

## SCOTTISH FARMERS OF THE WEST

THE writer need make no apology for introducing our successful farmers in company with professional or mercantile men. Virgil, not long after the Christian Era, wrote his famous classical poem, "The Georgics," in which in well-turned periods he makes the art of the farmer celebrated. The farmer is nearest to the land, and the worker who follows the most historic of occupations, begun when "Adam delved and Eve span," need take no second place in the catalogue of men. The "brown heath and shaggy wood," emblematic of sterility, with its mountains over which no plough can be drawn to leave a furrow, with its "flood" of many lochs, and bogs, and firths, is not an ideal land for the farmer. But Scottish pluck and Scottish thrift have reclaimed "carse lands," and cleared stony wastes, and drained swampy districts until the Lothians, and Aberdeen, and Berwickshire produce the best farmers in the world, and show the highest reach of farming skill and industry in the British Empire. When the Scottish settlers went to Rupert's Land a century ago, they were not the class, whether

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Orkneymen or Highlanders, to develop agriculture. Many of them were crofters—that is, they could fish better than they could farm. But Lord Selkirk's executors in 1822, learning that the prairies were fertile, undertook to teach the colonists by example. In the year named they sent out as a model farmer Manager Laidlaw, a Scottish agriculturist, to teach the colonists how to farm. The good scheme was most unwisely carried out. "Hayfield Farm" was chosen at a thoroughly satisfactory spot on the Assiniboine River, west of Fort Garry, and the promoters, "paying a high salary to the manager," "erected ample farm buildings, barns, yards, and stables." Everything was badly managed, and after a few years the "Experimental Farm" was given up, with a total loss of £3,500. Governor Simpson, with Scottish tenacity, next tried the "Assiniboine Wool Company," this time to fail before the first payment for stock was made. So that, as was remarked, there was "much cry and little wool." Another experiment was undertaken under the name of the "Flax and Hemp Company." The flax grew, a fine harvest was reaped, but there was no market for the product. Surely Scottish shrewdness might have foreseen such a result. But when neither gentleman farming nor linen manufacture seemed to succeed, it was taken for granted that the wild prairies would supply unlimited pasture for sheep.

In the twenties, however, the second Experimental Farm was begun on the Assiniboine, and

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to show that it had the full support, both theoretical and financial, of Governor Simpson, a Scottish Hudson's Bay Company officer, Chief Factor McMillan, was appointed manager. An expensive stallion, costing £300, was brought from Britain, high-priced American mares were imported, and costly implements were purchased. Mismanagement and extravagance also led to this farm being given up, and with a heavy loss. In 1838 a third Experimental Farm was begun, under Captain G. M. Cary, but it soon passed into the limbo of failures.

In the thirties Robert Campbell, a shepherd from West Perthshire in Scotland, along with Burke, one of Lord Selkirk's earliest settlers, was commissioned to buy 1,500 sheep in Kentucky and bring them to the prairies of Red River Settlement. Going to the proposed destination they found exorbitant prices prevailing, and went a hundred miles farther. They had to drive their flock some fifteen hundred or more miles, over rough prairies infested with spear grass, and the distance and obstacles led to only 250 of the sheep, and those lame and wounded, reaching the banks of the Red River. The men showed true Scottish pluck, but the scheme was quixotic. Even then the settlers, urged on by Governor Simpson, did not give up, but founded a tallow company, which failed.

Thus farming in Red River Settlement in the old colony days never met with much success. The people could only count on eight bushels of grain a year to be purchased from them by the

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Hudson's Bay Company. This, and a precarious sale in the Indian country, was their whole dependence. There was, however, plenty in the land for man and for beast, and a number of enterprising Scotsmen owned mills which made a flour, if not of the highest grade, yet of a nutritious character.

Those happy millers of Scottish blood were: George Flett, James Inkster, Thomas Logan, Hugh Polson, R. Sanderson, and Cuthbert Grant, our old acquaintance, now settled down to the arts of peace.

The establishment of a newspaper called the *Nor'-Wester* in 1859 did something to open up the hitherto hermit colony of Red River. News of a farming country of the greatest fertility reached the Press of all Canada. A number of Scottish families from near Guelph in Ontario reached Red River Settlement by way of St. Paul, Minnesota, making a journey of some five hundred miles in their covered immigrant wagons, their eyes being fixed on the North Star as their guide, as they looked out at their camping-places on the lonely trek. These men were John McLean, and in 1862 followed by Farquhar McLean and Kenneth McBain. With the eyes of graziers and farmers they journeyed to Portage la Prairie, and settled there in the "Garden of Manitoba." In 1868 there arrived on the scene another notable farmer from near Guelph, Kenneth McKenzie, whom we have already met as one of the legislators of Manitoba in Chapter XXVIII. McKenzie

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immediately began farming upon a large scale, and became for many years the chieftain of the clan of husbandmen. He accumulated whole regions of valuable land, and he and his sons were representatives of the best traditions of Scottish farming. Beside him lived a well-known farmer, Hugh Grant, hailing originally from Nova Scotia, but coming from Ontario with his reputation as a farmer well established. He and two other brothers became leading farmers in the Portage la Prairie district. Many of their countrymen followed them to that district, which might rank as the Lothians of Manitoba, from its Scottish atmosphere. In the north of this region, maintaining a great grazing farm, was Mr. Walter Lynch, a leading farmer. In Manitoba the Brandon district has always challenged comparison with the Portage plains. In some particulars the Brandon countryside excels. The experiences of a well known and typical farmer in this district may serve as a picture of hardship and success in the early days of Manitoba. We have chosen James Milliken, who was born in the middle of the last century in Berwickshire. In his Scottish home the love of the farm animals had been a passion with him from his childhood. In 1883 Milliken arrived from Scotland, and at once took up land on Pipestone Creek in the Brandon region. His first crops were bitten by the frost. His market town was twenty-four miles distant, and it took three bushels of wheat to realise one dollar. Failure followed failure, but

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in 1887 a bumper crop of 2,500 bushels of wheat gladdened his heart, and he began to assume the air of a Scottish laird. Three years later wheat had risen to a dollar a bushel, but failure came again. However, Milliken was a prudent farmer, and instead of "putting all his eggs into one basket" he followed mixed farming, with an intelligent rotation of crops. This Scottish farmer's experience is worthy of recounting on the side of stock-raising, but we refrain. Milliken and his wife and six children, of whom five are girls, now live in their comfortable home, the centre of a farm of 640 acres. They are an intelligent family and much respected. Success in this case has been attained by Scottish pluck and perseverance.

Different districts in Manitoba are known as "Scotia," "Scotch Settlement," "New Scotland," and the like. This tells its own tale, for Pilot Mount and Virden, Hamiota, Gladstone, Neepawa, Miami, and many other centres, being fertile regions, are good farming districts, and illustrate the saying that if there is a good thing to be found a Scotsman will be there. Perhaps best known of Scottish farmers and fruit-growers in Manitoba is Mr. A. P. Stevenson, of Nelson. He is commonly spoken of or known as "Sandy Stevenson." Coming to Manitoba as a Scottish lad of twenty in 1874, and knowing how they farm in Perthshire, Scotland, Stevenson homesteaded near Nelson at the foot of Pembina Mountain. Floods and grasshoppers were the enemies of his early efforts at farming. On his

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first arrival from Scotland, Stevenson had, in Scarborough, Ontario, passed two years among the apple-growers, and it was probably this experience which led him to experiment in horticulture. Old settlers had decided that no apple other than the crab-apple could be grown in Manitoba. The Experimental Farm at Brandon, with the full resources of Government behind it, has certainly failed to grow apples. It was reserved for this modest but enterprising Scotsman to compel success in apple-growing. Acting intelligently, he sheltered his place well with trees, bushes, and undergrowth; then he sought out in Minnesota, the State lying south of Manitoba, certain varieties of Russian apples, which had been acclimatised there, where the climate is similar to that of Manitoba. Protecting the trees from mice and rabbits in the winter and from the sun scald in spring, the experimenter succeeded in planting and developing his orchard, and the writer can certify that, on a visit to the Nelson farm, he saw ten or twenty varieties of large and beautiful apples in the autumn season. In a late year Stevenson produced from fifty to a hundred barrels of apples. Many of his neighbours are now learning his secret.

A few years ago Mr. Stevenson was appointed Forestry Inspector for Manitoba by the Dominion Government, and co-operated with the Brandon and Indian Head Experimental Farm in a scheme of tree-planting for the farmers of Manitoba. By skilful methods of soil preparation and cultiva-

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tion millions of trees have grown up in wind-breaks as protection on the prairie farms. This will stand as this worthy Scotsman's greatest achievement. As Manitoba is a farming province, it is also right to mention the hardships and success of such men as John Gray, of Brandon, James Duthie, and Wm. Laughlin, of Hartney—all good farmers and good Scotsmen.

In Manitoba a number of residents of Winnipeg and other urban centres have carried on farming with great success. Perhaps some of them may have been like Henry Ward Beecher, who had a farm up the Hudson above New York, and said he had not made money from it, but he had gained a great deal of experience. Among these enterprising business leaders are such men of Scottish blood as Robert H. Bryce, with his "Sturgeon Creek" farm; William Martin, on the "Plum Coulee" farm; and George Paterson, of the "Brandon" farm.

It would be doing Manitoba scant justice to fail to mention the Manitoba Agricultural College, near Winnipeg, which is the farmer's friend and mentor. Here the Manitoba Government is said to have spent \$600,000 in establishing an institution of the greatest value. Principal Black has all the marks of a man of Scottish blood, and he is assisted by Scottish or Scoto-Irish colleagues, although one of his staff, Mr. S. A. Bedford, long the director of the Brandon Experimental Farm, and now an able professor of the Agricultural College, has not been able to satisfy the writer that he is of Scottish blood.



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With its classes for farmers' daughters as well as sons this college is one of the most successful and useful, as well as one of the most popular, institutions of Manitoba.

Whatever may be said in favour of the Manitoba farmers in a greater degree can be declared of those of Saskatchewan. Years ago it was the great home of the buffalo, and to-day it is the paradise of a class of farmers who are exceedingly enterprising. When it is stated that the Hon. W. R. Motherwell, who is Minister of Agriculture, is a graduate of Guelph Agricultural College as well as a practical farmer, it may be realised how real a thing scientific agriculture is to become in Saskatchewan. North of Regina, in the neighbourhood of Lumsden and Forest, is a large settlement of Canadians of Scottish blood who have had marvellous success as farmers. Here are the Martins, Balfours, Smiths, Millers, Wilkies, &c., whose great operations in wheat-growing have made the region celebrated. Two brothers, Messrs. Mutch, of Scottish descent, have large possessions in farms, and especially in horses, which they breed with great success. In the south-eastern part of Saskatchewan is a noted farming district along the slope of Moose Mountain. Leaving Strathclair, a Scottish settlement, in North-Western Manitoba, through the fine district of Moosomin, where Scottish agriculturists abound, a party of Canadian Scotsmen went in 1872 and made the Moose Mountain Settlement. Then came the Crerars, the Hislops and Lees,

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the Kippens and McEacherns and McNabs, and a' and a', who built houses on their homesteads, seventy miles from the nearest railway station of Moosomin, which for years was their market town. Afterwards arrived the Maclarens and Lawtons and Hydes, and others who built up the settlement. Later the Eastern branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway gave them an outlet to the twin towns of Oxbow and Alameda, where they marketed their grain, though they were still thirty-five miles distant from the railway. A few years afterward the fertility of the district led to a branch railway going through these fine settlements, and the name of their town, Arcola, was given to their new railway line. Among the first settlers of the "trek" of 1882 was a young Scotsman from Stirling, William Henderson Bryce. Of modest manner, but of most determined disposition, Mr. Bryce has risen to be the greatest farmer of the district. Not only has he become a great wheat farmer, but also a most noted breeder of Clydesdale horses. His importations of high-bred animals from Scotland have reached some thirty or forty thousand dollars, and he has again and again swept the field for prizes at the agricultural fairs of Winnipeg and Brandon. Mr. Bryce's farm buildings are equipped with all modern improvements. He is an Elder in the Kirk and a most substantial citizen.

The future of agriculture in Saskatchewan is secured by the splendid provision being made in the erection of the Agricultural College in con-

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nection with the Provincial University at Saskatoon. Not only are many of the professors men of Scottish blood, but especially Professor Rutherford, Dean of the College of Agriculture, is a fine example of the patient, thorough, and practical agriculturist, who does credit to the land of the bluebell and heather.

Going westward to Alberta—"sunny Alberta"—new problems meet the agriculturist, and here "dry farming" is the method desired for meeting the conditions. The rainfall of 16 inches in the year, or in some localities only 8 inches, requires a change in the modes of farming from those followed in Manitoba; and while the northern part of the province about Edmonton has a good rainfall, yet the south requires conservation of the moisture as well as the use of irrigation methods in overcoming the drought. Alberta is fortunate in possessing a true man of Scottish blood in George Harcourt, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, who has his headquarters at Edmonton, the capital. He had already won a reputation as an agricultural editor and specialist in Winnipeg before going West to Alberta.

This is a province of great varieties of agriculture. Hitherto it has been best known in its southern districts for horse and cattle ranching, though in later years the farmer is replacing the rancher even in Southern Alberta, while farther north grain and mixed farming are being much developed. One of the veteran Scottish-Canadian ranchers of Alberta is Col. Walker, in the neigh-

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bourhood of Calgary. As a soldier, a farmer, and a public-spirited citizen he has been notable. If we seek for a type of the successful Alberta rancher, he is sure to be a Scotsman, and we find one in Bryce Wright, Esq., of De Winton, near Calgary. Born in Ayrshire, Scotland—a shire noted for its Scottish lore and song, but as well for its famous breed of cattle—Bryce Wright grew up and was well trained on his father's farm. Leaving home, he became under factor on the farm of Col. Anstruther in Fifeshire. Here he had experience in dealing with Shorthorn cattle and Clydesdale horses. Coming in 1886 to Canada, he settled down in De Winton, where he has a farm of eight hundred acres, containing a stud of thirty horses, a herd of forty Shorthorn cattle, and a flock of Oxford sheep. He has been a most useful leader in scientific agriculture, acting as a judge of animals at agricultural fairs, lecturing in provincial agricultural schools, and prominent in breeders' associations. Bryce Wright and his Scottish relative, John A. Turner, are credited with the foundation of the production of Clydesdale horses in the Province of Alberta.

Every part of the province has its good farmers, and many of them have Scottish blood. There is James Ramsay, of Priddie ; Alexander Blackwood, of De Winton ; Charles Stewart, M.P.P., of Sedgewick ; Hugh McIntosh, of Macleod ; George Duncan, of Innesfail ; and John McPherson, M.P.P., of Spruce Grove. Mr. McPherson is a Canadian Scotsman, born in Brant County,

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Ontario, who has become a leader in Alberta. An effusive writer, speaking of the Alberta farmers, many of whom are credited with being fine specimens of men in stature and intelligence, says :—

“ To be big, to be good-natured, to be Scotch, to live where the Rockies rear their everlasting peaks into the blue ether, to love good stock, and to have the respect of men, these are things worth striving for, aye, worth living for. Scotland has contributed more than cattle and horses to the upbuilding of the live-stock industry of the Canadian West. Strange, when one come to consider it, how large is the number of Scots, or men of Scottish descent, whose names are to be written first in the record of those who have a hand in the making of our live-stock history. May their numbers never grow less.”

Crossing the mountains to British Columbia Scotsmen, as we have seen, have taken their full part. In farming, however, British Columbia has been less noted than in mining, fishing, and shipping. However, nestling in the great mountain valleys or along the valleys or deltas of the mighty rivers, localities are found where farming and fruit-growing can be carried on with great success.

The price of land being so great in British Columbia, it is not surprising that the chief farmers of the province have been rich men engaged in other business, who had a taste for agriculture or horticulture. Among Scottish merchants are R. P. Rithet, who was mentioned in Chapter XXX.

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A true Scotsman, he has become one of the largest ranchers in the province. The present Lieutenant-Governor, T. W. Patterson, in business as contractor, and referred to in Chapter XXVII., has a large ranch on one of the islands of the Gulf of Georgia, and another in the New Westminster district. Two officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, Dr. Tolmie and Mr. A. C. Anderson, both of whom have passed away, and of whom sketches have been already given in Chapter XX., were engaged in farming, the former near Victoria and the latter near Saanich. In the last few years the Okanagan Valley has come into prominence as a fruit-growing district. The pioneer in this department was a Scottish nobleman, Lord Aberdeen, who when Governor-General of Canada took a liking for this upland valley, and began near Vernon the now well-known Coldstream Ranch. His example and influence have led many others to follow him. The land in the lower half of this valley required irrigation, and great works have been built, carrying the water to the points where it was needed. A number of Scottish gentlemen, retired officials from India, have ranches in this region. Many prominent Scotsmen from different parts of Canada have invested monies in the Kelowna, Peachland, Summerland, and Penticton fruit orchards. Scottish pluck and intelligence will no doubt be found taking the lead in making British Columbia the great source of supply for the fruit absolutely necessary for the health and delight of the denizens of the prairie provinces

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of Alberta and Saskatchewan ; and British Columbia will dispute with Ontario the supremacy in supplying the midway Province of Manitoba.