910—Lord Strathcona's testimony—Statement by the Minister of the Interior—Prosperous settlers from English cities—A case for preferential treatment—Wanted, a stepping-stone—How farmers are lost to Canada—Mr. Rowland's suggestion—The "green" man's need of three dexterities—Interview with the Prime Minister of Manitoba—Mr. Oliver's views—The Londoner's "mental alertness"—On the Salvation Army's programme—Experimental farms of the Federal Government—Provincial agricultural colleges—Training grounds in England—Successful emigration societies—The appeal to our farm labourers.

A LARGE majority of assisted immigrants from British cities congregate in industrial centres

of Eastern Canada ; and this, I think, is a pity. It is contrary to their own interests, and to Canada's, that they should live in communities—a state that delays their adaptation to new conditions.

An immigrant from the Old Country necessarily arrives with notions—on points ranging from how bricks should be carried to the proper time for meals—that conflict with notions obtaining in the new country. Assertions by the dogmatic Britisher, and denials by the sensitive Canadian, generate an ill-feeling that only passes away when the new-comer frankly falls in with prevailing ideas. Then he no longer hears himself addressed as a “sparrow” (for Canadians are still sore over the importation of a bird that has proved a nuisance) or a “broncho” (which, being interpreted, means a kicker).

A larger number of immigrants from our cities should, it seems to me, seek the wider opportunities that Central Canada and New Ontario afford—a view, by the way, that seemed to receive no very enthusiastic support from most of the Dominion statesmen and officials who favoured me with interviews. They talked about the London emigrant, and

I talked about the London emigrant, but it was clear that we had very different human types in our minds.

"Now, it's no good," exclaimed Mr. E. Marquette, at Montreal, "sending over a lot of wastrels and loafers. We only want good, steady workers."

"Some of the people from your slums," said Mr. Bruce Walker (Assistant-Superintendent of Immigration), at Winnipeg, "are quite useless. I'll give you an instance. The man said he was a carpenter, and I found him a job. Then it came to my knowledge that he hadn't gone to it, and I sent to ask why. Because he hadn't any tools, he replied. So I sent him money to buy tools with. But a week later I found he still hadn't gone to the job, and again I asked why. Because he didn't like the look of that job, he said, and he wanted me to find him another. So I found him another job in the next town, but he didn't go to that, either. I asked what was wrong this time. He explained that I hadn't sent him the money for his fare, so how could I expect him to go? Well, I sent him the money for his fare. But a few days later I was communicating with him at the old address—would

he please explain why he hadn't taken up his work in the next town? Because I hadn't sent the money to pay his wife's fare! So I sent the money to pay his wife's fare. Still, however, he tarried, and once more I had to trouble him for an explanation. It now appeared that he had changed his mind—he wanted me to find him a painter's job. Then I paid a personal call on that couple. I saw the wife. 'Now, my good woman,' I said, 'that husband of yours hasn't done a stroke of work since he's been in Canada, but he has let you slave away at the washtub' (for I'd been making inquiries) 'and he has been spending your hard-earned money in the liquor saloons.' 'Yes,' she retorted indignantly, 'and why shouldn't he have his glass of beer? He shan't go short if I can help it, not for the likes of you or anybody else.' In the end I had to deport them."

"Some of the worst people we have received," said Mr. W. D. Scott, the Superintendent of Immigration, "have come from London and your other big cities. It is quite out of the question that England should dump its useless material on our shores. Indeed, we have had to enforce regulations to put a stop to

that sort of thing. As for men who come into this country under a promise to take up farming work, and then refuse to go on the land—well, that is misrepresentation, and if cases of the sort occur again, we really shall have to make that in itself a ground for deportation.”

“And in the past it hasn't been limited to loafers”—to again quote Mr. Bruce Walker. “Some of your petty criminals have been exported to this country. Only a few months ago I read a report from one of your courts, where two lads had been found guilty of theft. It was their first offence, and the magistrate gave them an option—to go to prison for six weeks or to go to Canada. Really your magistrates ought to know better than to try and use this country as a sort of penal settlement. But ignorance of Canadian conditions was not limited to the bench—it was also noticeable in the dock. For those two young rascals elected to go to prison.”

And in the inquiries that elicited these responses I had been referring to the carefully chosen, hard-working men of good antecedents assisted to Canada by the London and provincial Committees! Thus at the beginning

of my interviews with those officials, we were hopelessly at sixes and sevens; though, of course, before conversation had advanced very far I made it clear that their strictures did not apply, since I was speaking of persons whose selection for emigration was in itself a guarantee of their industry and integrity.

Let me explain how it comes about that, at the first mention of assisted emigration, official Canada utters a note of anxious lamentation. For several years before the Committees began their work, the Church Army and other charitable bodies, acting from the highest motives, and encouraged by the free facilities and bonuses given by the Canadian Government, had been emigrating our weak and broken men in shiploads, the humane motive being "to give them another chance in a new land." When Canadians came to rub shoulders with these strange recruits to a busy and strenuous nation, amazement spread through the provinces—amazement that passed from indignation to dismay; and a public opinion was generated that found expression when the Federal Government, in the spring of 1908, enforced its present restrictions on immigration.

Now, it came about that, before Canadian feeling culminated in executive action, the Committees had already entered the field ; and thus their excellent emigrants, and the far inferior ones who had provoked official safeguards, came under a common classification, and remain participators in a common reputation.

One satisfactory feature of the situation is that the restrictions have raised the standard of emigrants all round ; and it needs but the lapse of time before " assisted immigrant," as a general term, will cease to excite apprehension. Meanwhile, alas !—since deportation enactments are not retrospective in their application—the undesirables who arrived a few years ago still wander about the streets, and haunt the saloons, of Toronto, Montreal, and other cities—dilapidated idlers, content to live by cadging ; wily practitioners on the compassion of kindly folk ; men whose nearest approach to work is, occasionally, to tend cattle on ships and trains ; a vagrant breed wholly out of place in Canada's population of workers : their presence serving as a reminder and a warning.

That the day of the wastrel is past, however,

and that the "assisted immigrant" promises to prove a factor of increasing value in Canadian development, the proof is not far to seek. Reporting from London to the Minister of the Interior in June, 1910, Lord Strathcona, the High Commissioner, wrote: "I am glad to be able to add that the class of immigrants now pouring into Canada is, I am assured, of a most excellent character." Let me quote later, and still more positive, testimony. In an interview with which he favoured me in October, 1910, the Minister of the Interior (the Hon. Frank Oliver) said: "The immigrants that we have received this year have fully realised the expectations we based on our restrictions. They have been thoroughly satisfactory—certainly in no previous year have we had a finer contingent from Great Britain."

Nor, it is interesting to note, have they often had a larger contingent. Indeed, in 1910, for the first time, the number of persons who emigrated from Great Britain to Canada exceeded the number who emigrated from Great Britain to the United States.

During my explorations in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta I happened upon many



"PROSPERO'S FARMERS WHO A FEW YEARS AGO WERE URBAN OR SUBURBAN MEMBERS OF THE ENGLISH WORKING CLASSES" (PAGE 107). THIS IS THE ACTUAL HOMESTEAD OF AN EX-ARTISAN FROM PLUMSTEAD.

prosperous farmers who a few years ago were urban or suburban members of the English working classes. Nay, among them I found some of the leading prize-winners in grain-growing competitions—a circumstance apparently identified with a readiness (not always observable in a lifelong tiller of the soil) to devote time and thought, and apply original methods, in preparing a fine, loose, level seed-bed.

A small proportion of the West Ham Committee's emigrants have, I am told, gone on the land, where they are making satisfactory progress. I would like to see the process of selection directed more definitely to the discovery of men and couples who, swayed either by early antecedents or an educated preference, are anxious to take up agriculture, first by hiring themselves to established farmers, and afterwards by entering for their own homesteads. Farming affords the new-comer a surer prospect of securing a substantial financial footing (as the reward, be it remembered, of hard work and perseverance) than any other calling he is likely to adopt.

The fact that, in the first years, farm work yields a smaller return than factory work need

not, it seemed to me, prevent this development, though it is a good argument for preferential treatment in the repayment of loans. The average sum due from the 54 emigrants (representing, with their dependents, 123 persons) assisted to Canada in 1909 by the West Ham Committee was £15 10s., the loans fluctuating between £78 2s. and £1 10s. and being repayable therefore over periods varying from three months to thirteen years. Thus it would introduce only one new variation into a situation already full of variety if, in the case of emigrants who go on the land, the rate of repayment were fixed at five shillings, instead of ten shillings, per month; though the scope of that concession could be limited to five years, from which term the balance of the loan might justly be repayable in monthly instalments of £1.

It is desirable, moreover, that there should be, in Canada, some machinery for introducing city emigrants to the soil. Farmers show no unwillingness to hire "green" men, whom they agree to instruct in the simple principles of prairie grain growing. But often enough, being busy workers and untrained in the teacher's art, their criticism of the novice

assumes a vehement form which, if his temperament errs on the side of sensitiveness, occasions his prompt withdrawal from the tilled field.

Discussing with me this aspect of the situation, Mr. Charles F. Roland, Commissioner of the Winnipeg Development and Industrial Bureau, threw out a suggestion—as one that was receiving the attention of his colleagues—for establishing a practical agricultural recruiting ground, where the Londoner could be taught to milk a cow, drive a Canadian plough, and harness a Canadian team. Less than a month's tuition and practice would, Mr. Roland pointed out, equip the right sort of man with those three dexterities; and, armed with a certificate of proficiency, he would embark on his new career with confidence, and be enabled to receive better wages than a "green" man, at the outset, is in a position to command. The only question on which Mr. Roland and his colleagues were doubtful, it appeared, concerned the authority that might properly be asked to defray the initial cost of this innovation. Nor was it possible to encourage a hope that the British Government would feel moved to act in the matter.

Being privileged, on the following day, to discuss questions of colonisation with the Hon. R. P. Roblin, I mentioned this proposal for establishing a stepping-stone between the cities of Great Britain and the soil of Canada.

“By all means,” replied the Prime Minister of Manitoba. “That seems an excellent idea. Everything should be done that will bring people on to the land. In this province alone we have 20,000,000 agricultural acres awaiting settlement. We therefore could absorb, and should welcome, a quarter of a million of your people if they were prepared to take up farming, in which pursuit they may feel assured that industry will yield a rich reward. But I may tell you at once that, in my opinion, the cost of such an establishment as you mention should not fall on the Government of Manitoba. The benefit would not be restricted to any one province, and therefore the charge should be defrayed by the Federal Government.”

Nor did I fail, on arriving at Ottawa, to ventilate this matter further in my interview with the Hon. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, who is responsible for moulding and carrying out the Dominion's immigration

policy. He, too, thought well of the suggestion. "But," he added, "it is not for the Canadian Government to establish an institution of the sort. Our policy is to hold out open arms to your agriculturists, who are, in our opinion, the finest in the world. We want the English and Scotch farmers to come over here and teach us how to farm. For us to set up an institution for teaching Englishmen how to farm would be entirely to reverse the position. Besides, 'once a city man, always a city man' is, I am afraid, the rule."

That a landward tendency was manifesting itself in our city population, though more particularly in the middle class, and that Londoners had been largely recruited from rural districts, were points I ventured to submit, coupled with allusion to the many Cockneys whom I had found as prosperous farmers out on the prairie.

"Yes, yes," conceded Mr. Oliver, "I know there is much to be said from that side of the question; and please understand that we do appreciate what I would call the mental alertness of the Londoner—a quality which no doubt, when he takes up farming seriously, not merely carries him through, but may well

give him an advantage over agriculturists whose intellectual antecedents, so to speak, have been more restricted than those he has enjoyed. Still, having regard to the declared policy of the Government, we must leave it to others to provide improved avenues, and initiate fresh facilities, for transferring people from the towns of Great Britain to the land of Canada. But the difference between us is, after all, largely one of point of view. The promoters of emigration on your side, and the promoters of immigration on our side, are moving towards a common goal. We are working at the problem from our end; you are working at it from your end."

Finally, I mentioned the proposal for a training ground to the gentleman who guides the Salvation Army's immigration work in Canada. "How curious," he exclaimed, "that you should bring that suggestion to me! We have thought of the same thing. It is on our programme to establish such a place."

He was not in a position to enter into details; but later inquiries enable me to foreshadow the establishment by the Salvation Army of training grounds in Ontario and Manitoba, it being thought, moreover, that the Maritime

Provinces are not without possibilities in this direction.

I make the foregoing announcement with great satisfaction. These training grounds will put a finishing touch to Canada's admirable and widespread system of agricultural education. From the Atlantic to the Pacific the Federal Government has established a chain of thirteen experimental farms—institutions that not merely apply the test of locality to desirable forms of vegetation, but gratuitously distribute trees, seed, and knowledge to applicants from among the general public. Then the Provincial Governments, besides fostering a love of Nature and farming in their elementary schools, have established fine agricultural academies, such as the Manitoba College at Winnipeg (with its practical short courses for farmers and farmers' wives), and the Ontario College at Guelph (which attracts pupils from England, Germany, Japan, and New Zealand). Thus facilities exist for what may be called secondary and higher education. The Army training grounds will constitute facilities for elementary education—for elementary education of a severely practical form and mainly in the interests of immigrants from English cities who desire to become Canadian farmers.

On this side of the Atlantic efforts have been made to establish training farms for emigrants. But the attempt to reproduce Canadian conditions in England could hardly be very successful; and the value of such farms has been in the direction of testing men's suitability for out-door life rather than of training them for it.

It will be understood that my references to the assisted immigrant have not applied only, or mainly, to persons sent to Canada by the London and provincial Committees. I came across many prosperous settlers who had crossed under the auspices of the East End Emigration Society, the Charity Organisation Society, the Self-Help Emigration Society, and kindred organisations.

Canada makes its official appeal to the farmers and farm labourers of Great Britain (and, having regard to the miserable wages ruling on this side, and the splendid prospects offered on the other, I am only surprised that the latter, at any rate, do not emigrate in a body). Canada, I think, does not fully realise how great is the number of agricultural recruits it can receive from among the middle and artisan classes of urban centres in the Old Country.

CHAPTER XI

EXPERIENCES OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS LAD

Willie's school days and early prospects—Why he went to Canada—An unathletic young "tender foot"—Quotations from his diary—Flying fish, sleighs, and half-breeds—Arrival in Saskatchewan—Engaged at ten dollars a month—The shacks—Cleaning, stoning, and discing—The doctor's prairie fire—Chasing a wolf—Troublesome cattle—Willie's second engagement—A grumbling employer—Herding steers, cows, and a bull—First "lessons" in driving—Willie's service dispensed with—His controversy about wages—He gets another berth—A day's work in detail—Willie learns to plough and drive—Left in charge of the farm—Stacking hay single-handed—Bathing, picnics, and pleasant Sundays—Willie joins a threshing gang—Working for ten shillings a day—An engagement for the winter—His duties as hall porter—A typewriting and shorthand job—Working on the railway section—Glorious January weather—Willie nearly takes up a homestead—Over £50 saved in eighteen months—Willie as I found him—Nine jobs to choose from.

WILLIE, to look at him, was just an ordinary, good-natured lad with ruddy cheeks, a slight

frame, and a grin. For a boy he was singularly free from conceit and self-assurance. He seemed to regard the world as a place full of more important persons than himself, and he gave one the idea of being perpetually grateful because everybody liked him.

When the time arrived for Willie to leave boarding school—where he had gained no special distinction—the question of his future became a puzzle both for his father and himself. Willie had never expressed, and apparently had never felt, any pronounced preference as between a professional and a commercial career; and whether it was desirable to make him a tailor, an engineer, a poet, or a fishmonger, nobody knew.

The only hint of a personal bias was that Willie had sometimes said he thought he should like to write, though he was afraid he never could do it. Acting on this dubious clue, the father installed the son as a boy clerk—at six shillings a week—in the office of a learned society; it being further arranged that he should read up for the Second Division of the Civil Service—some years of that sort of thing not having proved hurtful to the literary genius of Charles Lamb and W. W. Jacobs.

At the examination Willie secured high marks for his essays, but a slovenliness observable in other subjects—notably as regarded the bottle of ink he upset over his arithmetic papers—caused him to be plucked.

Grinning contentedly to himself, he set to work with renewed diligence to get through next time. But there was destined to be no next time.

Willie's brother developed lung weakness; and in Willie's case, as a measure of prevention, the healthy life of Canada was prescribed. In no wise put out by the altered current of his affairs, Willie set sail from the Old Country, on March 19, 1909, with a few pounds in his pocket, and with no policy more settled than to accompany a certain Mr. and Mrs. R—as far as they were going.

Willie had never been one for cricket or football—indeed, besides a little pensive angling, and an occasional spin on his bicycle, he indulged in no sports. He was a quiet, fireside sort of boy. In him the Dominion received a young "tender foot" if ever there was one.

Now, Willie happens to be a friend of mine, and accordingly I made a point, when in

Canada, of looking him up. What is more, having a mind to take a holiday, Willie accompanied my brother and myself for a fortnight of our further travels—during which time I persuaded him to lend me the diary he had kept since leaving England.

Written with candour, and a capacity for simple literary expression, this diary affords an instructive record of the experiences likely to befall middle-class lads who seek their fortunes in Canada. Therefore, with Willie's permission, I am going to reveal, in Willie's own words, what happened to Willie.

Over the journey we may pass lightly. "I came on deck after breakfast," he tells us, "and on reaching the top of the stairs, I saw before me the New World. It was raining fast. The sky looked grey, the sea looked grey, and the land looked cold and unwelcome. It was one of the islands at the entrance to Halifax harbour. . . ."

"Next morning we entered the Bay of Fundy, and while pacing the deck I saw a flying-fish fluttering over the grey waters." Landing at St. John, he got on the train. "The railway carriages and engines seem very different from those in England. The engines



AN AUTUMN SCENE : THE UNTILLED PRAIRIE, SHOWING "THE DARK-LOOKING LINES OF BEEPS" (PAGE 182)

are bigger, and each has a large headlight, and a big bell that is rung on passing a crossing. . . . Next morning we were passing through a part of the United States—the State of Maine. . . . On Tuesday morning we stopped for a time at North Bay, Ontario, and thus were able to go into the town and get a good breakfast. The majority of the houses were of wood, prettily painted and differing in size and architecture. Snow was still on the ground, and horses with tinkling bells on their harness were drawing sleighs about. . . . We stopped soon after at a little village in the middle of the forest. Some half-breeds were passing, and also a sleigh drawn by three Eskimo dogs.”

Arriving in due course at Earl Grey, Saskatchewan, Willie spent a few days assisting Mr. and Mrs. R—— to get their shack into shape. “The shack,” he notes, “is an unpainted wooden building, consisting of two rooms, one 20 by 12, the other slightly smaller. There are no fireplaces like those in England, but big stoves that burn wood.”

Willie met several farmers of the neighbourhood and told them he wanted a job. “I arranged,” he records, “with young John S——

to work for him for ten dollars a month. His shack is 12 by 8, and also built of wood, with turfs on the roof.

“ Our first occupation was to bag grain and put it in the stable. Next we cleaned it, putting it through the fanning machine to separate the wheat from other seeds and dirt. After that it was dipped in bluestone—a deadly poison—to rid it of all smuts. Two half-days we spent on a field about four miles away, picking stones and carting them away. Two other half-days were spent in discing a field near the shack. The mornings were very cold, and work on the land could often not be started until afternoon. In addition to the frost we had some snow. One of the horses is a white broncho that strongly objects to work at the discs.

“ April 18. We spent the morning repairing a fence to protect the hay. Yesterday evening we drove a man over to the doctor's, where he worked. It seemed that the doctor had attempted to burn a fire-guard round his house, but a wind had sprung up and carried the fire right across the prairie. As we neared the doctor's house, which is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Earl Grey, we had to pass right by a part of the fire. . . .

“April 20. I put thirty dollars into the Savings Bank Department of the Northern Crown Bank. . . .

“April 21st. In the early morning there were several blizzards. In the afternoon we drove over to Mr. S—— senior, and spent the afternoon at his place. On our way back we saw a wolf following one of Mr. S——’s calves. We gave chase, and kept it up for some time, but our buggy did not go as fast as the wolf and we never got within revolver shot. John S—— carries such a weapon with him. . . .

“April 22nd. Twice during the day we have had to drive away the cattle of neighbouring farmers. For the last week or so they have paid repeated visits to our hay. Among the methods we have tried for getting rid of them are blank cartridges, wire fencing, sticks, stones, and Jack, the dog. The last is the most effective. . . .

“May 3rd. As the boss had to plough and disc and seed some land on a homestead about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the town, and as the work would take about a fortnight, we went up there and stayed, living in the shack and putting up a rough shelter for the horses. . . . From this shack, which is on a slight elevation, a good

view can be obtained. The distant blue-looking prairie appears very much like the sea, and the dark-looking lines of bluffs resemble rocks. At this time of year many farmers are burning the stubble off their land, and in the evening streaks of red flames are to be seen in all directions.

“ May 12th. In the evening a man named Rackpool drove up and said he wanted a hand on his farm. John S—— then told me that, after my month was up, he would not be able to pay for any more help until harvest. Rackpool said he would give me ten dollars a month, and wanted me to herd cattle. I had a very vague idea what that meant. He said he would probably keep me until harvest, so I agreed to go with him. . . .

“ Rackpool came for me in his buggy. He said he could not take my box, but would send for it soon. We did not arrive at his place until the evening. He has 320 acres and a nice house. . . .

“ I stayed there for a little over a fortnight. Rackpool was always grumbling at me. He made no attempt to get my box, and I found it very difficult to get a good wash. On the other hand, I had a bed, and a bedroom to

myself. We got up at 5 a.m., and while Rackpool milked the cows, I fed and cleaned and harnessed the horses. Then I cleaned out the stable, and took the pig a pail of swill and shorts. At about six we had breakfast. Then I took my dinner in a box and drove the cattle out. I had to follow them round everywhere they went, and keep them from getting into the wheat crops. There were about twenty of them—cows, steers, calves, and a bull. They made a point of giving me as much trouble as possible. However, the work was fairly easy; but I was learning nothing about wheat-farming.

“When I had been there a little over a week, the cattle were put in a large pasture of which the fences had just been repaired. Then for a few days I helped Rackpool cart piles of stones from around the fields to where a milk-house was to be erected. I also tried my hand at driving, but Rackpool used to stand in the wagon behind me, and every minute he would be grumbling and yelling at me; so progress was slow.

“May 31st. After dinner I went to ask him what I should be doing while he was away, for he was going to drive into Earl

Grey. He told me I had better come with him as he had no further use for me, because I could neither drive nor plough properly. When he engaged me he asked if I had done any ploughing or driving, and I said, 'No.'

"He said he would pay me five dollars for the fortnight I had been with him. As he had engaged me for so much a month, he ought to have paid me the full month's wage—ten dollars. We had a little argument about the matter, but I could not get the other five dollars from him."

Willie was out of a job for three days, and those three days he spent in "doing some ploughing for Mr. R—."

The new engagement—once more at ten dollars a month, plus board and lodging—was with Mr. H—. "There is a Mrs. H—" we learn, "and three small children. The shack is two-roomed, and built of wood. There is a large stable that has room for eight horses, two cows, and calves. Four of the horses belong to Mr. A—, who lives on the next quarter-section, and is in a sort of partnership with Mr. H. He also has a young chap newly out from England, and commonly called Jack."

Our diarist mentions the heat and the mos-

quitos. When he has been with Mr. H— about a month, he sketches the “daily routine of work” as follows :

“ 5 a.m.-5.30. Rise, milk cows, feed and clean down horses. Mr. H— usually milks while I attend to the horses. About 6 a.m., have a wash and breakfast. After breakfast I saw wood and get water from the well, while Mr. H— harnesses the horses. At about 7 a.m. we commence work on the land. This has chiefly consisted of breaking the prairie for sowing with wheat next year. When the land had been disced and harrowed, I painted the house. Afterwards I did some drag-harrowing, and later on I disced an extra piece of land on which oats were hand sown, as the drill had been returned.

“ But to come back to the breaking—we have four good horses and a sulky plough. At first Mr. H. did all the ploughing, while I walked behind, kicking down any bits of earth that had not fallen properly, and eradicating stones with a pick or crowbar. But after a time I did a round or two on the sulky, and am gradually becoming more proficient in the art of driving a plough. It certainly is an art.

“ When you start a furrow, there is a lever to press down with the foot. Then there are two other levers—one on the right and one on the left. These have to be manipulated, and there are also the reins to hold, and the whip. It can therefore be seen that at least half a dozen hands are necessary. I have only two. Then one has to keep one’s eyes on the four horses, on the furrow wheel, on the furrow itself, and on—everything else.

“ This morning I have been ploughing alone while Mr. H— went to visit a neighbour. In the afternoon I cleaned out the well and banked it round. But to return to the programme.

“ At noon we come in to dinner, first un-harnessing the horses and putting them in the pasture. After dinner, I clean out the stable, bring up the horses’ feed, and harness them. Then work goes on until 6 p.m. At this hour we come in from the fields, unharness the horses, and give them oats. Tea is the next item on the programme, and afterwards the horses are turned out and the cows brought up to the stable and milked. This I usually do. Then any odd jobs are done, and the day’s work is over. I usually end up with a wash, and am then ready for bed.”

Our Willie, it will be noted, is learning to do things. Subsequent pages contain these items: "I built a pig pen of poplar poles and turf"; "Busy helping to load the wagons and stack the hay"; "I broke the axe-handle while chopping wood"; "While I was driving the rake, something went wrong with the whipple-tree"; "I drove in to Bulyea in the morning."

Nor is evidence lacking that our young friend was found worthy to be left in charge of the farm: "Mr. H—, Mr. A—, and Jack went stooking for B—. I loaded and stacked the remaining hay-cocks—two big loads. Heavy work, haying alone! I also found it very hot, and the mosquitoes were a regular nuisance. While hauling the first load Jolly and Bess nearly upset the wagon. The cows and calves were also very tantalising. Marie ate up some oats while I was driving Codlin home."

Next day the distribution of labour was apparently reversed, for we read: "I went and did some stooking for B—."

One is relieved to find, from a brief entry here and there, that recreation was not entirely neglected. Several times there is mention of a "jolly picnic" at one or other of the neigh-

bouring farms. Often this item occurs: "Had a bathe with Jack in the big lake." Pleasant Sundays spent with his friends Mr. and Mrs. R— seem to have been the rule.

Five months have now elapsed since Willie arrived in Canada. At about this time, it is clear, he recognises his fitness to earn proper wages. We read:

"At the end of my three months' work with Mr. H— I left, and set out to get work on a threshing gang. Managed to strike Johnson's gang, Monday, Sept. 6th, and was hired at two and a half dollars per day and board. The first afternoon I did pitching. It seemed a very long afternoon's work, and I was pretty tired at the finish. Then for two days I drove a team. . . . Gradually I got more used to the work, although I was about the slowest pitcher there was. . . . We dined in a canvas structure on wheels, which was drawn from farm to farm by oxen. There was a sleeping caboose attached to the outfit, but most of the English-speaking party preferred to sleep outside of it."

Willie remained in the threshing gang long enough to earn sixty-three dollars (over £12).



WHERE WILIE BATHED.

“Then,” he writes, “I walked into Bulyea to look for work for the winter. I got a job at the hotel to dig a cellar for one dollar a day and board. . . . One night I worked an hour and a half overtime, and altogether I earned 13 dollars 37 cents.”

Afterwards, rather than be idle, he became porter at the hotel for ten dollars a month, with board and lodging. Here is his entry for Christmas Day :

“As usual, I got up at 4.30 a.m., and went down to the station. It was a glorious morning; clear and frosty and moonlight. On returning from the station, I lit the kitchen fire, drew some water, fetched in some coal, and ground some coffee. Then I attended to the furnace. At about 6 o'clock I called Rosie, the cook. She did not come downstairs until 7.30. Between 6 and 7.30 I dozed before the kitchen fire. Between 7.30 and 8.30 I got my breakfast, and then waited at table. After breakfast I again attended to the furnace, and then, taking my broom, I commenced to sweep out the two sitting-rooms, the stairs, the hall, and the washroom, and afterwards dusted the furniture in these rooms. I then went upstairs and cleaned up. This done, I fetched

in more coal and water. I next took some hot water up to my room and had a good wash. When I came down, I helped Carl set the table, and then, when dinner was ready, we both waited at table and then got our own dinner. It consisted of turkey with cranberry sauce and cabbage salad and two vegetables, followed by mince and apple pie, and 'Charlotte ruste,' a Yankee dish, very nice, but still, not plum-pudding. Dinner over, I cleaned out the dirty dishes in the kitchen and swept up the crumbs. Then I fetched in more water, coal, and wood. My day's work was now done, and I had got the Sunday off. . . . On Sunday, we went to church in the afternoon. There was a big congregation. A baby was christened."

At the beginning of the year, the hotel proprietor heard of some one who would act as porter and also, on occasion, serve in the bar (which Willie positively refused to do). So on Friday, January, 14th, we find our young friend working in a new capacity. He had been engaged to do shorthand and typewriting for five dollars a week.

"Typing seemed very strange," he mentions, "as I had not practised it for so long.

But the shorthand was easy, as I had kept in practice by taking down the sermons in church of a Sunday. I had a very easy time. I reached the office at 8 o'clock, but Mr. M— did not arrive until nearly 10. So after lighting the stove and sweeping the floor, I had a lot of time for practising typing."

On the following Tuesday, he wrote: "I find myself getting more proficient in typing, and to-day I copied quite a number of by-laws. . . .

"When my week was up, Mr. M— said he would pay me one dollar a day, if I cared to stay on. Well, I had heard that there was a man wanted on the railway section, and as the pay was one dollar seventy cents a day, I thought I would take it on. On Friday night I saw the section foreman and made arrangements to come on Monday. . . .

"Monday, 24th Jan. Started work on the line. It seemed very hard at first, and the wretched influenza which I thought I had thrown off showed itself when I began to do muscular work."

Soon he sounds a more cheerful note: "All this month" [January] "the weather has been superb. In fact, with the exception of a few

days, there has been no severe winter weather at all as yet. These last few days everybody has been going about without overcoats or gloves. Bright clear days with brilliant warm sunshine."

Willie remained working on the section from January until the day of my arrival in September, when he resigned from the gang. But his long course of strenuous toil had been interrupted by one short spell of leisure. Under date of April 15th, he wrote: "Got one of my fingers crushed under a rail and the nail rooted out. So I decided to take a few days off to see if I could find a nice homestead."

Following some long tramps, he alighted upon a quarter-section to his liking, and paid the customary ten dollars to secure it. However, after he had returned to his labours on the C.P.R., a Government official wrote returning the ten dollars and explaining that a mistake had been made, since there was an earlier entry for that particular homestead.

On second thoughts, Willie decided that perhaps it would be premature for him to take up his own quarter-section; and when I saw him he had invested his savings (over £50)

in certain town sites for which he anticipates a rosy future.

The raw and weedy youth who left England eighteen months before had become a strong and self-reliant man. There was only a bright, wholesome grin to associate the new Willie with the old Willie.

Our paths parted at Edmonton, the handsome and prosperous capital of Alberta. It was at breakfast that my brother and I announced our intention of pushing on. Willie said he thought it was about time he started work again.

"What work will you do here?" I asked.

"Don't know," replied Willie.

"Unfortunately you are a complete stranger to everybody in this city," I pointed out.

"That'll be all right," replied Willie.

"Well," I suggested, "instead of coming with us this morning, hadn't you better try and get in touch with somebody who would know of an opening?"

"Might be as well," agreed Willie.

We met again at lunch.

"Did you do any any good?" I asked.

"Heard of nine jobs," Willie explained.

"Don't know which I'll take yet. They want

somebody on a railway survey party. That looks the most interesting. But I haven't quite made up my mind whether to take that or a job on bridge construction, which is ten dollars better pay."

CHAPTER XII

THE TWO ONTARIOS

Old Ontario and its origin—Toronto—Agricultural evolution—Peach orchards, vineyards, and tobacco plantations—Dairy farming on a great scale—New Ontario—Why it was overlooked—Its timber and minerals—Sudbury and Cobalt—My experiences in Old Ontario—Enthusiastic farmers—The old Scotchman's experiment—Guelph College: remarkable result of up-to-date tuition—Opportunities for farmer immigrants—"Home" boys—Testimony of Mr. W. D. Scott—Inspecting the little apprentices—Interview with Mr. G. Bogue Smart—Chat with a vivacious lady—Her Barnardo Boy husband—Anecdotes about Sammy—Old Ontario's grievance: why her sons go west—The Grand Trunk Pacific line—New Ontario and the Prairie Provinces: pros and cons—The Great Clay Belt—Development along the Government railway—The right type of settler—Adventures of Mr. and Mrs. Jack.

THERE are two Ontarios, and, from the point of view of the settler, they have nothing in common. The difference between them roughly

corresponds with the difference between England and Canada. One is an old country, already populated ; the other is a new country, inviting pioneers. In rough and ready speech, one is referred to as Ontario, the other as New Ontario. In more precise language, one is Southern or Lower Ontario, the other is Northern or Upper Ontario.

Originally settled, over 120 years ago, by United Empire loyalists from the south, Ontario has long been the most British, the most developed, the most populous, and the most prosperous part of Canada. It has made a great name for itself. It has produced Toronto, which embraces a population of 350,000 persons and of recent years has become one of the finest cities in the world. It has passed through grain-growing to the higher stages of agricultural evolution. Its apple and peach orchards, and its plantations of other fruits, cover hundreds of thousands of acres. Its vineyards (fancy "Our Lady of the Snows" having vineyards!) yield more than 40,000 tons of grapes in a season. It has learnt how to grow tobacco, and already produces over five million pounds of leaf. Its totals of cows and horses, were I to mention

them, would look like sheer exaggeration on my part. It possesses more than £200,000 worth of hived bees, and it numbers its poultry by tens of millions. It contributes two-thirds of the dairy produce of Canada, and Canada annually exports about sixty thousand more tons of cheese than any other country.

But, while achieving all this, Ontario has been very remiss in one particular. Until recent years, it completely overlooked nearly three-fourths of itself. For the Ontario of which I have been speaking is only that south-eastern, and boot-shaped, portion of the province which abuts on the Great Lakes—a mere bit of a place, not much larger than England. The part of Ontario that Ontario has only just discovered, so to speak, is nearly equal in extent to three Englands.

Of similar territorial oversights the recent history of Canada is, of course, full. 8,000,000 people necessarily cannot spread themselves over a country that is large enough, and rich enough, to support over 100,000,000 people. With two or three hundred acres to look after, the average man can get all he wants in the way of geographical exploration on his own property. When he

happens to look at a map, he naturally wonders what certain great areas of land are good for, but he has no time to go and see.

Then, too, in the case of New Ontario, the route of the C.P.R. has served as a sort of libellous advertisement. In an earlier chapter I referred to the railway traveller's sustained experience of a country which consists of nothing but rock. That country is the delight of the occasional artist who sees it, and the despair of the thousands of practical men who constantly pass that way. One recognises a value in forest land and in open land; an expanse of water also suggests useful possibilities; but rock—more particularly disintegrated rock—when it covers the landscape for hundreds of miles, gives the business person a headache.

It was perhaps inevitable that New Ontario should be judged by the sample in sight. But, as the Canadian people now are beginning to realise, the sample in sight is no criterion.

That New Ontario is rich in spruce, cedar, pine, and other valuable trees, has been known in the lumber world for some time; and the number of its logging camps, saw mills, pulp mills and paper mills is large and increasing.

That New Ontario is rich in silver, nickel, copper, iron, and other minerals, has been known in the mining world for some time; and the fame of Sudbury (as the world's chief source of nickel) and of Cobalt (which yielded nearly £2,000,000 worth of silver in 1908) needs no emphasis. That New Ontario possesses some millions of acres as fertile as any in Canada has been known for some time to the authorities, but is not yet known to the public at large. Therefore those acres—which are destined to become New Ontario's chief source of wealth—are now obtainable on terms which can only be described as reasonable. If you are single, you can have one hundred acres for nothing. If you are married, and have a child or children under sixteen years of age, you can have two hundred acres for nothing. Any more that you want you must pay for, the price being two shillings and a halfpenny per acre.

No person instructed in the facts can doubt, I think, that we may read the future history of New Ontario in the past history of Old Ontario—that comparatively small stretch of territory embracing 170,000 farms which, with their buildings, implements, and live-stock,

represent a value of £200,000,000, and which, since 1880, have supplied humanity with £400,000,000 worth of milk, butter, and cheese. Figures like that are, no doubt, vaguely impressive, but Ontario statistics sink into insignificance when once you have seen the Ontario farms and farmers. I visited a number of British settlers at and near Dundas, Woodstock, Brantford and Ingersoll; and it was indeed pleasant to meet them. They are as hearty and happy as our own farmers doubtless would be were it not for landlords, rates, tithes, and the English climate. They are surrounded by varied scenery that put me in mind of Devonshire, Scotland, and the south of France. They are living under skies which give them, not a monotony, but an abundance of sunshine. They are (and I suppose here we touch the chief cause of their jolly faces) making fat livings. I think it is a fair summary of the position to say that they experience the interests of agriculture without the anxieties. One was overflowing with enthusiasm about his new field of alfalfa (or lucerne, as we call it). Another would not give me any peace until I had seen and admired the second silo he had just erected. A third was eloquent

over the advantage of a daily record of the weight of milk yielded by each cow. For, under the fostering care of an energetic Provincial Government, and the stimulus of 334 agricultural societies, dairy-farming in Ontario is pushing on from a high stage of excellence to a higher.

This present-day trend of affairs in Southern Ontario may usefully be illustrated by the testimony of a modest and magnanimous old Scotchman.

“ I have been on this farm,” he told me, “ for fifteen years, but three years ago I handed it over to my eldest boy. It was like this. For twelve years I worked the farm and did well—at least, I was nicely satisfied, and able to put a bit of money in the bank every year. But there was all this talk of doing things a different way than everybody was used to—how this and that ought to be altered, how something else was all wrong, and so forth and so on. I couldn’t see it myself. All the same, I made up my mind to give it a trial. There was my son Henry that I’d always intended should have the place when I got past the work. I’d brought him up with that idea, and I’d taught him to do things according

to my way of doing 'em. But now I altered my plans. I made up my mind he should go to Guelph College—go right through all the courses; and then, when he came back, he should take over the farm, and I'd let him go his own way without interfering. That 'ud show us which was best—the old ideas or the new. I told him before he went, 'Now, Henry, you're starting all over again, mind, and it's those college people you've got to learn from—don't take any notice of what your old Dad has taught you if they tell you something different.' Well, when he came back from Guelph he took charge here, and he's had charge ever since. And what's been the result, do you think? Why, each year he's made just three times as much money out of the place as I did. Three times, mind you! It's simply wonderful."

Small wonder that the market price of well-appointed farms in Old Ontario is about £14 per acre. They are excellent investments for immigrants who have agricultural experience. They would be unwise investments for immigrants who merely have agricultural aspirations. The latter may, however, judiciously serve an apprenticeship on those farms. The

supply of labour, even of unskilled labour, falls lamentably short of the demand. The "green" man who is teachable and industrious readily commands £2 a month, with board and lodging. Of British immigrants whose agricultural aspirations are unsupported by experience, the great majority are placed (by the Salvation Army and other societies) on farms in Old Ontario. It is pointed out to them that, when they have acquired knowledge, they can push west and appropriate their slices of the fertile prairie. Many do so. Others, falling in love with dairy-farming or fruit-growing, stay in the populated province.

Nor is Old Ontario a training ground merely for adults. It receives most of the boys and girls sent out from the Old Country by various bodies—by Poor Law Guardians, by Industrial School committees, and by the benevolent societies, of which Dr. Barnardo's is the chief. These children—the most precious of Great Britain's exports—are known in Canada as "Home boys" and "Home girls." My interest in them had been early aroused by Mr. W. D. Scott, the Superintendent of Immigration.

"Of all the people your country sends to

Canada," he said when visiting me in the steerage of the *Empress of Britain*, "the children are, from many points of view, the most valuable. They have nothing to unlearn. We receive them at the impressionable age, with their characters still unformed. Their ideas receive the Canadian stamp. They become Canadians from the start."

Each boy is apprenticed to a farmer, and is periodically visited by a Government inspector, who sees that the little chap is properly clothed and fed, that he attends school regularly, and that the farmer treats him with kindness. Dr. Barnardo's Homes, and the other institutions, have their own independent staffs of inspectors, whose sole function is to pay surprise visits to the little agricultural apprentices.

At Ottawa Mr. Scott introduced me to his Chief Inspector of British Immigrant Children and Receiving Homes, Mr. G. Bogue Smart, than whom I never met a Government official who took a more enthusiastic interest in his duties.

"It's the most wonderful work of the age," he declared. "Think how handicapped the poor little fellows would be if they remained

in the Old Country. And see how splendidly they turn out in the new country. No other class of immigrants shows anything like the same ratio of successes. More than 95 per cent. of these boys prove quite satisfactory. What is more, fully 75 per cent. of them remain on the land. Perhaps I ought not to say so, but really I feel that the present system of inspection is immensely valuable. It shows a parental interest on the part of the State, and that not only has a fine influence on the boy, but it impresses his employer with the necessity to take care of him. In rare cases a farmer is tyrannical, and the lad is at once removed; but the great majority of farmers and farmers' wives treat the boys like their own sons. Here," he added, taking up a document, "is a recent return dealing with 1,719 boys visited by our inspectors, who report that 1,671 were in 'very good health,' 40 in 'good or fair health,' and only 8 in 'indifferent or unsatisfactory health.'"

"And you have no difficulty in finding good homes for all the children?" I asked.

Mr. Smart smiled.

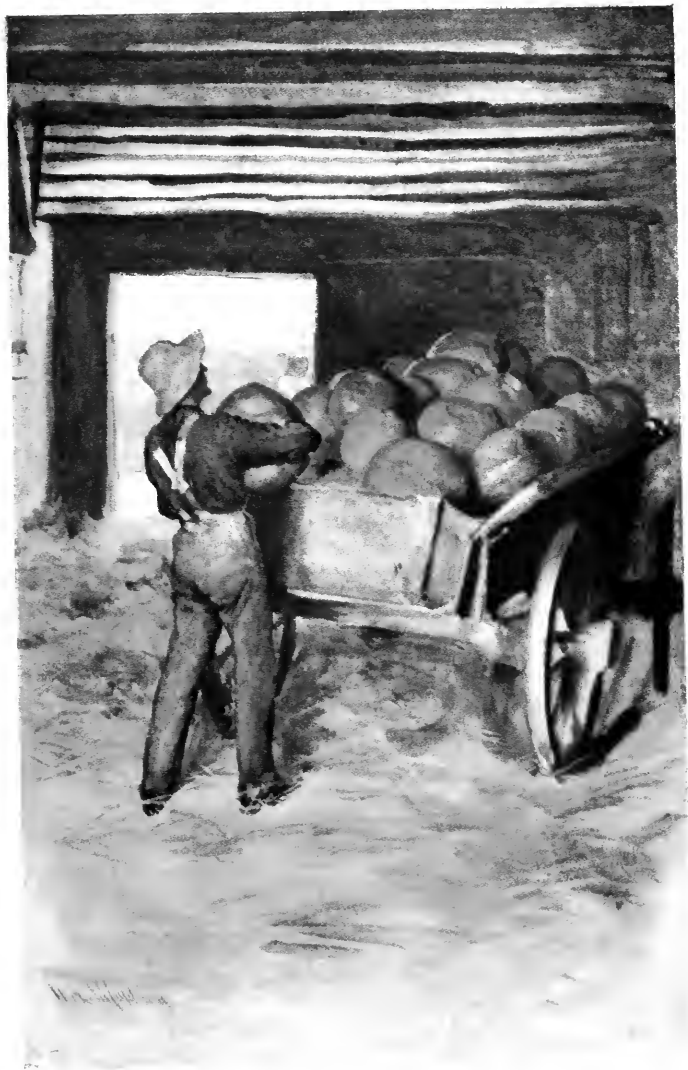
"Why," he exclaimed, "the supply falls ludicrously short of the demand. Here are

some precise figures: During the past nine years we received 19,034 child immigrants, and during that period we received 130,825 applications for children. Obviously there remains very little prejudice against these youngsters. That prejudice was based upon theories of heredity and of the influence attributed to early environment; but the whole fabric of fallacies is knocked to smithereens by the facts. Take this one fact, for instance: during the past three years, from among all the British Poor Law boys under the care of this Department, there has only been one who was charged with a criminal offence. What other class of the community, I should like to know, could show as clean a record?"

In an earlier chapter I spoke of State-aided immigration from our cities as a promising Imperial experiment. The immigration of these youngsters may be described as a triumphant Imperial achievement. For the British Government defrays the cost of the periodical inspection carried out by the Canadian Government.

Into the life of a "Home" boy in his early teens my wanderings yielded an insight.

Among the prosperous Ontario farmers I



LOADING UP PUMPKINS ON A FARM IN OLD ONTARIO

visited was one of whom I gained some particulars from his wife.

“Yes, it’s a pretty farm, isn’t it?” she said, in hearty endorsement of my praise. “It cost 700 dollars, which seemed a lot of money at the time, but my husband felt sure it was good value. He was right, too, for we’ve been able to pay off the last instalment a year before it was due. That makes it so nice now we know everything is paid for. My husband just hates being in debt, and I don’t think it’s very nice either. I expect him in directly—I’m sure you’d like to meet him. He’s not a great talker, but he does like seeing any one who comes from England. Not that he remembers as much about it as I do. But of course I came out with my people several years after he did, and he was only a little boy when he left.”

“The joke was,” this vivacious young woman was presently remarking, “everybody said I was silly to marry him. My two brothers and some cousins of ours made quite a fuss about it. Just as though it was any business of theirs, too! They said I ought to do better than marry a Barnardo boy, as he was sure not to be steady. That is so funny if you

know Charles, especially if you also know the young gentlemen who were so free with their advice. They all smoke—though I don't think much of that—but two of them have been known to drink rather more than is good for them; and that's very different. Charles doesn't do either; and anybody who has seen their places, and then comes and sees ours, wouldn't have much doubt who was the best farmer."

"I suppose they are more reconciled to your marriage now?" I ventured.

"Oh, yes," laughed the lady. "They and Charles are the best of friends, and they all look up to him—they can't help doing so. But it always amuses me to think of what they used to say. As for my brother Fred—he's come to believe there's no living creature to equal a Barnardo boy. He's got one on his farm, and every Sunday, when my brother and his wife come to dinner, we are sure to hear something fresh about their wonderful little Sammy. He certainly seems to be quite a treasure of a boy. When my brother is doing a bit of carpentering, or any other odd job, Sammy is sure to be by his side, ready to help. And he helps in the right way, too—Fred

doesn't have to tell him. One day my brother was up a ladder, putting some new boards on the side of the stable, and he couldn't get a nail out; so he was just coming down to find the pincers—but there was Sammy holding them up for him! He knew what Fred wanted almost before Fred did.

“Sammy doesn't talk much,” she prattled on, “but he is so wonderfully thoughtful. It really used to be a most untidy house—I can't help saying so—but Sammy has altered all that. My sister-in-law is rather absent-minded, you know, and it was nothing unusual for her to be half the afternoon hunting high and low for something she had mislaid. Now all she has to do is to ask Sammy—he always knows where everything is. But the best joke was when my brother forgot to shut the stable door. It wasn't until next morning he remembered that he didn't do it. Off he went in a great state, because he knew the calves would be sure to be out, and most likely he'd find them trampling down the oats. But, to his surprise, the stable door was shut all right. Sammy had seen to that. Then it came out that every night, after my brother has finished work and gone into the house, Sammy makes it a rule

to go round all the out-houses, just to satisfy himself that everything is all right. Poor Fred—how we do chaff him! It does show such a lovely want of confidence on the boy's part. As a matter of fact, they've both come to rely so much on Sammy that goodness knows what they would do without him. He's such an old-fashioned little chap, and so unselfish. They are always saying how much they would like to adopt him, but I say it would be more reasonable the other way round. Sammy ought to do the adopting. I'm sure he's quite a mother to both of them."

These little glimpses of domestic life have perhaps assisted the reader to realise the advanced condition of the greater part of Old Ontario. Her adventurous young men, indisposed to pay local prices for developed farms, have for some time been migrating to territories where they could acquire land for nothing, or nearly nothing. And in this connection Ontario has a genuine grievance against fate.

The fame of the Prairie Provinces had been trumpeted to the world. All Canada was ringing with details of the magnificent opportunities awaiting industrious men away in the West.

On the other hand, the agricultural possibilities of New Ontario were not known, or, at any rate, not appreciated. Information on the subject was scrappy, and what facts were accessible had not yet been diffused. The great project of the Grand Trunk Pacific trans-continental line—which was to pass right through the heart of New Ontario—had not yet been carried out. People were slow to grasp the significance of the Provincial Government's line—the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway, which runs from North Bay, on the C.P.R., to Cochrane, on the new Grand Trunk Pacific route, a distance of 252 miles. In a word, New Ontario had not been boomed, and the Prairie Provinces had been boomed. Hence it has come about that the adventurous young men of Old Ontario, instead of migrating to the northern sections of their own province (which would have involved a comparatively small cost for transportation, and a comparative proximity to the homes and friends they were leaving behind), have joined the ever-increasing stream of immigrants pouring across the continent to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Some comparison between New Ontario and

the Prairie Provinces becomes, at this point, inevitable. It is not easy to make that comparison. Where conditions are various, generalisations are apt to be dangerous. There are many different sorts of prairie, and there are many different districts in New Ontario. But certain broad facts may be stated as having a general application.

The clearing of the ground, as a preliminary to cultivating it, is a much slower, more arduous, and more costly, operation in New Ontario than on the prairie. For New Ontario is heavily timbered, whereas much of the prairie is only covered with scrub. On the other hand, there are better wage-earning opportunities in New Ontario than on the prairie; that is to say, men who have taken up land in New Ontario can finance themselves, during the earlier years, by occasionally working for a few months in the mines, the logging camps, the lumber mills, or the numerous factories.

A comparison between New Ontario and Old Ontario is also inevitable. The former cannot hope to compete with the latter in vineyards, peach orchards, and tobacco plantations. But as fine grain and vegetables can be grown in the

one as in the other. There are shorter winters in the south, but—to compensate for this—there are longer days in the north. In latitude and climate, northern Ontario roughly corresponds to southern Manitoba.

For the rest, the agricultural possibilities of New Ontario have been triumphantly demonstrated by the pioneer farmers who have reared crops and herds in that country, and who, by the way, are finding a good market for their produce in the mines, the mills, the factories, and the camps.

The Great Clay Belt—a tract of land running 400 miles east and west through New Ontario, and embracing about 16,000,000 acres—is proving of exceptional fertility, and giving remarkable results in peas, beans, clover, lucerne, and the other leguminous crops. That Belt is tapped by the Government line and by the section of the Grand Trunk Pacific that is already constructed. It follows that in this, the south-eastern, corner of New Ontario, settlement is already far advanced.

In one district traversed by the Government line—the district of Temiskaming—there are already more than 60,000 inhabitants. Among the towns that have sprung up along the line

are New Liskeard (with a population of 3,000), Haileybury (with a population of 4,000) and famous Cobalt (with a population of 5,500). The Federal Government has established an experimental farm near the Grand Trunk Pacific junction, and it is officially reported that "fine samples" of wheat have been produced there, and that apples and other fruits are now receiving attention.

I was discussing that district with a Canadian who knows it well, and he said: "New Ontario is a splendid country for a type of Englishman who is found in all classes of society. I mean the man who is robust in body and in spirit—the man who relishes a spice of adventure in his life—the man with pioneering blood in his veins—in one word, a sport."

I like that word. It is a little slangy perhaps, but it applies. Certainly the intending emigrant to New Ontario should ask himself the question, "Am I a sport?" To make the position clearer, I will give an actual instance of a man who is a sport, and whose wife is another.

Mr. Jack looked very haggard for so young a man, especially in comparison with Mrs.

Jack, who inclines to be plump. They made the stranger welcome with a seat by the stove. Yet I was not entirely a stranger, since I came from London and knew West Ham. Mr. and Mrs. Jack came from West Ham. They offered me the choice of beer or milk, and then Mr. Jack explained why there was no plaster on the laths.

“ I’ve had eleven months of misfortune,” he said. “ Been on my back with some sort of rheumatism. And that’s why these walls never got finished. There I’ve laid helpless as a baby, and so weak I had to be fed with a spoon. I dunno what sort of rheumatism they call it. But it’s a sort that nearly settles you.”

“ When they brought him in here,” chirruped his wife, “ I made sure he was going. I told my next-door neighbour so. ‘ Jack’s come home,’ I said, ‘ but he’s only come home to die.’ And Christmas Day, too ! ”

“ I quite thought the same,” he said. “ I couldn’t move, and I hollered out if any one touched me—the pain was so bad. But here I am, all right again—at least, nearly all right. It’s left my muscles terribly stiff, and that’s why, in starting to work again, I’ve begun with a

whitewashing job. It pays out my arms a treat, but I fancy it's getting the cramp out of 'em."

"Funny to have Jack back at whitewashing!" soliloquised his laughing wife. She was evidently very much amused. I did not quite see the point.

We were at Earl's Court, the Toronto suburb whose English inhabitants, as I indicated in a previous chapter, work in factories, and at other jobs appropriate to city toilers. What was there so funny in Mr. Jack, late of West Ham, turning his hand to house-decorating?

"It's the trade I followed in the Old Country," he said apologetically. "And, after doing nothing for a twelvemonth, I'm satisfied to be back at work, no matter what it is."

Which remark did not make the position any clearer to me.

"And who do you think," broke in the vivacious lady, "was the breadwinner while Jack was on his back? I was! Oh, yes—I can earn my nine dollars a week house-cleaning down in the city. What's more, I enjoyed it."

"If Liz hadn't turned to," Mr. Jack ungrudgingly confirmed, "goodness knows what

would have become of us. Fortunately, we'd paid for the land and house, and didn't owe a cent. But my money from the last camp didn't keep us going for more than three months, what with doctor's bills and one thing and another."

"What camp was that?" I asked.

"Logging away north of Cobalt," he explained. "And before that I was with a mining gang. That's the sort of life! When I first came out I started in the radiator shop, the same as one might do in the Old Country. But as soon as I heard of New Ontario I pricked up my ears; and it wasn't long before I started off to try my luck out there. It just suited me. The cities are all very well for those who like 'em, but give me the lakes and the forests. It's better money for one thing; but what I like about it is the freedom. Wait till I get my joints in working order! I'll soon be back there."

"And I shall go with him," Mrs. Jack averred.

"Yes, I had Liz with me in one camp, and she quite took to the life. Of course, we've always got this home to come back to when we want a change."

“You wouldn’t believe what he’s gone through,” exclaimed the exuberant lady, as she eyed her husband with unmistakable pride. “He could tell you something—sleeping on the coffin of a murdered man, and I don’t know what all! Tell him some of the things, Jack. Go on—tell him about the Macedonian.” And her high-spirited shudder served to whet my curiosity.

“Oh, that was a poor fellow who was helping to blast rocks for the new railroad,” Mr. Jack modestly narrated. “He had a leg and half his face blown away; and when he was dead, one of his mates got to work on a box to put him in. But he made it too small, which caused a lot of trouble; and I shall never forget seeing them row out with it to the island. There was no clergyman, so they couldn’t have a proper funeral; and when they got to the island the ground was all rocks. But the strange part was that this poor Macedonian hadn’t any relations or friends in Canada, and nobody knew what his proper name was or anything about him, so they couldn’t put up any tombstone.”

“And now tell him,” came Mrs. Jack’s eager suggestion, “about your journey from North Bay.”

“ Well, you must know,” began her compliant lord, “ that the winter set in just as I was taken bad, and there I lay in camp, all swollen and inflamed, with shooting pains all over me. The lake had just been frozen when a lot of snow fell, and, you see, that made a sort of warm blanket to prevent the ice getting thicker. So I was there for three weeks, waiting for the lake to bear ; and it would have been longer still if my mate, with another, hadn't gone across and beaten out a trail, to give the frost a better chance. Even then it wasn't safe for a horse, so my mate, with that other chap, took and dragged the sledge themselves.

“ What with the cold and the bumping, I shan't forget that journey as long as I live ; and I don't suppose the other two will either. It took a long time getting over the lake, and I don't know how many more hours before we reached the railway for North Bay. My mate, who had been nursing me night and day before then, was fairly played out, and the moment he got on the train, he just bent over and went off to sleep like a log. It being Christmas time, the car was jambfull of passengers, most of them pretty lively. I told the conductor

how it was with me, and I begged him to find me a corner where I could lay down and be quiet. So he and another train-man took hold of me between them, and got me along to the mail-van. But, owing to all the Christmas letters and parcels, that was about as full as it would hold. I just fell down on a heap of mail-bags, and soon I felt several more bags come tumbling over on top of me. Not that I minded about that ; but the next I remember was a couple of fellows lifting me out of there. They said they'd find me a place where I'd be out of the way, if I didn't mind sleeping on the coffin of a murdered man. Then they lifted me up, and next minute I was lying on something hard and level. I knew who was underneath me—the poor chap that had been killed down the line ; for the news had come to our camp before we left. But, the way I felt it didn't make any difference to me whether I was on a coffin or anything else. But I couldn't help feeling it was a funny way to be spending Christmas Eve."

CHAPTER XIII

WOMEN SETTLERS

Grumblers and optimists—Mr. and Mrs. Y—— and their untidy shack—A paralysed pig and broken plough—The lady's lament—Mr. and Mrs. C—— from Chelsea—Persian rugs and old oak on the prairie—An artist's strange experiences—Left with the baby on a snowed-up train—Farming without knowledge—Crop failures and dying stock—How Mrs. C—— saved the situation—A head waitress and her story—Confessions of a cultured lady—Quaint preparation for Canada—Girls I interviewed at Vancouver—Testimony of an ex-school teacher—Canadian children: a nursemaid's impressions—The dressmaker and her mother—My visit to their cosy flat—Immigration experiences of a pet dog—Why the old lady attends Salvation Army services—A girl's appreciated draughtsmanship—Shopping in England and Canada: a comparison—Questions I put to servant-girls—Reasons for their contentment—Abrupt proposals of marriage.

OUT on the prairie I met many English housewives. If asked to classify them, I

should be tempted to say: a small minority are grumblers; a large majority are optimists.

As to the former, one could only regret that, in the interests of all parties, they did not remain in the sedate suburban world where the milkman calls twice a day. The latter are making Central Canada what Central Canada is rapidly becoming—a country of attractive, prosperous, and happy homes.

I have already introduced into this book a typical example of the right sort of woman for Canada. Her name is Mrs. Fisher, and you will find her in Chapter IV.

Let us now glance briefly at a sample of the wrong sort.

On a beautiful quarter-section of rich soil in Southern Alberta I beheld a shack that was very amateurish in construction. Obviously the people who lived there were still at the stage of struggle and stress.

I found out all about them.

A dissatisfied chemist in England, and scarcely knowing a horse from a cow, Mr. Y—, on arriving in Canada at the age of 40, made the mistake—alas! so common—of at once taking up his own homestead. He should, of course, have hired himself for the

first season to an established settler, with whom he would have acquired a practical knowledge of Canadian farming. He thought he knew what he did not know, and acted on his ignorance, with the inevitable result that several years have been wasted in costly bungling.

Then, too, while Mr. Y—— obviously has a great love for farming, he seems to have little natural aptitude for it. He is this sort of man : he bought a pig that proved to be paralysed ; he bought an ox without suspecting, until too late, that it was dying of tuberculosis. I found him mourning over his plough. It seemed that, having broken the wheel, he had sent for another one (forgetting to state dimensions). He was two days trying to fit the new wheel before he discovered that it was of the wrong size. And by that time he had broken the plough.

In fairness to Mrs. Y—— I mention these facts, by way of illustrating her environment. For the rest, she shall speak for herself.

“ Here’s a nice sort of place, isn’t it,” she remarked, “ for a lady to live in? And, you know, I’m not accustomed to this sort of thing. It might be different for anybody who had been brought up just anyhow. But my father

was in a bank, and I was always used to a respectable home, with a servant and everything. But this—oh, it's too dreadful."

Now she came to mention it, I was bound to admit (to myself) that, of the many shack interiors I had seen, this was the most untidy and dirty. Wallpaper patched with newspaper, two skirts hanging from a nail that also held a picture, boots and books in a pile on the sofa—things like that certainly lent colour to the lady's criticism.

"When Herbert came over to England and married me," she went on, "I never dreamt I was coming out to anything like this. It isn't fair. And such a dreadful wild country, too, with no proper society."

"Have you no neighbours?" I asked in my innocence.

"Yes," she replied, "but I don't have anything to do with them, thank you! They are not at all the sort of people I should care to know. If my elder sister hadn't been able to come out and be a little company for me, I'm sure I don't know what I should have done. She doesn't think it's a nice place to live in either! I expect she'll be in soon—she's gone out to give baby an airing."

That interior assumed a new interest with the discovery that there were two ladies to look after it. But my attention was called in another direction.

"Have you seen our fowls?" Mrs. Y— suddenly asked.

I felt it was rather an embarrassing question, for I *had* seen the poor things.

"Well, can *you* say what's the matter with them?" she asked triumphantly. "There they are, moping and hanging their heads and dying off one after the other; and as for eggs—well, we haven't seen such a thing for nearly six months."

I had a very definite idea what was amiss with those unhappy birds; and, as gently as possible, I was entering into particulars when—

"Oh, no; it can't be that," corrected the lady, a trifle haughtily. "They receive every attention. No—I think it must be the climate. People are able to keep fowls all right in England."

"Do you do any gardening?" I asked, to change the subject.

"Oh, no; I haven't time," Mrs. Y— explained. "You see, there's baby."

So much for the two extremes—Mrs. Fisher, the ideal prairie housewife ; and Mrs. Y—, who ought to be deported.

Of course, many of the optimists, while taking everything very good-naturedly from the outset, are some time before they adapt themselves to the conditions of life in Canada. In this connection I recall the case of Mrs. C—.

I was sitting with Mr. and Mrs. C— in that charming room of theirs which, with its Persian rugs, Dutch dresser, Delft pots, and old oak chairs, was such a surprising place to find in Southern Saskatchewan ; and Mr. C— asked me, rather abruptly :

“ Have you ever realised that you have made an absolute ass of yourself ? ”

“ I beg your pardon ? ” I stammered, wondering to which particular episode in my life he was referring.

“ Because I have,” Mr. C— went on, revealing a purely egotistical application to his inquiry. “ Listen, and I’ll tell you about it. Five years ago I was a harmless, respectable artist living in Chelsea, and making—well, a comfortable living by illustrating books and magazines. Art was my profession, I had

worked at it all my life. I knew nothing of any other trade or calling. Now note. A friend of mine used to drop into my studio and talk about Canada. He was an enthusiast. I suppose he had caught the back-to-the-land fever about as badly as a man can catch it. Not content with talking, he lent me books and pamphlets. What was the result? I decided that, as an ordinary measure of prudence and worldly wisdom, I must at once sell up my small possessions and start farming in Canada. As for Milly—well, womanlike, and anxious at all costs for adventure, she was only too willing.”

“Come, now, I do like that!” laughed astounded Mrs. C—. “Why, he was positively crazy about it—could talk and think of nothing else—used to lie awake at night trying to decide how he should spend all the money he was going to make in Canada. Of course, I had to consent.”

Mr. C— waved aside his wife’s interruption as irrelevant. “The only fact of importance,” he said, “is that we came. We came with a matter of £2,000. Now, how did I apply that money?”

“But you’ve forgotten about the baby!”

broke in Mrs. C——. “ Surely the baby is a fact of importance? ”

“ In a way—yes,” Mr. C—— thoughtfully admitted. “ I apologise for omitting the baby from my narrative. It was like this. In our eagerness to get here by the spring, we arrived before the winter was over. Our train got snowed up—badly snowed up. We were only fifty miles from our journey’s end, but there we were—stuck fast. Three days went by, and the position began to be serious. There was no more food on the train! However, communication was opened up with neighbouring farmers, who, with great hospitality, invited the passengers to dinner and sent sleighs to fetch them in. Milly and my little daughter went off with one of the parties, and I stayed behind with the baby. A quarter of an hour afterwards the train started! Now, I don’t know whether you have ever been cut off from feminine assistance when you have a baby literally on your hands. I confess that, for one lucid second, the question passed through my brain,—‘ How came I to be in such a predicament out on that great white landscape; what in the world was I up to?’ But the train stopped, Milly returned, and that momentary misgiving was forgotten.

“ And so,” continued Mr. C—, “ I come to the farming. How did I begin? Did I inquire for an agricultural college where I might pick up a smattering of my new profession? No. Did I engage myself to a farmer in order to acquire some little practical experience? Certainly not. Did I begin with a modest quarter-section that had about forty acres broken? No, sir. A humble start like that might be all very well for the English farmer who came out with us; but my ambition was of wider range. I bought four adjoining cultivated quarter-sections—that is to say, I bought a solid square mile of farm land. Well, of course certain accessories were necessary—horses, ploughs, pigs, and things like that; so I arranged with some firms to supply whatever was usual. Also I engaged two young fellows to help me with the work. Then I began—painting during the morning, farming during the afternoon. I expect you can guess the rest.”

“ Poor Teddy ! ” murmured Mrs. C—, with a laugh that was half a sigh.

“ Yes,” he agreed; “ and poor Milly ! ”

“ You did not succeed very well ? ” I hazarded.

“ I’m afraid not,” she said. “ You see, our

hired girl did not get good results with the dairying, and I was much too ignorant to correct or direct her. The two young men were obviously both incompetent and idle, but Teddy was hardly in a position to supply their deficiencies."

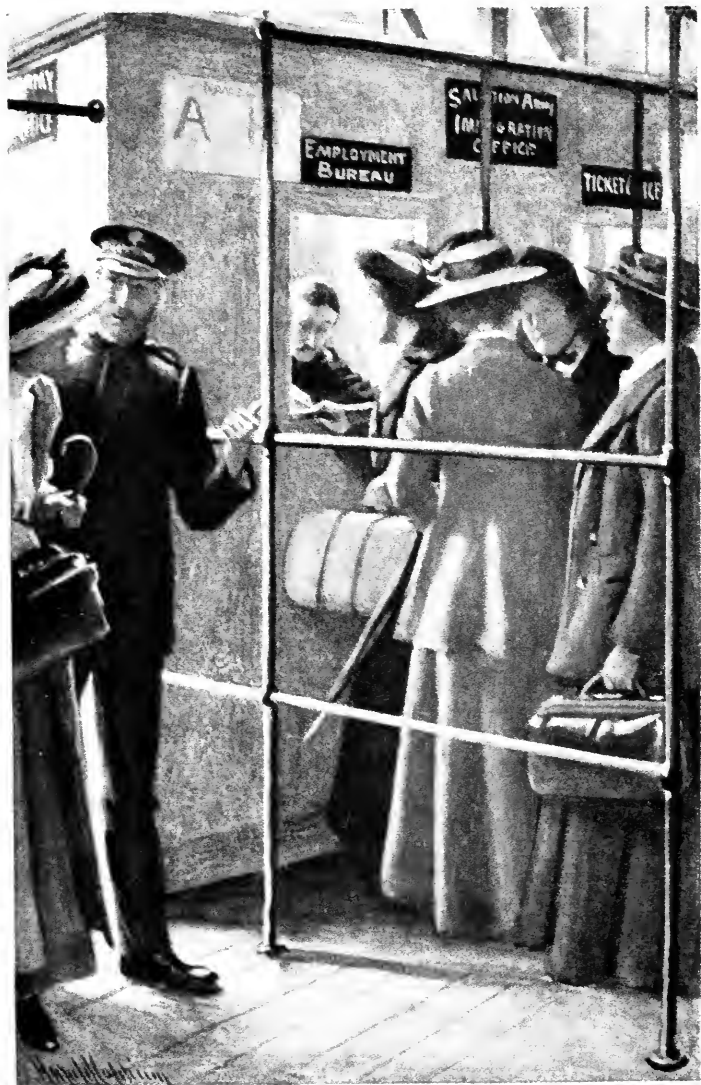
"The crops all failed," groaned Mr. C—.

"Horses died," supplemented Mrs. C—.

"I overheard neighbouring farmers speak of me as 'that dear old duck,'" deplored the gentleman.

"On the children's behalf, I began to get anxious," confessed the lady.

"Then," said Mr. C—, "occurred the grand transformation. It was all due to Milly. She came to me one day and said she was going round to Mrs. Shotter's for her first lesson in butter-making. She also said Mrs. Franklin had promised to teach her how to milk a cow. I further gathered that she was looking to some other neighbour for hints on poultry management. At first I was more amused than anything else. But when Milly produced the first pound of butter she had made, its excellence set me thinking. And when I found her detecting all sorts of egregious mistakes in our pig department, I did more than think.



ARRIVAL AT OFFICE OF A PARTY OF WOMEN IMMIGRANTS CONDUCTED BY THE SALVATION ARMY.

Realising for the first time that I knew nothing whatever about farming, and that, in point of fact, I had been behaving like an absolute ass, I set humbly to work, à la Milly, to learn things."

"He has been so splendid!" exclaimed his wife. "You should see him manage the horses. We are never late now with the ploughing. Teddy has built a stable that people say is as strong as a church. And we are beginning to make such a lot of money! We had bumper crops last year; our wheat graded No. 1, and we took a first for oats. I suppose I ought not to say 'we,'" she added in a merry parenthesis, "though I did lend a hand with the stooking. And this year the crops look even better."

"Yes, they don't call me 'that dear old duck' now," said Mr. C—.

So much for the prairie housewives—perhaps the most valuable, and valued, class in Canada. I also took note of another class that is held in high esteem throughout the Dominion—women immigrants who work for wages.

A slight toothache was the means of introducing me, at Revelstoke, in British Columbia, to two interesting and typical cases. During

dinner I shifted from a table near the open window to one less exposed to draught, and the head waitress, not unnaturally, wanted to know what I did it for. A simple, good-hearted soul, she tarried awhile to gossip with a fellow-Cockney, the conversation shifting from myrrh and chloroform to the fine opportunities Canada affords for persons who don't mind work.

The part of London she came from, it seemed, was Battersea, where her receipts from mangling served but inadequately to fill the void that occurred when her husband, who was a carman, could not get employment. So he preceded her to Canada, the pay from his job in a Revelstoke brewery enabling her to follow him three months later.

"Then the manager here saw Tom one day," narrated my new-found friend, "and asked him if he'd care to be hotel porter, and he should have the same wages as he was getting at the brewery. But, as Tom said, he was well off where he was, and the people seemed satisfied; so he was much obliged, but he thought he'd sooner stay where he was. But the manager spoke to him again after that, and said there was his rooms

he was paying for and all his food, and if he came to the hotel he'd have the same money and his bedroom and board thrown in. So Tom told him he'd have to keep his lodgings all the same, seeing I was on my way out to join him. And that's what settled it, because the manager said they would take me too ; and if I'd give a hand in the kitchen, just for an hour every morning to clean the forks and spoons, that'd cover my meals."

For the rest, husband and wife had, it seemed, risen quickly from one sphere of service to another, until now, after being two years in the establishment, she was head waitress and he was in charge of the bar, the salary of each being more than twice as much as they were jointly earning in the Old Country. Since, moreover, they no longer had to pay for board and lodging, they were faced with the pleasant problem, for the first time in their lives, of deciding how accumulated savings could most advantageously be invested.

The hotel management—I ventured to point out—had secured two very capable persons. But she would not hear of such a thing.

"Oh, no," she was eager to assure me ; "it's the same with everybody else in this

country. I don't mean those who won't work, and won't put themselves to any trouble about anything. They're no good here or anywhere else. But anybody that isn't quite a fool, and has got enough sense to know you can't have anything in this world if you don't work for it—that sort can't help doing well in Canada. To know that, you've only got to see the way everybody gets run after. In London, where there'd be work for one, you'd find twenty trying for it. Out here it's all the other way—there's twenty jobs waiting for everybody that wants to work. I could go from here tomorrow to more hotels than one, if I wasn't satisfied, and get jest as good money ; so could my husband. There's nine places out of ten where they wouldn't look at any one else if they could get somebody from England. They know you can depend on them. Of course, having been used to nice ways in the Old Country, they're more careful to keep the place clean than any one else might be. The manager of the hotel—he's Canadian, but he always tells me to get English girls if I can. The last one I got is an English lady born—any one can see that. She is so very nice, and so cheerful over her work, and you never have

to ask her twice to do anything. From a word now and again that she's dropped, I can see she's been used to have servants wait on her. You can know she's had plenty of money by all the countries she and her mother used to go to. They must have travelled half over the world—jest to pass the time. But from what I can understand, when the mother died something happened to all the money, so the daughter was left without a penny and had to turn to and earn her own living."

My curiosity was aroused ; and later in the evening, by arrangement, the head waitress brought her assistant to the drawing-room, that she might meet the gentleman from England who was going to write a book.

Miss R—, a middle-aged lady of culture and education, gave me supplementary details about herself.

"Unfortunately," was her smiling way of putting it, "I had never learnt to do anything useful. I did not realise my deficiencies until one day I found that, for the future, I must earn my own living. It was most humiliating to find myself so unprepared for the emergency. The women writers, the typists, the dressmakers, the shop assistants—how I

envied the knowledge and training that enabled them to play a useful part in the world, while I was an utterly incompetent and superfluous person. I even found myself looking with a new and strange respect at a girl who was cleaning a doorstep.

“ However, I got a post—as companion in a clergyman’s family at Manchester. But it was not at all satisfactory. It did not surprise me that the clergyman and his family could not accept me as an equal. I hardly expected they would ; and I knew how thoroughly I deserved their dignified aloofness. For in days gone by I, too, had looked down upon companions and persons of that class. What made the position unendurable was the attitude of the servants. I did think I was entitled to be received by them on a footing of equality and good feeling. But no ; they treated me with a sort of spiteful respect, as though I were a superior, but one who was rather contemptible. Between the two I felt completely ostracised.”

“ And so you decided to come to this country? ”

“ Yes,” she smilingly replied. “ And how do you think I prepared myself for Canada?

Why, I attended a cookery-class, and learnt how to make dainty cakes, with sugar-icing and all manner of *recherché* embellishments. It really was a dreadful insult to the Canadian people, wasn't it? But it never occurred to me that they would be too busy, and much too sensible, to want to eat things like that. I have been in the country three months now, but three days were enough to show me that, instead of wasting my time over fancy cookery, I ought to have learnt milking and butter-making, or something else really useful."

"You arrived only three months ago!" I exclaimed. "Please let me know what experiences you have had."

"I'm afraid there's not much to tell. I came out through Miss Lefroy and the British Women's Emigration Society. I didn't stop anywhere until reaching Calgary, and as soon as I got there the agent asked me if I wanted an engagement. I said 'Yes.' Then she said some one was required in a hotel at Banff, and did I think that would suit me? I said I really hadn't any definite preferences. Well, could I go at once? she asked. Yes—I thought I could. So the end of it was I caught the next train to Banff, and the same evening was

duly initiated into my new duties. I was placed in charge of a number of rooms, and all I had to do was to keep them clean and tidy and make the beds."

"Did you find the drudgery very irksome?" I asked.

"Not at all," Miss R— heartily testified. "In fact, I enjoyed the work, and soon began to regard my smooth coverlets and my polished mirrors with the pride of an artist. Then, too, after the merely nominal remuneration I received in the clergyman's family, it was very satisfactory to be earning, not only my board and lodging, but £1 5s. a week in addition, for the pay was 25 dollars a month. But what I appreciated most was the unaffected friendliness of everybody, and the fact that one was not looked down upon for doing menial work. That, I think, is the great charm of this country—every one treats every one else as an equal. It comes as such a delightful surprise after the social distinctions and class barriers that exist in England."

I asked Miss R— why she left beautiful Banff.

"It was only a temporary engagement," she explained, "as the hotel is closed in the winter.

One of the girls told me of the vacancy here, and as the salary was the same and this hotel is open all the year, I applied for the post. I have fewer rooms to look after than at Banff, though occasionally, at times of pressure, I help wait at table. But I always have the afternoons to myself, and I really believe I never enjoyed better health or found life more interesting than I do now. There—that, I think, completes my revelations.”

“And your work is in every way congenial?” I persisted.

“Well, perhaps that would be going a little too far,” was her laughing rejoinder. “For instance, once or twice, when I have gone into a room to make the bed, I have found a tipsy man there. But one learns how to act in these unpleasant little emergencies; and, on the whole, I assure you I am having a very good time. Of course, the novelty of it all has not yet worn off. Don’t you consider the Canadians very ingenious and interesting? One thing that amuses me very much is their practice of moving houses bodily from one street to another. I was in the habit of going to a book-shop and drug-store here; but one day, when I went there, it had mysteriously dis-

appeared. I happened to turn round, and, to my utter amazement, there was the shop going down the road! You can't imagine a thing like that happening in London. Fancy meeting one of the Bond Street shops on its way to Trafalgar Square!"

So ended our chat; and I afterwards found myself wondering how far Miss R—'s experiences and impressions were shared by her wage-earning compatriots in Canada. At Vancouver I put that issue to a test. Staff-Captain Wakefield told me of the hundreds of girls and women annually transplanted from Great Britain to that city by the Salvation Army, and I said I should like to meet some of them. So he dictated the first two dozen names and addresses he found on his cards; and I set off on a house-to-house visitation. It kept me busy for two days and an afternoon.

At tea-rooms in the centre of the city I introduced myself to Miss W—, who had been a teacher in Glasgow, and whose typical Scotch face reflected sweetness and common sense.

"There's no comparison between Canada and the Old Country," she declared with unpatriotic enthusiasm. "Wages are much

higher here and hours are shorter. Take my own case. I am receiving nine dollars, or thirty-six shillings, a week, which is a good deal more than I got for teaching. Then, too, I don't have to pay for meals, which used to make a heavy inroad on my wretched Glasgow salary. I share very nice lodgings with another girl in a rooming house, and we each pay two and a half dollars, or ten shillings, a week for them. Of course, one could get cheaper quarters than that, but we both feel comfort is worth paying for. I am only on duty for eight hours a day, and the times are arranged in shifts. This week, for instance, I come on at eleven and leave at seven; next week I begin earlier and get off at three. So one has quite a lot of time to oneself. Besides, everybody on the staff has a full day's holiday once in three weeks."

"Then, on the whole—may I assume—you do not regret coming to Canada?"

"I wouldn't go back for anything," was Miss W—'s emphatic reply. "This country is fine. I like the people, and I simply love the climate. It is so delightful to have a real summer and a real winter. Of course, everything has its drawbacks. At first I very much missed the

home-life I was used to. And I still miss the mental side of my old work. As a teacher one has to do a lot of reading. The work of a waitress is rather too remote from that sort of thing to satisfy me entirely. However, Canada offers plenty of openings, and when I am tired of being a waitress I can do something else."

Strolling to the delightful residential suburb of English Bay, I called at the house where Mary P— acts as housemaid. Showing me into a handsome sitting-room, the conscientious girl explained that she could not spare many minutes as she had a lot of work to do.

"It costs you more to dress in this country," she pointed out. "But look how much more money one earns. I was getting £1 a month in Scotland, and I'm getting £3 a month here. There's plenty to be done, mind you. Houses that would have three servants in the Old Country often have only one here. But a girl doesn't mind working hard if she is nicely treated; and in Canada a servant is made to feel herself quite one of the family."

"You have plenty of time to yourself?" I asked.

"Yes, and I could have more if I wanted it.

When I came, it was arranged that I should have Sunday afternoons off and three evenings a week. But, you see, I'm with the children so much, on the beach and in Stanley Park, that I really don't want so many evenings out, and I mostly prefer to stop at home, especially if there's something to be done, and Mrs. Hunt would have to do it alone if I wasn't there to help."

I asked for her opinion of Canadian children.

"They are not any different from other children," said Mary. "Our four are pretty lively, but very nice. They don't seem to have toys much in this country, but they love to play at romping games—especially when they pretend to be Red Indians. They are very cute, and just now it's a great joke with them that they are getting to be Scotch children through eating the Scotch scones I make them. They go about the house singing, 'Mary, my Scotch Lassie'!"

Miss T—, when I saw her at the Hudson Bay Stores, could not spare time for a chat; but she told me where she lived, and said, if I cared to call, she and her mother would be pleased to see me.

That evening, at their cosy little £40 flat, Miss T— showed me into a room where I found a gentle-mannered old lady and a little dog which, being so obviously anxious to bite my leg, had to be banished to the kitchen.

I had, it seemed, happened upon one of four sisters who, unaided by male relative or private means, had to support themselves and their invalid mother. This had not been too easy when they lived at Maida Vale; and so, ten months before, they had emigrated to Canada—they and their dog and their piano, with certain prized chimney ornaments.

The old lady still spoke of that great adventure with bated breath and a devout thankfulness.

“Wans’t it wonderful—not one of the vases got broken! But poor Joe did have a bad time on the voyage. He had to be kept in a part of the ship right away from us. Only they very kindly let us see him every day, and the girls sometimes took him for a run on deck. The railway journey was the worst though. He wasn’t allowed to come with us; he had to travel all by himself in a freight train. Poor Joe!—you can imagine how terribly he fretted.”

But the little brute had not gone the right way to work to engage my sympathies; and so, offering no comment on his immigration experiences, I inquired how the old lady had fared on the journey.

“ Oh, everything was very nice,” she replied. “ I quite enjoyed it—especially on the train. And I had been so dreading it all! I’m sure everybody was most kind. And as for Staff-Captain Wakefield, he has indeed proved a friend. Being strange to the city, I don’t know what we should have done without him. In all our difficulties we turned to the Army, because they said that’s what they were there for, and we needn’t mind how much we bothered them. And do you know,” Mrs. T.—went on, lowering her voice confidentially, “ we are not connected with the Army in any way. I told them so—I really felt bound to; but they said that didn’t make any difference—they had brought us out, and they wanted to see us comfortably settled.”

And even as she spoke, my eyes chanced upon the Bishop of London’s photograph in its neat gilt frame on the piano.

“ But,” continued the gentle old lady, “ I’ve made a point of going to one or two Army

services, for, after they've been so good to us, I feel that's the least I can do."

I asked if all the girls were dressmakers.

"No; one's a nurse, and another is a telephone operator," Mrs. T— explained. "Then my eldest girl does draughtsmanship. She was the only one who didn't get an engagement as soon as we arrived. You see, it was new in Canada for a girl to do work like that. The Vancouver surveyors were quite amused about it at first. But one firm agreed to give Milly a trial, and they are so very pleased with her. They say hers are by far the best plans that are done in the office."

"And are your girls satisfied with the salaries they receive in this country?" I asked.

"My word!" answered the old lady, as she threw up her eyes and her mittened hands. "I never heard of such salaries for girls to be getting. Why, they are all earning more than twice as much as they were earning before. But the great thing is that it's steady employment all the time. In London there was usually one, and often two, out of a berth. That is what used to trouble them—posts were so very hard to get."

For the country as a whole, and for Vancouver in particular, Mrs. T— had nothing but praise. I found that she also liked the people and the weather. But my inquiries at last touched upon a matter regarding which, in the old lady's opinion, Canada is far behind her native land.

“ I must say you don't get the same attention in the shops,” she mildly deplored. “ I'm not saying the Vancouver assistants may not be just as polite in their way, but they don't take the same pains. They'll bring you what they think you want, and that's the end of it—you can take it or not, just as you please. They don't give themselves the trouble really to show you what they've got in stock, so that you can have several things to choose from, and perhaps in the end find something to suit you that is quite different from what you first asked for.”

“ No, mother dear,” interposed the Hudson Bay machinist, “ they haven't the same fear of what may happen if a customer doesn't buy anything.”

I afterwards interviewed several girls who had exchanged domestic service on one side of the Atlantic for domestic service on the other

side. They laid but minor stress on their improved wages. What they liked most about Canada, they told me, was that they were considered as good as other people, and if, when their work was done, they wanted to run out and post a letter or get something, they hadn't got to ask permission.

A girl's chances of finding a congenial partner, and settling down in life, accounted, I found, for a large, if somewhat frivolous, element in the interest they took in the country of their adoption. Such embarrassment as they experienced in this connection arose, so far as I could understand, from a superabundance, rather than from any dearth, of opportunity.

"I never saw such a daft lot of fellows," declared a laughing, pretty Cumberland lass. "I can hardly go a day without one of the great big sillies wants to marry me. With some of them it's almost the first word when they're introduced. And so solemn they are over it, too! They've got farms in the country, they say, and they are doing nicely; but they want a wife to look after the house—did you ever hear such impudence?—and be a little company for them, poor dears!"



"THEY'VE GOT FARMS IN THE COUNTRY, THEY SAY" (PAGE 248)

I ventured to probe, at my next interview, for similar experiences.

“Have I had any proposals!” echoed the astonished young lady. “That’s rather a strange question, isn’t it?”

However, she graciously decided not to be offended.

“Yes, I’ve had a lot,” that alert London girl avowed, a trifle scornfully. “It began on the journey, when we were passing through the prairie country—a farmer who came part of the way on the train. I’ve no patience with ’em.”

From another girl my impudent inquiry met with a reception of marked coyness. She had been in Canada only three months. But the date of her marriage was already fixed.

“I met him at the Salvation Army,” she confessed with blushing impetuosity; “and he is so nice.”

CHAPTER XIV

EDUCATION

England and Canada compared—Imagination and reality—Vigorous vitality of new traditions—Embryo towns and the telephone—Education in the Prairie Provinces—An enlightened curriculum—Object-lessons from Nature—My visit to a prairie school—Quotations from the blackboard—What the little girls were doing—Signalling in silence—Interview with a schoolmaster—Canada's social problems—Retired farmers and their empty lives—Educating the second generation—A nation of optimists—Climate and happiness—Canada's future.

A NEW country is apt to be associated, in the imagination of persons who have never been there, with makeshift social arrangements. Its conditions are assumed to be a pathetic burlesque of modern civilisation. Life out there is understood to have a primitive, almost a Robinson Crusoe, touch.

But such misgivings are baseless. It is a

mistake to suppose that the new country begins where the Old Country began. It is not even true that the new country reflects, in its social amenities, the most backward portions of the Old Country. The village pump, the village idiot, and doddering Giles have no counterparts across the Atlantic. Central Canada is not handicapped by any surviving relics of Feudal times, or even of the mid-Victorian era. It is developing with the vigorous vitality of new traditions that belong to the North American continent—a continent that has already produced one young nation of colossal strength and is now producing another.

In Canada I saw a little embryo town that was only two months old. But the houses were fitted with telephones and electric light as a matter of course. For historical, æsthetic, and personal reasons, I delight in my native land. But in practical matters of social evolution England, as compared with Canada, is a museum of red tape and paralysing precedents.

Yet I must confess that even to me—who had twice journeyed across Canada, and was familiar with its spirit—the Elementary and High Schools of the Prairie Provinces came as a surprise. It was in my mind that the British

immigrant must surely find, in his new sphere, some disadvantage to set against a better livelihood and a brighter climate. As the only thing I could think of, I pictured him with impaired opportunities for the mental training of his children.

Humbly apologising to the provincial Governments, I fully recant that ludicrous error. Those Governments have established a system of popular education that is free, universal, unsectarian, and so sound and attractive that it scarcely needs to be compulsory. The system is kept healthy and democratic by the large measure of control vested in local trustees and meetings of rate-payers. The system is kept to the highest attainable pitch of efficiency by the activities and generous expenditure of Departments of Education, with their ministers, deputy-ministers, and advisory boards.

Educational facilities are promptly provided in newly-settled districts. The presence of ten children is enough to justify a school. Where a journey of more than one mile is involved, provision is frequently made for the free transportation of the children from and to their homes. For the rest, having learnt

what to teach, the teachers are taught how to teach.

The school curriculum furnishes abundant proof that the authorities, instead of slavishly following custom, have had the courage to think things out for themselves. Thus the subjects taught in the Manitoba schools include arithmetic, purity of thought, history, reading, industry, writing, cleanliness, the proper treatment of animals, geography, and correct breathing.

I cannot resist quoting an item or two from the programme of studies. Thus: "The planting of a potato or a potato section by each pupil. Observation of growth from week to week. Keeping a record of this." Again: "The study of such birds as live near the water or frequent the meadows. Special reference to the red-winged blackbird, bobolink, and meadow-lark." Here is a word of admonition addressed to the Saskatchewan teacher by his employers: "He should carefully guard against the child's knowledge of history becoming a jumbled mass of useless and unrelated facts. . . . Training the moral judgment and preparation for intelligent citizenship are important aims in teaching this

subject." In connection with Nature study, provision is made for "short field excursions for purposes of observation"; while it is laid down that, by actual experiment, pupils are to be instructed in the "methods of, and reasons for, digging, hoeing, raking, watering, shading, planting, transplanting, &c., in connection with garden crops."

Alighting from the train at Qu'Appelle in Saskatchewan, and taking a direction at haphazard, I set out to gain some personal knowledge of education on the prairie. Presently meeting a long, box-like wagon full of wheat, I asked the driver if he would kindly direct me to the school.

"Which school?" he asked, a little reproachfully.

"The nearest," I explained.

This was rather a poser for him. If I went back two miles, he explained, I'd find a school in the town. Also I'd find one if I went two miles farther on. There was another school, it seemed, away to the right—a bit over two miles, he thought that was. Then again, there was a school away to the left—he rather fancied that was under two miles, though a stranger might easily miss the way.

I continued straight on, and in half an hour came to a substantial-looking stone building standing by the roadside. It was wrapped in quietude and there was no one about. However, swings in the garden looked promising, and so, entering the lobby, I pushed open the door of one of the rooms and peeped in.

At a table on a dais stood a young lady with a pleasant expression, a book in her hand. Standing immediately before her were three little girls with eager, upturned faces. Some dozen or so other little girls sat at the desks which, arranged in rows, with intervening gangways, occupied most of the floor space.

Entering, I attempted to justify my intrusion, and was received with cordial courtesy by the schoolmistress, and with no little interest by her beaming class. On the understanding that work should go forward exactly as if no stranger were present, I went and took up my post of observation on a back bench.

A line of blackboards extended across three of the walls, which were further embellished by charts, maps, and bouquets of autumn foliage. Some expert hand, employing white and coloured chinks, had drawn admirable designs, in addition to birds, rabbits, and

flowers, on areas of the blackboards not utilised for poetry, mottoes, sums, and music notation. Concluding that the verses had been put there to be copied, I straightway copied the following song to the month that had recently arrived :

“ Oh, come to the woods, the merry green woods,
While gaily the autumn leaves fall,
Just look overhead, 'mid leaves brown and red,
Where squirrels all chatter and call—
'October is here, the Queen of the year.' ”

Oh, out in the woods, the merry green woods,
The fairies their revels will keep ;
Then when it is dark, comes the Frost Spirit—hark !
He's singing the flowers to sleep.”

I also took note of one of the exhibited maxims, namely : “ Politeness is to do and say the kindest thing in the kindest way.”

While thus occupied, I was watching the proceedings out of a corner of my eye. The three pupils standing before the teacher were receiving a lesson in attention, history, and the use of words. From her book the gracious young pedagogue would read a description of some stirring episode in the early French

occupation of Canada. Then one of the pupils was encouraged to give an account of the affair in her own juvenile vocabulary; after which, her two companions were in turn asked to elucidate certain facts that belonged to the narrative.

Meanwhile, with apparently undistracted attention, the other little girls were improving their minds in various ways. Some were reading, others were writing, while one was dexterously manipulating modelling clay into what at first I thought was going to be a balloon, though it rapidly developed into a very creditable bullfinch. A child somewhat older than the others, and over whose shoulder my position enabled me to glance, was translating simple French sentences into English.

Each scholar, while she obviously had permission to smile her full and feel as happy as she liked, was, I observed, under a disciplinary obligation to hold her tongue, save when she was spoken to. I wondered why in the world one healthy little mite had desisted from penmanship to hold aloft her chubby arm. But presently, looking in her direction, the schoolmistress said:

“ Well, Frances? ”

“ Please, how do you spell ‘ tortoise ’ ? ” inquired the signaller.

Books and writing materials being laid aside, the entire class participated in a music lesson. The teacher’s pointer moved from note to note in the scale on the blackboard, and the well-trained young voices rendered the intervals with accuracy and enjoyment. Then they sang songs, other lessons following ; and I left the school with a conviction that, if for no other reason, British parents should go and settle on the Canadian prairie to ensure a thorough, comprehensive, and interesting education for their children.

It was also in Saskatchewan that I interviewed the headmaster of a large town school. I asked if he observed any difference between boys who were born in Canada and boys from the British Isles.

“ Speaking generally,” he replied, “ British boys show a readier grasp of languages and mathematics, but they lack initiative. Now, the Canadian boy is apt to have a little too much initiative,” he added, speaking no doubt with a schoolmaster’s bias, though certainly with no national prejudice, since he was born in Nova Scotia.



EVENING ON THE PRAIRIE — CHILDREN RETURNING FROM SCHOOL

Alfred Stieglitz

Conversation turned on the careers of his former pupils, and I was surprised to learn how many follow the law, commerce, medicine, engineering, and architecture.

“You see,” he explained, “the people hereabouts have all made their money as farmers, and it gratifies them to spend some of it in turning their sons into professional men. Another factor in the case, of course, is the restless and enterprising temperament of youth, particularly of Canadian youth. The lad has been brought up on the farm. It has become for him a familiar and commonplace world. Upon realms outside there rests the glamour of the unknown. What Dad did was all very well for Dad; the youngster is set on doing something different—something more interesting. To counteract these tendencies as far as possible, the Education Departments are fostering Nature study in the Elementary schools, developing biology in the High Schools, and introducing special agricultural courses in the collegiate institutes.”

This led us to consider a strange position of affairs. The social problems of Great Britain tend to turn on the difficulty of the individual to gain a livelihood. The social

problems of Canada arise rather from the fatal facility with which money is made there.

“Look at towns like this,” said the schoolmaster—“the towns you find all along the railway lines right through the Prairie Provinces. They are full of retired farmers—men who, after ten or fifteen years of grain-growing, have saved enough money to keep themselves in idleness for the rest of their lives. Could anything be more pathetic than the spectacle of their empty lives? There they sit about in the hotels, not drinking (as a rule they don't do that), just glancing at the newspaper now and again, talking a little but not much, sometimes quite asleep and usually half asleep. When they were at work they paid periodic visits to that town. It was the one urban centre of which they had an intimate personal knowledge. In that town, accordingly, they anchored themselves on selling their farms and retiring on their means. And I think it is correct to say that they are left with only one interest—to meet the present-day farmers when they drive in, and to hear how things are going out on the prairie.”

Yes, I had seen them. Often, on leaving my hotel after breakfast, I noted the retired

farmers in the arm-chairs facing the window ; and on returning several hours later, I would find the same men sitting in the same chairs.

“ Why in the world don't they do something? ” I protested.

“ Ah ! ” replied the schoolmaster. “ You must remember that they were pioneers—men who set out to fight the world with little schooling and no literary culture. Therefore, now in their days of leisure they have no mental resources to fall back upon. Hence the paramount importance of education in a new country. By training the mental powers of the young we ensure that the second generation on the land will be men of wider intellectual sympathies—men who, when they have made fortunes and it is their turn to retire, will instinctively take up with some new interest, such as service in Parliament or on any of the local public bodies.”

Having criticised those retired farmers for being idle (and having, by the way, previously called other rich farmers over the coals for being too busy), I feel bound to add my impressions of Canadians as a whole.

People in England, before they show each other hospitality and friendship, have to be

introduced. Strangers are felt to be rather suspicious characters, who render house-dogs necessary. Out in Canada the idea seems to be that all men are brothers. The population of that country is like a gigantic family of 8,000,000 friends. Everybody goes about with an isn't-it-nice-to-be-alive and a you-really-must-stop-to-dinner sort of air.

I think the climate has a good deal to do with it. It is a lively, refreshing climate. A great majority of the hours of sunlight are hours of sunshine, alike in the seven green months and the five white ones. There is nothing like sunshine and dry air for making people hearty, healthy, and happy. Those two conditions, and the fact that industry commands a sure and ample reward, have produced in Canada a nation of optimists.

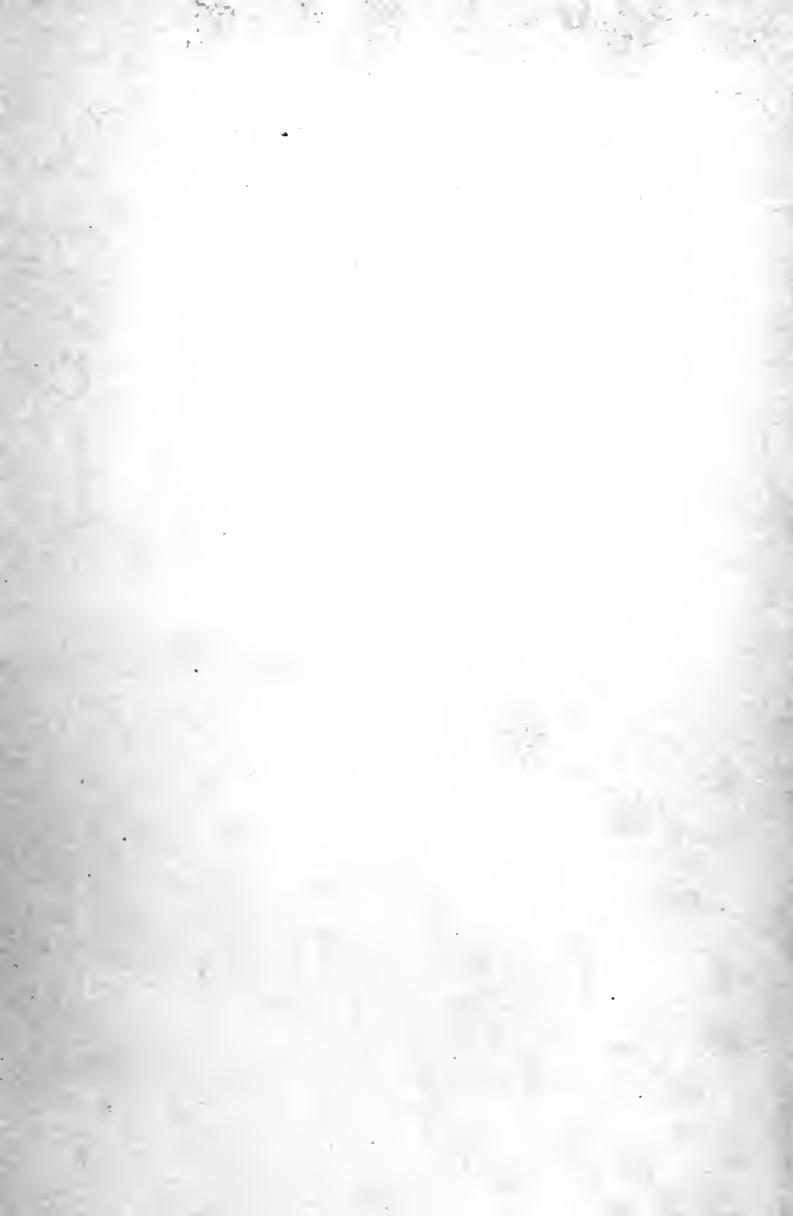
Mr. Kipling has announced that the Dominion "ultimately must assume nothing less than the very headship of the Empire." Speaking in Canada, Lord Northcliffe said: "It is more than possible that, in the perhaps not far distant future, the force of circumstances may cause the centre of the British Empire to come here." A distinguished literary Canadian assured me that the King and the Imperial

Parliament will inevitably some day emigrate to Winnipeg.

Those are political prophecies, calling for no comment from a mere recorder of facts. But there can be no doubt, I think, that Canada promises to become, in a few decades, the most populous and prosperous part of our English Empire.

THE END

The Gresham Press,
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED,
WOKING AND LONDON.





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