

## UNFAVORABLE REPORTS OF THE NORTH-WEST.

"Why, then, do we receive so many unfavorable reports about the country?"

Chiefly because of the sources from which these reports come. Often they originate with Americans, who are interested in the sale of lands in Dakota and elsewhere. These men are to be found on almost every train carrying emigrants to the North-west, and they are by no means particular as to the statements they make if they can only induce Canadians to settle under the Stars and Stripes. They represent the North-west as a region so cold that nothing will ripen, and so unhealthy that nothing can live; and not unfrequently Canadians are deterred by these disinterested (?) representations from entering the country at all, and report back to their friends that the North-west is not fit to live in.

Then, again, reports of this kind are sometimes set in motion by political partizans for political purposes—men who care little what injury they inflict upon the country if they can only score a point against the opposite party. Those familiar with the Pacific Railway debates of the last few years will need no other evidence upon this point.

But, it will be said, not a few people who have gone to the North-west with the intention of settling there, have come away discouraged, and have brought up "an evil report" upon the land. True, and for a very simple reason: Most people enter the North-west by way of Emerson and Winnipeg, and from these points go westward for a short distance; they usually go in early summer, the season of heavy rains, when the roads are at the worst. Then Manitoba is the lowest and flattest part of the whole North-west, and consequently the part where travelling in the rainy season is the most unpleasant. Going west from Winnipeg toward Portage la Prairie, the traveller has to pass over an exceedingly bad piece of road, of considerable extent; then beyond the Portage, if his courage has not given out, he finds on the north trail at Palestine, or on the south trail at McKinnon's Woods, as horrible a piece of country as he would be likely to discover in a year of travel. Floundering in mud and water below, and drenched by rain from above, the man who had been accustomed in Ontario to gravelled roads and comfortable stopping-places, becomes utterly disgusted; he thinks *this is a fair specimen of the whole country*, and so he goes back and reports that the whole thing is a fraud, and that he wouldn't take a farm there as a gift. These are the people, as a rule, who have brought back discouraging accounts of the country; but during my whole trip I did not meet a single person who had been two years in the country, and who had gone manfully to work, who had the least idea of going back to Ontario, much less to the territory of Brother Jonathan.—From Dr. Sutherland's "A Summer in Prairie Land."

## THROUGH MUD AND MIRE.

Our route on Friday morning was over rolling sand-hills, with level prairie interspersed. After crossing Pine Creek we struck a beautiful piece of country,

some of which is already brought under cultivation. In the afternoon we reached McKinnon's Woods, a place we had been hearing about for days, and which, when reached, realized our worst expectations. I have travelled bush roads in all parts of Ontario, but never struck a worse piece than this. We met numerous teams with emigrants on their way farther west, some of them looking discouraged enough "because of the way." I was glad to be able to cheer them with the assurance that it was "better farther on." Later in the day the clouds again began to "drop down fatness;" but we had had so much of this kind of thing that we could have wished the clouds as lean as Pharaoh's kine, if that would have put an end to the dropping. Sometimes the sun would struggle through a rift, and the rain would cease, but before we had time to congratulate ourselves on the change, down it would come again. We were forcibly reminded of a worthy Scottish home Missionary who was about to commence an out-door service, when a few drops of rain began to fall. Fearing that a shower would scatter his congregation, he devoutly lifted up his voice in prayer, asking that the Lord would be pleased to withhold the rain till the service was over. Even while he was speaking the rain ceased, and the worthy man's prayer was turned to praise; but e'er he had uttered a dozen words of thanksgiving, down came the rain again as though the bottom had fallen out. Opening his eyes with a look of mingled astonishment and protest, the good man cried—"Eh, guid Lord, *this is perfetly ridecklous!*"

On Saturday the roads for a number of miles were still very bad. It was no longer continuous bush, but stretches of low level prairie almost entirely covered with water. Sometimes to escape the "grease" and mud-holes on the trail, I would turn into the long grass, where the horses had to wade through water almost up to their bellies for half a mile together. At one point the trail crossed a large pond—almost a lake—that spread out for hundreds of yards in every direction. Just before we reached it part of a company of Ontario emigrants had passed over, and entering the water from the farther side was a horse and cart, loaded with goods, on the top of which was perched a young couple who looked as though they belonged to one another or expected to do so shortly. But the course of their love did not run smoothly at this particular time, for when the horse reached the middle of the pond, he stopped, as if he had made up his mind to rest awhile; when the driver urged him with the whip, he made preparations to lie down. By this time we had reached the same part of the pond, and shouting at the unmannerly brute he became ashamed of his performance, and starting on took the young couple safely to the other side. Closing up the procession was a lad of 12 or 14 years of age, who crossed the water in triumph astride the back of a cow!—From Dr. Sutherland's "A Summer in Prairie Land."

Japan has a school population of five millions, between the ages of six and twenty-four. Of these two millions are on the school registers. Rev. H. Evington, of Osaka, says it is an education wanting in the foundation of all instruction—that of duty to God.