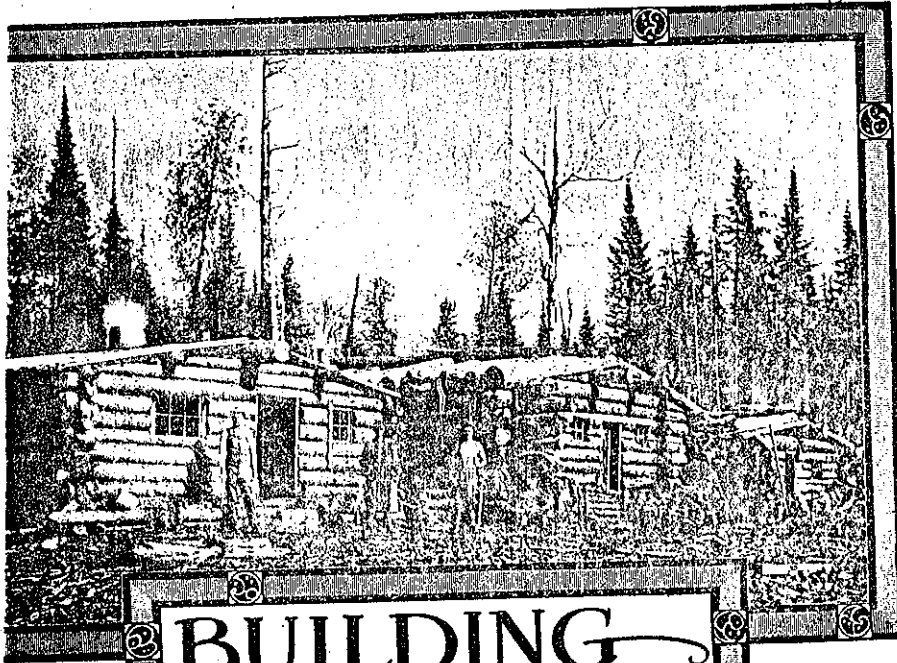


Technical World
July 1910



BUILDING a Town a Day

By James Oliver Curwood

It is expected that the next eighteen months will see the culmination of one of the greatest colonization movements in history, for during that time it is schemed to build and populate 220 towns in the Dominion of Canada, an average of one town for every other week day in that year and a half. By the middle of 1911, if Canadian government officials are not wrong in their estimate, these 220 towns will have their official places and names on the map of Canada, populations of from one hundred to a thousand people each, and they will have been made largely by good American citizens from over the border.

Never has a more interesting or a more unusual scheme for the development of a country been undertaken than this, and that it will undoubtedly succeed is assured by the fact that both the

Government and the great Railroad interests of the Dominion are behind it. Recently Andrew D. Davidson, one of the big men of the Canadian Northern, said to me, "I will show you how towns and cities are born, as they have never been born in any country in the world before; I will show you how within a year or two a vast wilderness, a thousand miles in width, is to be populated, so that from one town you will almost be able to see the smoke of the next."

And he did. Today the greatest railroad building epoch in the history of any country is in progress in Canada, notwithstanding that she already has more mileage according to population than any other nation on earth. Nine thousand miles are projected or under construction. The new Grand Trunk Pacific is stretching from coast to coast. The Canadian Pacific is throwing out



HON. FRANK OLIVER, MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR.
Head of the Immigration Department of the Dominion.

lines right and left. The Canadian Northern has 5,000 miles and will soon have 3,000 more. I followed construction gangs into the unbroken wilderness of the north, and into the mountains of the west, ate

moose meat with the railroad builders and chatted with the factors of Hudson Bay Posts, and I found railroads penetrating everywhere. But the most wonderful thing that I found was the great scheme of the Government and the Railroads, which is already in operation, for the building and populating of these 220 towns. This scheme is hardly known in the Dominion itself. It has not been exploited, for good reasons which the Government and the Railroads have kept to themselves.

On the new Grand Trunk Pacific westward from Winnipeg, a distance of 960 miles, a new town is to be located during the next year and a half at a distance of every eight miles, or 120 towns for the total distance. Most of these towns are already marked on the construction maps and the majority of them are named. On the mountain division of the same road, which is to terminate at Prince Rupert on the Pacific, thirty-five new towns are to be platted. On the main line and branches of the Canadian Northern in Saskatchewan and Alberta thirty new towns are to be brought into

existence, and on the Canadian Pacific in the same provinces thirty-five, a total of 220 in all!

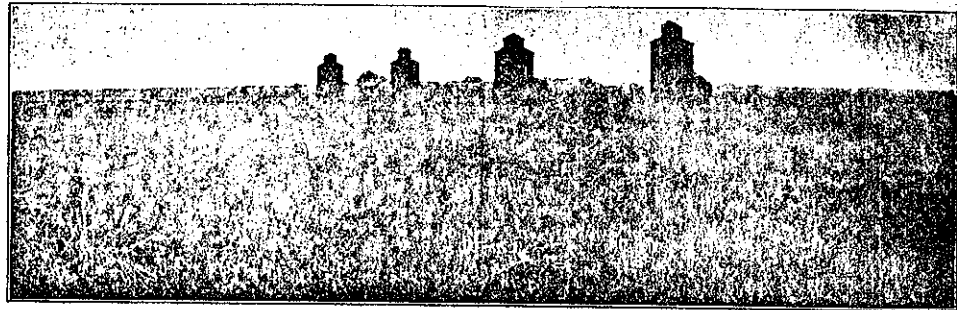
The history of these towns is to be unlike that of any other in existence. They are not to be merely platted and named, and then left to vegetate. They are to be forced into life. That is the remarkable thing about them. And this is neither a guess nor a hope. It is the result of a "game of town-building" which has been played-out by the Government as carefully as one might play a game of chess.

It must be understood, from the first, that in Canada the Government and the Railroads work hand in hand; so much so, in fact, that the Government is building a half of the new transcontinental—the Grand Trunk Pacific. Each of these 220 towns is to be located in a fertile farming region or in a country abounding in mineral and timber wealth. Otherwise the scheme would fail. One hundred and seventy-five of them are to be in a farming country. At the very first, as the towns are officially platted, a station is to be built at each place; not a very large one, but a station for all that. The elevator companies of Canada have agreed to build at least one elevator at every station, and construction on many of these will actually begin before there is a farmer in the neighborhood.

This is the first step in the populating



M. V. MACINNES, CHIEF AGENT OF THE IMMIGRATION FORCES AT WORK IN THE UNITED STATES.



THE GRAIN ELEVATORS OFTEN FORM THE NUCLEUS OF A TOWN.



WHERE A TOWN PRECEDED A RAILROAD.

This little settlement was in existence when the tracks were still fifty miles away.

of the new towns. It is argued that where there is a station and an elevator farmers will gather, but the scheme does not wait upon the will and choice of the incoming settlers. Hereafter, to a very large extent, the tide of immigration is to be directed in channels especially cut out for it. "Into this valley," say the Government and the Railroad, "we will throw 100,000 people within the next two years. We will bring another hundred thousand to the lumber and minerals of British Columbia within three years. Here is a town, with a thousand square miles of wheat land about it, that we will start with two elevators instead of one, and to which we will throw 2,000 people within eighteen months." And so, in this way, the scheme has been carefully mapped out. The army of 300 Canadian agents who are working almost night and day for settlers in the United States are already beginning to receive their instructions for the settling of these places. In England, Scotland, Ireland and other European countries the same scheme is to be followed out.

Here is the way it works.



W. J. WHITE, INSPECTOR GENERAL OF CANADA.

A farmer, with a couple of husky sons, wants to emigrate to the Canadian farm-lands. He wants free homesteads. Consequently he must go to one of these Canadian agents. That, in short,

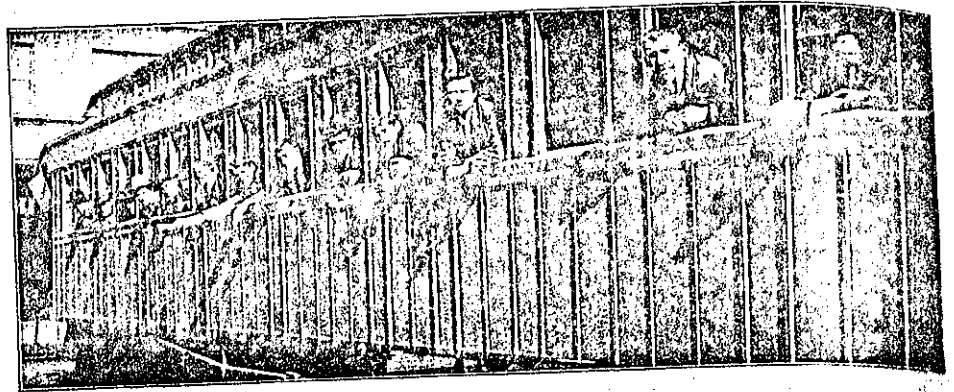
means another citizen for one of these 220 towns, or its adjacent territory. He is easily "booked" for one of these new stations. When he reaches his destination he is met by an agent, who takes him in hand, and because he and his sons are each getting a big farm for nothing they can be placed almost where the agent wants to place them, so long as they are getting good land. If necessary, seventy per cent of the emigration of the next twelve months can be handled in this way. If the Government and the Railroads want to place 1,000 people in and near a certain station within a given time they can do so. For the first season in some of these new towns the elevators will probably do no business; but with the second season the crops will begin coming in. That is the guarantee on which the companies erect their buildings.

This is not all of the scheme for the building of these 220 towns in a year. Most of the Americans, of course, will settle on the farm lands. But a certain percentage of them, and of other people, will be induced to remain in the towns.

Both the Government and the Railroads will offer inducements to capital, and there is plenty of capital besides that held by the elevator companies which is waiting for just such inducements. Capital, it is



W. D. SCOTT, SUPERINTENDENT OF IMMIGRATION. The actual working head of all immigration.

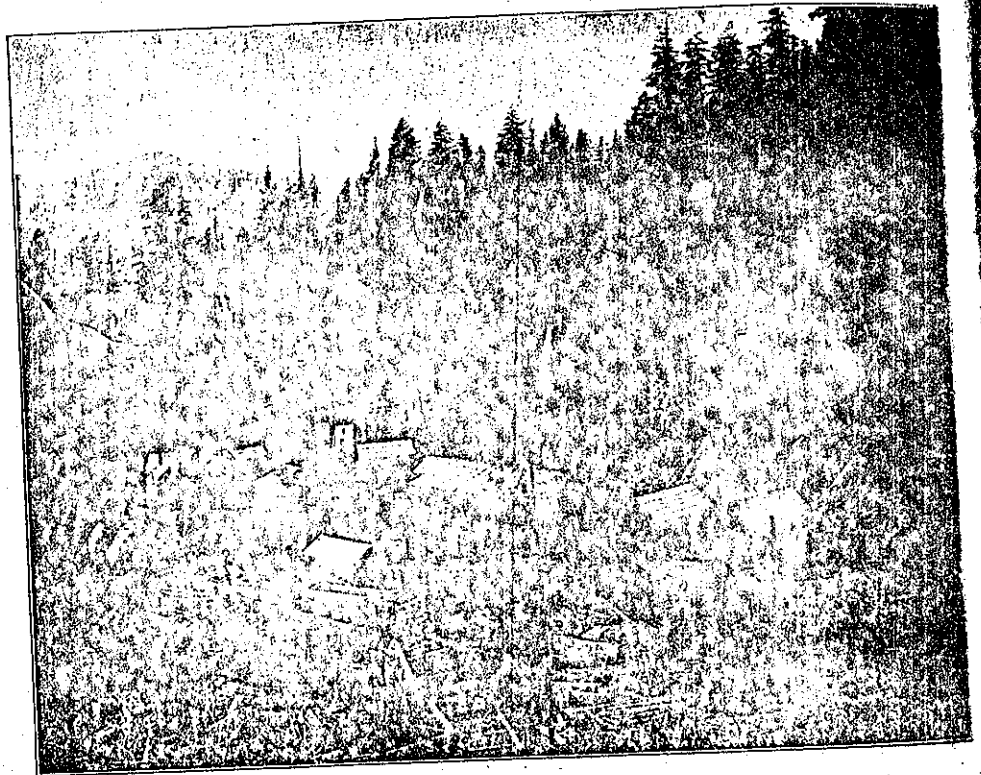


IMMIGRANTS BOUND FOR THE REGIONS WHERE THE TOWNS ARE IN BUILDING.

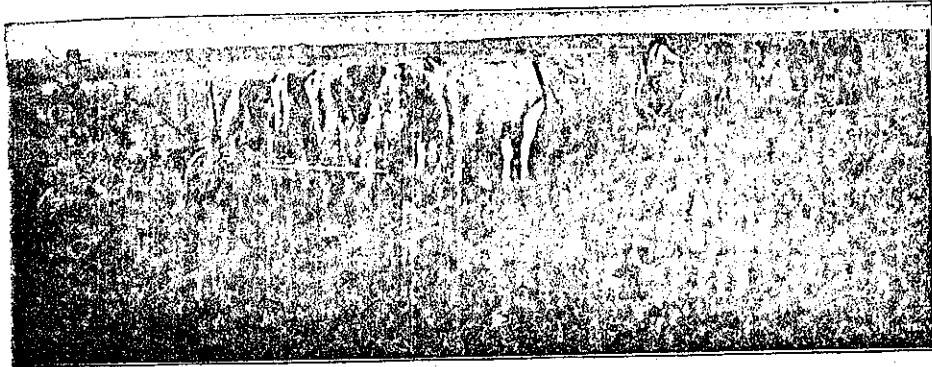
schemed, will immediately bring industry, and people.

That this scheme of building towns is practical has already been demonstrated, though but few know of this demonstration. It was tried out in that im-

mensely fertile region on the Canadian Northern between Lumsden and Saskatoon, a distance of 160 miles. When I went over this region just seven years ago there were only three settlers between these two towns. Now there are



AN ABANDONED CAMP OF THE TOWN BUILDERS.

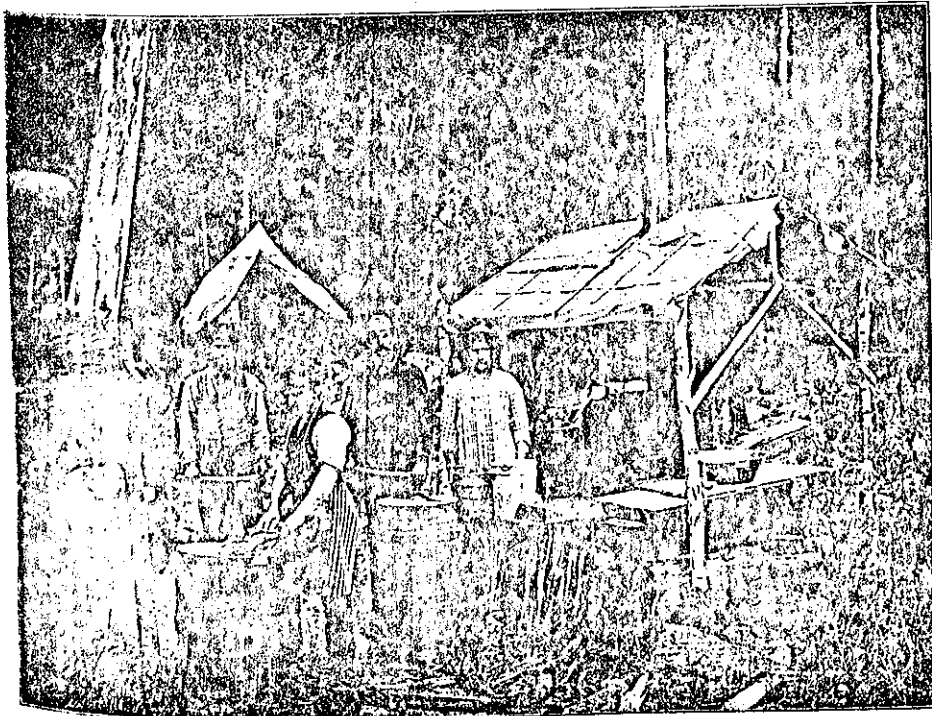


BREAKING GROUND ON THE VIRGIN PRAIRIE.

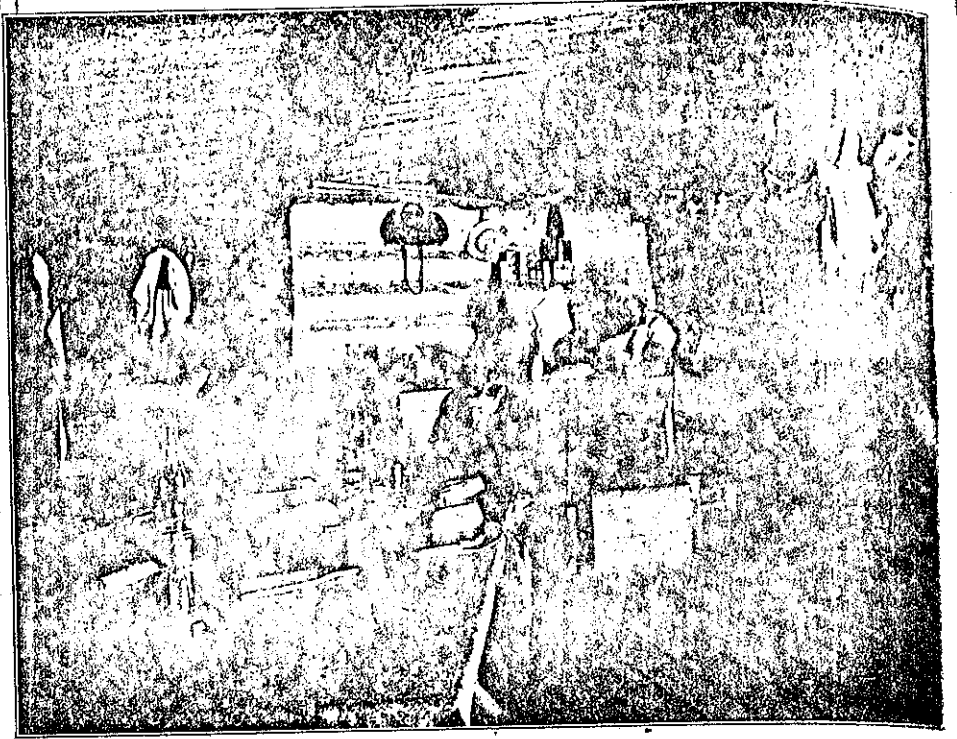
ten towns, not including Lumsden or Saskatoon, with a population of 10,000. There are, in addition, 25,000 settlers in the vicinity of these towns, and last year they had five hundred thousand acres of wheat land under cultivation. Ninety per cent of these settlers and towns-

people are Americans and are true pioneers.

This was only a partial experiment; that is, it was not prosecuted with the push and determination that will characterize the new scheme of town-building, and also less than a third as many



A COOKING CAMP—THROUGH JUST SUCH COUNTRY THE NEW ROADS ARE BEING RUSHED.



THE HOME OF THE ENGINEERS IN THE WILDERNESS.

people were going into the Canadian West at that time as now.

Early next year, because of these new towns, the Department of the Interior of Canada will issue new maps of the Dominion.

In a recent interview Col. A. D. Davidson, of the Canadian Northern, said to me, "To the people of the United States must almost directly be given the credit of building the great railroads of Western Canada. We have banked on them, and we bank on them still. Not only have they built our railroads, but our

towns. They are pouring into our West as never before. It is not the poor and destitute that come, but the best among the people of your country; men with ambition, with energy, and in most instances with modern machinery and up-to-date ideas. Your Americans are the best farmers in the world. We bow to them as the real builders of the prosperity of the Canadian West."

In this way does it come about that Americans will build a town every other day, resting on Sundays, during the next year and a half.

