

**A YEAR IN MANITOBA BEING THE
EXPERIENCE OF A RETIRED OFFICER IN
SETTLING HIS SONS,
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, OBSERVATIONS
ON THE COUNTRY, AND SUGGESTIONS
FOR SETTLERS GENERALLY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649070381

A Year in Manitoba Being the Experience of a Retired Officer in Settling His Sons, with Illustrations, Observations on the Country, and Suggestions for Settlers Generally by Anonymous

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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Second Edition



W. & R. CHAMBERS
LONDON AND EDINBURGH
1882



AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

So many publications have appeared, in one form or another, treating of Manitoba, and the North-west Provinces of British America, that it might almost be thought the subject was exhausted. The fact is, however, they have generally emanated from scientists, professors, delegates, or the many who have more or less interest in extolling the country, and are on that account to be taken with caution. Having fully realised this myself, it has occurred to me that the actual experience in the Province of one whose age, antecedents, and associations may give him some authority to offer it, may prove not only interesting, but really valuable to the numerous classes at home who are thinking of settling either themselves or members of their families here.

Moreover, the question of a suitable settlement for the sons of naval and military officers, clergymen, professional men, &c., has long been an anxious one; the system of competitive examinations having practically excluded all but the talented and studious from the prizes in the civil and military services, and professional life generally.

Although the English have been termed 'a nation of shopkeepers,' trade seldom commends itself to the classes above referred to, and Colonial Life seems the only 'refuge for the destitute' that in most cases offers itself.

Considerable acquaintance with some of our colonies had long convinced me that, without some previous training, young men are really no more fitted for this than for other professions. As a rule, colonial life means the practice of agriculture; and

agriculture is a trade, profession, or science, requiring for its pursuit some previous experience or initiation.

As an ex-military officer, with three or four sons to settle, the problem, how best to do this, had long been before me as a practical question; and, being fond of a country life myself, I determined to take a small farm in a good agricultural county, and there have my boys thoroughly schooled in every detail of husbandry, so as to be fitted for the work of emigrant farmers when the time arrived for them to settle in one or other of our colonies.

There can be no question that Manitoba, and the North-west Territory of British North America, have within the past two or three years attracted considerable attention as a most promising country for settlers. Offers of free grants of land—glowing accounts of the great fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, and the admirable character of the government—have been sown, in books and pamphlets, broadcast over the United Kingdom, determining many hesitating emigrants to decide in its favour. Seeing an advertisement in the *Times* newspaper in the spring of 1880 of a 'Farm and Cottage' to be let in the neighbourhood of the capital of Manitoba (Winnipeg), I put myself in communication with the advertiser, and in the end decided to take it as a base for future operations; thereafter, along with my wife and daughter, accompanying my three sons to the remote west, in order to see the boys fairly started, and then return home.

With these preliminary observations I shall now proceed to lay before my readers the result of our first year's experiences.

A RETIRED OFFICER.

MANITOBA, 1881.





ADDENDUM BY THE PUBLISHERS.

We have only to add that we have much pleasure in launching this little work upon Manitoba—a province which offers considerable attractions to those who by perseverance and industry are determined to succeed. The narrative treats of farming operations begun and carried on between the summer of 1880 and that of 1881; and by aid of a Supplement—to which the attention of the intending emigrant is particularly directed—the reader has a statement of farming operations down to the autumn of 1881.

Intending emigrants will find the Practical Hints, which follow the Supplement, of service to them, not only as a guide to routes to be followed, but as directing attention to various matters connected with passage-money, colonial disbursement, &c.

We have only further to express a sincere wish that this little work may achieve a useful end, and be the means of converting the unprosperous but willing home-worker into a prosperous and contented colonist, to whom we offer a cheery God-speed.

W. & R. C.

EDINBURGH, *January* 1882.



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