

# COLONIZATION OF NEW ONTARIO.

## Settlers of the Most Desirable Class.

Many of Them Formerly Held Rented Farms in the Mid-Western States.

The system of promoting colonization in New Ontario, which was inaugurated this season by the Provincial Government by the appointment of Mr. Thomas Southworth of the Forestry Bureau as Director of Colonization, has been in operation this season with highly satisfactory results. Some account of what has been accomplished and the character and direction of the influx of population seeking homes in the new settlements may convey an idea of the working of the system.

Owing to the want of a centre of trustworthy information as to local conditions, means of travel, etc., many persons desiring to take up land in the newer parts of the Province have been put to considerable unnecessary expense and delay in selecting a location. The establishment of the Bureau of Colonization aims at giving the land-seeker such specific and detailed information in advance as will enable him to go direct to the locality best suited to his requirements, and in various ways to facilitate and lessen the cost of his search. No direct pecuniary aid is given, although a widespread impression obtains, doubtless due to the former practice of assisted passage from Europe, that some such assistance can be obtained. Many letters received by the bureau, both from various parts of Canada and the United States, are written with the object of obtaining aid of this character. There is no difference made in the treatment of Canadians and foreigners, but in neither case is any financial aid extended. The guidance afforded to settlers is, however, probably of greater advantage than the mere payment of passage money, leaving the new-comers to shift for themselves at the end of the journey. One of the most important features of the system is the employment of guides to conduct those in search of locations through the country and help them to pick out a lot. It appears that a year or so ago Mr. R. A. Burriss, formerly a resident of Bowmanville, undertook the selection of lands for settlers coming in from the United States. He was largely instrumental in settling a township in the Rainy River Valley, and subsequently directed many to choice locations in Whitefish and State River Valleys, in Thunder Bay. When the Colonization Bureau was formed appreciation was manifested for the work he had accomplished by retaining his services in a similar capacity, and owing to his operations the organization of colonization work is better in the Port Arthur District than elsewhere. Here a large shed, built some time since by the Dominion Government for the accommodation of immigrants, has been fitted up with cook stoves and other conveniences, and is available as a temporary shelter for settlers.

Under the direction of the local colonization agent land guides are placed at the service of settlers in a number of the townships in Thunder Bay district, including Blake, Gillies, O'Connor, Strange, Lybster, Conmee, Palpoonge, Dorion and Gotham. An arrangement has also been effected with the railroads in accordance with which intending settlers can travel from Port Arthur to these localities and to the colony at Dryden and Wabigoon at the reduced rate of one cent per mile each way. Considerable as this reduction is, it is hoped to obtain better terms from the railroads next season, by which the cost of reaching these and other settlements will be further cheapened. Access to the Rainy River Valley will be greatly facilitated, and the cost of travel lessened by the completion of the Rainy River Railway, which is expected to be in running order this year.

The immigration into the townships specified in the Thunder Bay district has been larger than elsewhere in New Ontario. The principal element is that from the United States, more particularly from the west. Most of the new-comers from this quarter occupied rented farms in Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and other western States, and sought in New Ontario better opportunities of becoming the owners of their own farms than are now obtainable in any desirable American locality. These include a few families of French origin. The other settlers in this district are from the older parts of Ontario and Great Britain.

Another stream of incoming population is directed towards the good farming land in different portions of Eastern Algoma, more especially along the line of the C.P.R. between Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie, and also bordering on Lake Nipissing. Much of the latter area is distant from railways, but the construction of waggon roads next season will render it more easy of access. A flourishing settlement also exists at the head of Lake Temiscamingue, which has received a number of recent accessions. A large proportion of the settlers about Lake Nipissing are French-Canadians, who are also strongly represented in the East Algoma settlements. Those who devote their principal attention to it make excellent farmers, as testified by the thriving condition of their holdings, but there are among them many who engage in lumbering, and also take up land, which they improve but slowly.

A great deal has yet to be done by the bureau in inspecting land supposed to be well adapted for settlement, and the work is being steadily proceeded with. The instructions received by Mr. Southworth from the Commissioner of Crown Lands are to the effect that he must be able to testify from personal knowledge as to the quality of the land and the local conditions of each section, so as to give intending visitors a thorough information as possible. The movement of population has exceeded all expectations, and the bureau has had much to contend with in perfecting the work of organization owing to lack of experience, but it is hoped that next season the details will be fully arranged and many improvements in the working of the system effected.