CLIMATE AND FARM PRODUCTS.

In view of the fact that very low temperatures are reached in the northwestern states of the United States, an impression once prevailed that the Canadian provinces to the north of them must be too cold for successful farming; but the western states are very highly elevated, and this is the reason for the cold climate, as they are not far north The Canadian Western Plain slopes steadily from the international boundary to the Arctic ocean, and the decreasing altitudes offset the higher latitudes.

The vast Western Plain has three great natural subdivisions, the Prairies, the Forest region and the "Barren Lands." The Prairie region lies between the United States boundary and the 54th parallel of latitude, sloping gradually eastward from an elevation of over 3,500 feet in the foothills of the Rocky mountains to an elevation of about 800 feet in the valley of the Red river. There is also a steady slope northward, but in the prairie country the eastward slope is a little more pronounced and directs the course of the rivers toward Hudson bay. Throughout the Prairie region there are trees in many spots along the banks of rivers and on the low hills that rise from the plains in some places, but the prairie country as a whole is almost treeless except in the northern part, where there is a park-like country having many groves of trees with wide, open spaces between them. This park country may be regarded as the borderland between the Prairie and the Forest region. The Forest region includes the districts lying within the basins of the Churchill and Mackenzie river and lake systems and the country extending east and northeast of lake Winnipeg to Hudson bay. Just as in the Prairie region there are small tree-covered areas, so in the Forest region there are small prairies. The district known as the "Barren Lands" lies east of the watershed of rivers flowing into the Mackenzie system of lakes and rivers and extends from about the 60th parallel of latitude to the Arctic ocean.

Throughout the three Prairie Provinces the sky is usually bright and the atmosphere dry, clear and pure. The dryness of the atmosphere makes both heat and cold more endurable. The cold is often extreme in winter, but the degree of cold is not realized until one examines the thermometer. The temperatures do not vary as much in different sections of these provinces as might be expected in a territory covering an area of 758,817 square miles. While the elevation increases as one moves westward from the Red river toward the mountains, the western country is farther from the influence of cold winds blowing from the ice in the north of the Hudson bay and Hudson strait in the winter and spring, and this offsets the higher elevation. In Alberta the influence of the warm Chinook breezes coming through passes of the Rocky mountains is often felt. These warm winter winds melt the snow in a marvellously short time, so that it seldom lies long on the ground, and cattle are able to feed on the prairie all winter. Comparing Manitoba and Alberta, it may be said that the winters are a little colder and steadier in Manitoba and the summers a little warmer, but the difference is not great. Saskatchewan has very much the same climate as Manitoba, and in both of these provinces the winters are less changeable than in Alberta. The large lakes of Manitoba have a moderating influence on the climate.