

A
Visit
To The
Province of Upper Canada,
In
1819.
James Strachan.

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IT is by no means the design of this Publication to promote Emigration, or lightly to consider the difficulties and frequent miseries by which it is attended ;—my object is to point out the superior advantages which Canada offers to those who are determined to leave the British Islands for the Continent of America.

The most exaggerated and false accounts have for many years circulated in Great Britain and Ireland, of the encouragement experienced by Foreigners, in the United States. In consequence, thousands have gone over, been disappointed, and ruined. Yet the stream of emigration still flows with increasing vigour to that Country, while respectable Emigrants to Canada are comparatively few.

The facts disclosed in this Work will, it is hoped, produce, in this respect, a salutary change ; for when it is found that an Emigrant going to Upper Canada, well recommended, gets a grant of one or two hundred Acres of land for nothing, except the trifling fee of preparing it for Location—that he enjoys it under the protection of British Laws, and possesses all the privileges of a British Subject—that he has access to Religious Instruction, and the means of Educating his Children—that the Climate is healthy, and the best medical aid at hand in case of sickness—that he has a good Market for his produce—is in no danger from the Indians—and receives his supplies of Clothing, and other necessaries, at a moderate expence—few will he disposed to go to the United States, where all these things are reversed.

The Emigrant going to the United States must purchase his lands at a dear rate, and he must encounter a terrible journey of seventeen hundred miles from the port at which he lands, after experiencing the miseries of a tedious sea voyage, before he gets to them. In America, the superiority of Upper Canada in climate and soil to the Western States, begins to be known ; and numbers who went with the new of settling in the United States, are daily coming into the Province.

The Author is sensible that his style is inferior, for he has not been accustomed to composition ; but though the Workmanship be plain, he can vouch for the solidity of the Materials,—for he had better opportunities of information, than any other traveller can possess ; and he believes that almost every thing which an Emigrant going to Upper Canada wishes to know, will be found in this small volume.

All persons leaving their native soil should weigh the matter well, before they take their final resolution ; and, after determining, they should look into the primary cause that takes

them from their native land. If politics, then they ought to go to the United States ; not that they will be pleased with the government there, or will become content, but because the disaffected will not suit this province, nor will it suit them. But if the emigrant's desire to maintain a rising family, and increase a small capital, with greater ease and certainty of success than in any other country that I know. Upper Canada will not disappoint him.

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Not having seen my brother for twenty five years, who is respectably settled in Upper Canada, and having some leisure, I determined to pay him a visit. Accordingly, I sailed from Aberdeen, on the 27th March, with a fine breeze. On the 28th, about mid-day, we passed through the Pentland firth, and, the wind continuing, soon got clear of the islands, and entered the Western Ocean.

April 6. The winds were baffling, and we made very little way ; but next morning a very heavy gale commenced, which continued fair for more than eight days. The passengers consisted of three ladies and three gentlemen, with one child ; and, as they had never been at sea before, they were easily terrified at any unusual appearance. On the evening of the 16th, all were filled with consternation at the carrying away our main-yard on the slings : screaming and wailings, repinings and vain resolutions, which are common on such occasions, deafened us for the greater part of the night. But in the morning, the yard was taken down and repaired, again set up ; the wind abated, and we pursued our voyage.

On Sunday, April 18, saw two islands of ice, or as they are now denominated, ice-bergs, one on the weather bow, very large, another a-head, somewhat less ; the atmosphere was exceedingly cold till we passed some distance beyond them. 19th, land in sight, which we found to be the western-most point of the island of Newfoundland : the weather was extremely pleasant this and the following day. On the 31st, ice was discovered from the mast-head, and before night we were completely surrounded. We had now entered the Gulph of St Lawrence, but the ice impeded our progress, striking against the sides of the ship with great violence, and exciting not a little apprehension ; on going to the mast-head, I saw nothing but ice on every side—this continued for several days. A ship from London followed our track through the ice, but with great terror ; for, having never been in the same situation, this being her captain's first voyage to Quebec, he hailed us the first evening after we got into the ice, and thought that we had done wrong in getting environed ; but our captain encouraged him by informing him, that he had been often in similar situations, during the twelve years that he had sailed to Canada ; that he was well acquainted with the Gulph, and that they must persevere ; for, to go back, was much more dangerous than to proceed. On the ice, several seals were seen—four of which we caught, two very large, and two of a smaller size.

On the 24th, still continuing in the ice, we began to be somewhat alarmed : as the masses were large, and the breeze brisk, they struck against the sides of the ship in a dreadful manner ; but towards night, they began to get smaller, and a clear sea was perceived at some distance a-head. In the morning of the 25th, we found ourselves in clear water, and making great progress. The Point of Gaspé was now in sight ; and about ten at night we entered what is properly called the river St. Lawrence. There are several small islands in sight, which are said to afford excellent fishing stations, and are so used, though not by any means to the extent that they are capable of. After passing the island of Anticosti, which appears as void of improvement as when first discovered, we had the satisfaction of seeing both shores, and of being convinced that we were in a river—a circumstance which had long been asserted by our captain, but of which we had reason to doubt, not being able at all times to discover land on either side.

We now perceived vast chains of mountains on the north, covered with snow : the scenery was grand and terrific ; but their distance was so great, as not to present any alteration to the eye, from our approaching near the shore.

In this part of the river there is great difficulty ; and, to prevent accidents, every ship is obliged to have a pilot. This has, like all other good rules, been to many a cause of complaint, who pretend that they can direct the ship's course better than the pilots sent on board. But such complaints only prove that the best intentioned measures are censured, and that some persons cannot be satisfied. That the ships should be all obliged to employ men experienced in the navigation of the river is just, not only to insure the safety of the vessel, but to enable Trinity-House to support such a number of pilots as may supply every demand : the loss of one or two vessels would be much more than the price of pilotage for several years.

As we approached the island of Bique, signs of cultivation appear : farm-houses are perceived along the coast, and the lands cleared around them. As we proceed up the river, several beautiful islands are seen, covered with fine wood : spots of clearing are visible in many of them, at different distances ; and the smoke rises in columns in various places out of the forest, making the whole exceedingly interesting and picturesque.

Having been often told that the coast of America was low, and the country flat, so that you were at land before you were aware, I was sensibly struck with the incorrectness of these remarks, as we were passing up the St. Lawrence. Here every thing appeared on the grandest scale : the mountains lofty and cragged, and the general effect exceedingly sublime. Not having been in any other part of America, I can say nothing of the aspect of the coast ; but I have travelled through great part of Europe, and yet I never saw so interesting an approach to any country, as by the St. Lawrence. The magnitude of the river, which discharges more water into the ocean, than any six rivers of Europe, and the majestic rudeness of the rising mountains, have a powerful influence over the mind.

April 26. This morning the wind heads us—take in our studding sails ; but at mid-day the wind comes fair, and we advance rapidly up the river, expecting a pilot every moment. The ship that had been with us in the ice not visible, some think that she is a-stern ; but the captain says she must be a-head, as she sails much better than we do.—The breeze dies away, and about 9 in the evening, the tide stops us.

27. This morning, get under weigh, and sail up the river, with a commanding breeze, hoping to arrive in the evening at Quebec ; but the wind died away about eleven ; no pilot had yet offered, which the captain considered of no consequence as he had been so frequently at Quebec. He tells us that he can take the ship up as well as any pilot ; but if one comes, he must receive him. This he considered a great hardship. I asked whether he thought it so the first time he came up the river ? he answered no ; for then the pilot was most welcome.

A very fine country now presents itself on the south shore of the St. Lawrence ; but, on the north it is very mountainous, and appears wild, barren, and uncultivated, and still covered with snow. Fine weather and light breezes. At one *a.m.* a boat with four men came off from land, and told us the ice was a-head, and that it was of no use to proceed further, for that the ice at Quebec had broken up only four days ago. Notwithstanding this disagreeable information, we stood in for about an hour ; and being now within twelve leagues of Quebec, we could perceive the ice very plain from the deck. About two o'clock, huge masses of ice passing us, we came to anchor at Goose Island. Soon after we had moored the ship, a boat came off, and, on its return, the captain sent a letter to his consignees at Quebec. Here we lay till the 29th, when we shifted our station, for greater convenience in moving up the river : went

on shore at noon, but could purchase nothing, except milk, and very black flour bread ; the walking extremely bad ; the ice, in many places, unbroken, but giving way to the pressure of the feet—every step went above the ankles in mud, water, and snow. We soon got tired and returned on board. The inhabitants are stout, and dark complexioned ; the number of children in every house very great. Went ashore a second time this day, and hired a carriage, to take us to a Mr. M'Pherson's, who had been residing in this part of the country upwards of 40 years. He is originally from Scotland. He received us most courteously, insisted on our remaining to dinner, was lively and polite in his manners ; has several grand-children married, and seems to live in great comfort. From him we first learned the death of Dr. Spark.

On reaching the ship, we found the ice much thinner, and expect to sail in the morning, wind and weather serving. About 4 *p.m.* on the 30th, we set sail, with an excellent breeze ; but were very much impeded by the running ice, which struck the bow of the vessel with such force as to stop her altogether. About 11 *p.m.* we came to anchor off the island of Orleans. This island is extremely beautiful : the lands are excellent ; and the people, who are numerous, appear to be in good circumstances. The island is said to be about 30 miles long, by ten in breadth : it appears to be well cultivated and pleasing prospects of villages and cottages satisfy the eye.

May 1. Got under weigh at 4 *a.m.* with a light breeze : about 8 o'clock we saw the Falls of Montmorency, Quebec having for some time opened to our view. The city, built upon a lofty rock, seems to look with defiance down the stream : as you approach, you have Point Levi on your left, and on the right the western point of the island of Orleans ; on passing which, you see the main land to the north full of villages, and the steeples of their churches shining in the sun-beams, as they are commonly covered with tin.

Charlevoix justly remarks, that there is no other city besides this in the world, that can boast of a fresh water harbour, three hundred miles from the sea, capable of containing one hundred ships of the line.

At the island of Orleans, the breadth of the river is not less than twelve or fifteen miles ; but, above this island, it narrows suddenly, so as not to be quite a mile at Quebec. Yet, between the island and the city, there is a large bason, three or four miles in every direction, into which the little river St. Charles discharges itself.

About 10. *a.m.* we came to anchor at Heath and Moir's wharf, all safe, after a passage of five weeks. Went ashore in the lower town, which we find full of ice, and almost impassable ; board and lodging very high. Lodge at the Exchange Coffee-house for 7s. 6d. per day.

The situation of Quebec is extremely judicious. It is destined by nature for a great city : it entirely commands the river, which is 100 feet dept and not a mile broad. The anchorage, however, is good. Above the city, the river widens, and presents a majestic stream, slowly rolling its waters towards the ocean.

The few days that I spent in Quebec, I found extremely pleasant ; and though my brother resides at York, in Upper Canada, a distance of nearly 600 miles, he was well known, and I received attention on his account. There are so many good descriptions of Quebec, and the surrounding objects, Cape Diamond, St. Charles, Point Levi, and the Falls of Montmorency, &c. that I despair of adding any thing to them ; and therefore I forbear. But I felt very strong emotions when walking on the plains of Abraham, and standing over the place where Wolfe expired, just as his troops became victorious.

EPITAPH.

Here modest WOLFE, cut off in early bloom.
Though crown'd with glory, waits the gen'ral doom.
The shouts of victory met his parting breath :
He heard with joy—and smiling, sunk in death.
O ! brave enlightened youth, thy manners mild.
Of half its terrors horrid war beguil'd :
And sweet compassion purified the flame
That fir'd thy breast to gain a deathless name.
For thee thy country drops the gen'rous tear
And mourns thy conquests at a price so dear.

A stranger, well introduced, spends his time very pleasantly at Quebec. The inhabitants are polite, hospitable, and intelligent ; indeed the society is equal to any you can find in England. The judges, the crown officers, and principal merchants, on the civil side, and the staff-officers attached to the commander of the forces, on the military, form a mixture highly agreeable. Here I was struck with a circumstance, which I thought might be peculiar to Quebec, but which I found afterwards to be general through both the Canadas ; it is this, that the dinner parties consist almost always of gentlemen, and seldom, as at home, of nearly equal numbers of ladies and gentlemen.

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On the 5th, I took my place in the steam-boat Telegraph, at 9 o'clock *p.m.* and arrived at Montreal on the 7th. The banks of the river all the way are pleasant and interesting ; almost every six miles you see a village, with a church and neat steeple, covered generally with tin. This associates in the mind the most agreeable reflections. You are in a Christian country, among the disciples of the lowly Jesus ; and, though to the protestant there is a great drawback, when he finds the majority catholics yet when he farther considers the very few colonies that have a regular worship, he thinks Lower Canada a vast gainer by the comparison ; and is forced to admit that, however superstitious the Roman catholic religion may be, and however great its deviation from pure Christianity, it embraces many sincere disciples of Jesus Christ, and sets its face against every thing irreligious and immoral. In the neighbourhood of Quebec, the lands are fertile, and the population very considerable, as appears from the hamlets visible from Cape Diamond ; but there is still so much snow and ice, that the face of the country, in general, presents a rude and inhospitable aspect. After reaching Three Rivers, the climate becomes more mild : the ice and snow have disappeared, the air is soft and temperate. The country is level as you approach Lake St. Peter's ; and nothing can be more cheerful than the banks, when you leave that broad expanse. The lands are well cultivated ; the river is interspersed with beautiful islands, some of which are inhabited, and others partially cleared, without inhabitants ; and present you with some of the finest landscapes in the world.

On coming near Montreal, the river is extremely rapid, and requires nearly the whole force of the steam engine to enable the vessel to stem it. This city, which is before Quebec, in point of commerce, stands on an island nearly thirty miles long, and thirteen at its greatest breadth. The mountain from which Montreal derives its name, is about a mile from the town, and affords the most agreeable sites for country-houses and beautiful gardens. From the top of the mountain the view is very extensive embracing a circle of nearly 80 miles radius.

Montreal was once surrounded with a wall, to defend it from the Indians and English, by whom it was frequently alarmed ; but lately, the ramparts have been levelled, and streets and building lots laid out on the ground which they occupied.

The town is more open and airy than Quebec, and consequently more pleasing to strangers ; but neither so romantic, nor surrounded with scenery so sublime. It is more populous than Quebec, containing, perhaps, 20,000 inhabitants, and the latter about 15,000. A stranger is particularly struck in this city with the iron doors and window shutters, and the roofs of white tin or sheet iron, which give a gloomy appearance to the houses, and excite the notion of house-breaking and robbery ; but, on enquiry, I found it was to guard against fires, which have been very frequent, and very destructive.

The inhabitants of Montreal are extremely kind to strangers, and many of them entertain in a princely style. The few days I remained were spent in the most pleasant manner, and I left it with regret. At Montreal, the steam navigation ceases for the distance of about 160 miles, which most either be passed over in batteaux or in the stage. There are objections to both : the batteau moves so very slowly, seldom more than 20 miles a-day, and the stage is so rough and uncomfortable. To save time, I chose the latter ; but could not help lamenting that steam-boats were not practicable the whole way. The ease of travelling by steamboats is very great : you step into the boat as into your dining-room—you read in the gentlemen's cabin, or you walk upon the deck, as you feel more agreeable ; and, at meal-time, you are served most comfortably with every viand you can well desire. There is no fatigue, no privation—you are as comfortable as in your own apartment. There are seven excellent steam-boats plying between Quebec and Montreal ; some of them very large, fitted up both for goods and passengers. There is no difficulty in coming up, except at the rapid of the Richlieu, which requires some attention. No accidents have happened, owing to the superior excellence of the engines, some of them of fifty-horse power, (which are all from England), and the attention of the persons by whom they are conducted. The application of steam to navigation brings virtually the back settlements of America to the ocean ; it gives such a facility to exports and imports, and is so much cheaper than the former modes of conveyance. It, however, appears, that nature always gives an advantage on certain conditions, and here a great sacrifice is made ; for the prosperity of the steam vessels becomes the ruin of all the sloops and river craft, which in cases of emergency furnished us with a very considerable number of pilots and seamen.

On the 12th, I left Montreal, in the stage ; the roads very bad, but the country through which we passed well cultivated, and seemingly full of people. In the afternoon, we came to a broad part of the river, which is called Lake St Francis. The rapid water which we passed the greater part of the day is extremely curious ; rushing forward with incredible swiftness, and carrying the boats with it often nine or ten miles an hour.

At Lake St. Francis we find a very good passage-boat in waiting, which took us up to the mouth of the River au Rasin, a distance of 26 miles, at which place we landed, and again entered the stage. I am now in Upper Canada ; no villages yet in sight, and the land seems more in a state of nature than in the Lower province.

We reached Cornwall to breakfast. The country looks now more interesting : this village, though not large, is clean and neat, and is ornamented with an excellent church. From Cornwall to Prescott the country is very fine, and the Long Sault and the Rapid Plat, from the turbulence and swiftness of the stream, are very wonderful. As we approach Prescott, the river widens, and is less involved with islands ; and when we arrived, the St. Lawrence appeared truly majestic—for 20 miles it is nearly two miles broad, the banks on both sides gently

rising. It is grand to see a river, nearly seven hundred miles from the sea, pouring its waters in a channel two miles broad, and capable of conveying in its bosom ships of the greatest burthen,

Saturday 15th May, went on board the steamboat Charlotte, at Prescott, and proceed to Kingston, where we arrive at nine, and retire to Walker's hotel. Next morning a friend of my brother, a most intelligent and respectable gentleman, invited me most cordially to his house, till the return of the steam-boat Frontenac, which was then at York and Niagara. In this gentleman's house I was entertained in the most agreeable and courteous manner. Kingston looks well as you approach from the water. The war was of much use to it, not only more than doubling the population, but likewise distributing among its inhabitants large sums of money. The number of houses built, and well built, since the war, is very honourable to the taste and enterprize of the people. Here I found the same hospitality as at Montreal, but it made me more impatient to see my brother ; for, when his friends are so kindly eager to pay me attention, how much more will he rejoice to see and entertain me ?

A stranger, coming to Kingston, by the way of New York or Quebec, must be filled with astonishment at the size of our ships, one of which is as large, and, perhaps, larger than any ship of the line in his majesty's service. After passing up the river so many miles, to behold the vessels and dock-yard is indeed truly wonderful. The St. Lawrence, is the largest, has flush decks, and carries 110 guns ; her broadside must be tremendous.

The chaplain of the army, a gentleman of sweet and obliging manners, conducted me through the fortifications, which are rendered strong by art and nature. The Martello tower, on Point Henry, commands the harbour, and can easily prevent the approach of any vessel, however formidable. The dock-yard and principal fort stand on land separated from Kingston by an arm of the Lake. The town is, therefore, not sufficiently protected ; and, in case of war, it will be greatly exposed. The inhabitants were very active during the late contest with the United States, and are justly proud of their exertions.

May 21. I took my passage on board the steam-boat, Frontenac, for York, the seat of government in Upper Canada. This is the largest boat that I have yet seen, arranged for both passengers and freight : as a vessel of burden, and having to encounter the storms of the Lake, she is broader in the beam, and not so flat in her bottom, as those which are built to sail on rivers only. The Frontenac is admirably commanded : captain M'Kenzie to the most incessant care of the ship, adds the greatest politeness and attention to his passengers.

Saturday, May 22, I arrived at York, about six o'clock. My meeting with my brother, whom I had not seen for twenty-five years, his wife, and beautiful family, is more easily imagined than described. I am now at the end of my journey, and at the source of information respecting this country. I shall, therefore, at my leisure, answer the different questions which were given me by many persons before I left Scotland. I have arranged them in some kind of order, and selected from several lists all those which require distinct answers.

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How are Emigrants to get Land on arriving in Upper Canada ?

It is time to point out the manner of becoming settlers. And here it is to be remarked, that it is infinitely more advantageous, both for poor and rich, to go to Canada, than to the United States ; the poor emigrant gets better lands, for nothing, than he can purchase in that country. He gets them close to a settlement, and very near a good market. On reaching Upper Canada,

emigrants have to chuse which of the ten districts they are desirous of remaining in. Having determined this, they enquire for the Land Board—one has been lately established for their convenience in every district ; and, having attended this Board, the oath of allegiance is administered to them : they are examined, and, if their answers prove satisfactory, they are ordered 100 acres of land. The Boards are permitted to give only 100 acres of land to any applicant. Many prefer going to York, the seat of government, and applying to the lieutenant-governor in council, either in the hope of getting a larger grant of land, from their having greater means to improve it, or from curiosity, or because they think it better to go to the fountain-head. The lands distributing to applicants are at present nowhere beyond ten or fifteen miles from the old settlements : they consist of a range of townships in the rear of those which are already granted, and which are laid out parallel to the St. Lawrence and the lakes.

When an emigrant comes to York, he reports himself at the lieutenant-governor's office ; shews that he has come from some part of the United Kingdom, and is capable, by the laws of England of holding lands. He is then permitted to take the oath of allegiance, a certificate of which is annexed to a short memorial praying for a portion of the waste lands of the crown. This petition is lodged in the council-office ; and before it is read, it is referred to the surveyor-general, to report whether the person applying has ever received any lands or order for lands before. When this report is received, the petition is then presented to the council by its clerk, which is read, and the prayer recommended to his excellency the lieutenant-governor, as the Board, which possess a discretionary power, think just and reasonable, for one or two hundred acres of land. This recommendation, when approved by the lieutenant-governor, becomes an order and enables the clerk to issue his warrant to the surveyor-general to locate and describe the lands granted. A description is made out when the lands are fixed upon, which goes to the attorney-general for his fiat ; returns to the surveyor-general, who transmits it to the secretary of the province, who engrosses it on vellum, attaches to it the great seal, and procures the signature of the lieutenant-governor ; after which it is registered and completed, and given to the person to whom the land had been ordered. In extraordinary cases, the Board recommend four, six, and even so far as twelve hundred acres ; but very rarely, and only on special grounds.

The lands are granted with a condition not to be disposed of for three years, and no deed can be issued till the settling duties are performed ; which duties are, to clear five acres upon each hundred granted, and the half of the road in front of the same.

The settler, having procured his order for lands, and having located the same, now proceeds to perform his settling duties, which are very soon done by active men ; insomuch, that many have applied for their deeds, or patents, in two months after their land had been granted in council. The facility with which property is made by settlers, (I speak at present of those who get one or two hundred acres) is truly astonishing. Mr. Fairfield passed through Kingston, with an axe on his shoulder, a small sleigh, drawn by an old horse, containing his wife and three children, and half a dollar in his pockets. He took a piece of land to clear, which enabled him to present his petition for land and was granted two hundred acres. In ten years his clearing was very large : he built an excellent brick house, having long before erected a good barn ; and his property was valued at two thousand pounds, or eight thousand dollars.—James Cline was granted one hundred acres of land ; engaged to get out lumber for the winter season, in consideration of receiving a yoke of oxen in the spring. Went upon his land, cleared two acres, which he planted with potatoes, and one acre with Indian corn ; got another acre ready for turnips. His cattle got low, and he hired himself out to mow grass, and to harvest grain, in doing which, he made forty dollars. His potatoes were a large crop, about 500 bushels, his corn was likewise good, and his turnips prodigious. Un-

fortunately, he sold 300 bushels of potatoes, at a quarter-dollar, in the fall ; the remainder he buried till spring, at which time he sold them for half a dollar per bushel. The corn he kept for his cattle ; and sold only 100 bushels, at a quarter dollar. The money that he procured for his labour and crop enabled him to purchase two cows, and to clear and fence ten acres for spring wheat besides potatoe, corn, and turnip ground, as before. His neighbours assisted him in building a log-house and a log-barn ; and he married the daughter of one of them. He redoubled his industry : in two years after, he purchased two hundred acres adjoining his own one hundred, for three hundred dollars, payable by instalments of fifty dollars a-year, with interest. In a very few years he paid this up ; and in twelve years he had one hundred and thirty acres cleared ; had built two excellent barns, one for hay, and another for grain ; and had likewise built a good substantial stone house—and lives in great comfort.

It would be endless to enumerate all the examples that occur, many more extraordinary than those mentioned. Mr. James Campbell, whose property, before he died, was worth several thousand pounds. Mr. Casey, equally opulent ; or James Simpson, Esq. member of the House of Assembly, who had nothing a very few years ago, but his industry, and is now one of the most wealthy men in the province. The emigrant, who comes out possessed of industrious habits, and who does not allow himself to be led away with the ridiculous hope of finding a place where idleness may repose itself, while the earth shall produce its fruits spontaneously, will not fail of rendering himself comfortable. The happiness and prosperity of all the inhabitants of the colony depend upon their industry, and general good conduct. All visionary expectations must be thrown aside ; no person will succeed who is not of sober and laborious habits.

The native of this country goes upon new lands without emotion ; but to the emigrant it is, at first, terrific ; to place himself in the midst of a wood—the trees heavy ; not any of the sun able to penetrate ; no neighbour, perhaps, within several miles, and only an axe in his hand—he is ready to despair. But he has only to persevere a very short time, and apply his strength judiciously, and in a few months he will equal a native in felling trees and clearing lands. ‘ You know,’ said Mr. S——, ‘ that I was not accustomed to hard labour. Stripped of my fortune by the pressure of the times, and my own credulity, I reached York, with little or nothing in my pocket ; I could work, and therefore declined compassionate assistance. I undertook to split five thousand rails, at one dollar per hundred ; the work is heavy : I commenced vigorously, and in less than an hour, I became faint—I desisted, and wrought no more all that day. Next morning I was able to continue somewhat longer, before I experienced the same weakness—I desisted as before ! Every day I was able to continue longer and longer, till I could, in about one month, work the whole day, without any particular fatigue ; and although I cannot split rails or chop cord-wood so fast as a native, for one day, I will do more in a week, as I continue more regularly, and am never idle. These rails, when finished, enabled me to purchase some necessaries, and to set my farm a-going. I am now encouraged. I see the way clearly; and, after many vicissitudes, I look forward to ease and independence.’

Every thing depends upon skill and industry. A poor man was mentioned to me who was not very strong to clear his lands rapidly, and who seemed to get on so badly, that his neighbours thought he never would succeed ; nevertheless he persevered. The first spot which he cleared he sowed with two or three pounds of apple seeds which had been given him ; these he kept clean, and well fenced from the cattle : he tinned the plants from lime to time, and went on with his general improvements as fast as he was able. The third year his neighbours discovered that he had been wiser than they ; for he was now in possession of an incredible number of excellent apple trees ; which he sold at a shilling a piece, or so many days work on his farm per hundred. All the surrounding settlement purchased of him as every farmer saw the great advantage of having a good orchard. By means of his nursery he was enabled to

clear as much of his small farm as he wanted and to plant a very large orchard, to make cyder.

Sometimes four or six emigrants, who have no money, join together ; and one half go upon the land, and clear as fast as they can, and half go into service, and supply provisions and necessaries to those who are clearing. In this way they get on rapidly ; and when there is a house on each lot, and they have two or three yoke of oxen among them, they commonly all go upon their lands, and make more by their produce than by their day's labour.

Emigrants who are able to pay their passage, and have L.000 to the good when they enter upon their land, are soon independent. This, with industry, renders it easy for them to clear a portion of their lands, and make themselves comfortable ; and they have, therefore, much less cause for repining, and meet with much less distress, than those who have: nothing to begin with. But such as have no means to support themselves, and have large families depending upon them, are apt to get discouraged, and to learn bad habits. With fortitude and perseverance, and the blessing of health, all may get on, although it be much more desirable to see greater numbers of those who are able, coming among us.

In regard to those who have large capitals that they wish to invest in lands and agricultural pursuits, there is no place in the world equal to Canada. They may purchase lands to any extent, in the midst of flourishing settlements ; or they may obtain a grant of land, within a short distance of a settlement, from the crown. And here, comparatively speaking, they will be exposed to no privations ; but may look forward with confident expectation to great prosperity and increasing comforts—animated by the consciousness of being able to bring up their children with a good education, and to leave them with ample possessions. In this province the settlements proceed gradually—the new ones, close to the old ; the quality of the soil, and the real value of the lands, are ascertained. All the difficulties of the first improvements are, in a great measure, removed : provisions are to be found in the neighbourhood : grist and saw-mills are numerous ; and even the comforts, as well as the necessaries of life, may be obtained without much trouble. But, for some emigrants, it is more eligible to purchase an improved farm, than to go immediately on new land ; particularly if they happen to have families. By such purchases, they are at once able to keep their cattle and horses—to have their pasture meadow, and plough land ; and in this manner they may commence farming, with very little of the inconvenience, and all the advantages of a new settler.

A Visit to the Province of Upper Canada, in 1819 (1820)

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