

advantages of a well-settled district, which include school, churches, ample railway facilities, rural telephones, cheaper living, better and bigger markets close at hand and lower freight rates for the produce exported and the goods imported.

Central Manitoba

In this pamphlet it would be impossible to describe all the varied parts of Manitoba. Its prairies, its woodlands, its valleys and its hills if properly described would fill a very large volume and the intention is to give the intending settler a little better idea of the central portion, or what is commonly known as the centre of the province.

A resident of Central Manitoba for more than twenty years said in speaking of this province: — "While not detracting from the many advantages possessed by the younger provinces of denying the great future that lies before them, I maintain that the advantages offered by Manitoba are far greater. I have lived in Manitoba and watched her development from her very infancy. I was here when homesteads could be taken up within a mile of the then only railway, the Canadian Pacific, yet I do not hesitate to say that the man who buys a quarter section today at from \$3,000 to \$5,000 is in a far better position, even though he starts with no more capital than did the first settler, though he got the land for the nominal fee of \$10."

Rapidly Developing Market

"We have today what we had then, a rapidly developing local market, and not only the necessities of a country life, but practically the luxuries of a city life at our doors. European countries may cry out against the increasing cost of living, but to us it is a source of wealth for we can not only supply ourselves with the necessities of life but have a goodly surplus to sell and make a profit on. We can rejoice at the increased cost of bread for do we not get a proportionate advance in our wheat? We can make our own butter and cheese and have some to sell. Our vegetables are produced for the cost of weeding our gardens, while the raising of beef, pork, mutton, poultry and eggs is all a part of our trade and though the price may have doubled the cost of production has not increased in anything like the same proportion. Horses, too, are double the price they were fifteen years ago though they do not eat any more, and if we do not wish to buy we can raise them, always having a ready sale for our surplus in all these lines."

"Do not think I am digressing from my subject in recounting these facts for these are advantages we have in this province of improved farms which the homesteader has not. It sounds good when you are told you can possess 160 acres for \$10, but let us look at the subsequent work and expense entailed."

Homestead Versus Improved Farm

"The homesteader must now locate at least 500 miles farther West and probably 15 to 20 miles from a railway, living in hopes that one may be located close to him in the future. In the meantime he requires a house and stable. All this material must be hauled from the existing railway. He requires food and clothing for himself and family, hay and oats for his horses. He has to start in at once and build and break up the virgin soil with no prospect of return for at

least eighteen months. The \$500 to \$1,000 required to make a first payment on an improved farm can well be expended by the homesteader in carrying him over till he gets his first crop, whilst the purchaser of an improved farm finds his buildings ready for him and a portion of the land already under cultivation. In April he can sow spring rye and in June cut a crop of hay from it. He can purchase his seed and pay for it out of the resultant crop in September, while his garden will go a long way towards supplying the bill of fare from after about June 1st."

The Arcadia of the West

Such improved farms may be purchased in any part of Central and Southern Manitoba, either touching the railway or within easy reach of one. Almost immediately in the centre of the province is the village of Austin. And it is worth while to stop and contemplate a few of the advantages given to this Arcadia of the West by nature and man.

Situated on what in prehistoric ages was the coast line of a large lake of which Lake Manitoba is today the remnant, a variety of soils and agricultural conditions are found. Running from Northwest to Southeast until due south of Austin and then taking a more direct Easterly course is a belt of clay land some four miles wide and equal, if not superior, to any land in the West for Wheat farming. This land formed the boundary of the lake, and as the water receded the surface water washing deep ravines in the clay has produced a district of hills and valleys hardly expected in what one is led to believe is a flat province. This land when first taken up by the homesteader was heavily timbered and the purchaser today can form no estimate, from viewing the 160 acres of wheat without stick or stone to intercept his labors, of the amount of time, money and labor expended to bring it to its present state of efficiency. Certainly the \$25 to \$30 an acre he is paying would not compensate the original owner, but he has paid himself by the subsequent productiveness of the soil.

As the lake bottom is approached a strip some 400 yards wide is crossed, which evidently was for many years the beach and here a ridge of gravel and sharp building sand is found from which the community procures material for repairing their roads and the plasterer and cement worker find material for their trade ready at hand and from the cement block business already established on a small scale the district now boasts of several substantial cement block houses and barns.

Passing over the beach and some eighty feet lower in altitude is what in early times was unquestionably the bottom of the lake. Here the silt from the highlands mixed with the rank vegetation of what was originally swamps has produced a black sandy loam highly productive of all classes of vegetation.

Especially is it adapted to mixed farming and the raising of alfalfa and hay, while in wheat, oats, and barley it will hold its own with any part of the province. The creeks and streams are a feature of this district for nowhere in the West is there so well watered and drained a country.

Streams are Well Contained

While in the West every small stream makes a valley from a half to five miles in width, here they run with banks