

AMONG THE GALICIANS.

Old Settlers Feel More Kindly Towards Them.

THEIR INDUSTRY.

Every Cent Goes to Improve Their Land.

BUYING NEW MACHINERY

Threshers and Binders Now Used by the Galicians - Schools and Churches—Story of the Strikers.

(Special Correspondence of The Globe.)

Edmonton, Sept. 2.—In addition to the United States and eastern Canadian settlers here, there are many foreigners—Swedes, Germans, Austrians and Russians. Probably there has been nothing more remarkable in immigration here than the change that has taken place in local opinion with regard to the Galicians as farmers. From being considered undesirable, they are now regarded as among the most industrious and energetic farmers in the district. This change is entirely due to their steady perseverance and industry, and in some cases has been developed against the will of their critics. They are still, however, some few old Canadian settlers who object to foreigners of any nationality, and hope for the coming of Ontario men, but if foreigners are to come in, they admit that the Galicians have proved themselves first-class. Other farmers have been surprised by the progress made by the Galicians, and merchants have been agreeably disappointed in the extent of their dealings and in the promptness with which payments are made. The first Galician colony came in here eight years ago. Now many of them have purchased adjoining lands from the C.P.R. to increase the size of their farms. Several of them have now three quarter sections, 150 acres, with from 25 to 30 head of cattle, and there is one Galician who now owns a whole section. This is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that they came into this country poor men, and either could not get or did not ask for credit.

Extending Their Farms.

Their experience before coming here taught them to till each acre most carefully, and they have carried this rule into practice here. Their farm lands are tended like gardens, and the result has been excellent returns even from land that others may have considered not of the first quality. Accustomed, as they were at home, to use only the most primitive implements, it is rather remarkable that they have been able to take up the use of up-to-date machinery so readily. There are now three threshing outfits owned in the Galician settlement, and the number of binders sold to them by the four implement agents here is placed this year at between fifty and sixty.

Whatever their profits may be each year, almost every dollar is devoted to increasing their operations, either by buying machinery, more land or more stock. They borrow money for the purchase of more land by mortgaging their homesteads, and not only those from whom they borrow, but also the

C.P.R. land officials, state that the Galicians as a rule pay their instalments before due, and implement agents who sell them machinery make the same statement. It is significant, too, that they borrow money only for the purpose of extending their operations, and never for the purpose of paying old debts.

Becoming Canadians.

Some of the early prejudice against Galicians was undoubtedly due to their poverty. They brought nothing, because they had no money, and got no credit. They made no business for the local merchant, and he saw no good in them. This interested opinion is also fast changing with their prosperity, and with their increased knowledge of the customs of the country, for the Galicians are admittedly quick to learn and also anxious to become thoroughly Canadian in all their ways. This last characteristic has also had much to do in bringing about the change of sentiment towards them. Galician girls, it is said, make excellent servants, acquire the English language very readily, and then prefer to use it rather than their own, in talking even with those who know both. In six months or a year, it is said, one could not tell either from their appearance or speech that they were foreigners. The Galician children, too, soon learn English. At present there are four English schools in the Edna settlement, about 60 miles east of here, and the settlers are preparing to establish others.

Their church organization at Edna has reached the stage of litigation. After building a church and placing it in the hands of trustees, difficulties arose. The priest, who was first in charge, went away, and in his absence the trustees called another to his place. On the return of the priest number one, he called together some members of the parish, and had new trustees chosen. These have now instituted an action for possession of the building, alleging not only that they are the proper trustees, but that the present holders have fallen away from the true faith. The tenets of their church are thus brought in issue, and evidence on this point carries the controversy back to A.D. 154.

The Stuartburn Colony.

The Stuartburn settlement of Galicians is a more recent colony, and is situated about 25 miles east of Emerson, near the boundary line in southern Manitoba. These settlers petitioned the municipality to establish schools in their locality, but the local authorities who represent the older settled portion of the municipality about Emerson refused the petition. An additional outlay for schools would be assessed against the whole municipality, and the older settlers objected to any increase in their own taxes for this purpose, although the eastern section, the Galician, is paying its share of the school tax which goes to maintain the schools of these older settlers. To overcome the deadlock, the Galicians last winter petitioned the Local Government to establish a new municipality for them, and an act was passed at the last session of the Legislature giving the Government power to do this. Hon. Mr. McFadden, the municipal commissioner, states that the new municipality will be established as soon as the burden of the debt of the municipality as at present existing can be adjusted.

Buying Threshers.

As these Galicians have been only three years here they have not advanced so well as the earlier colonies about Edmonton, and have just now purchased their first threshing machine. Perhaps nothing will better illustrate the changed attitude of the older settlers towards these Galicians than the following incident. When sixteen Galicians at Stuartburn combined to purchase the threshing machine there were several of the better established farmers about Emerson who offered their threshing, so that the Galicians might be able to earn almost enough to pay for the machine. But the delay in delivery and the amount of threshing that the purchasers had to do on their own lands compelled them to decline the offer.

Assisting Each Other.

The fact that sixteen farmers combined to buy the machine shows their

desire to pay cash for their purchase, and also shows their reliance on each other. In the Edmonton district this latter characteristic is shown by the number of new arrivals constantly coming on without any aid or inducement from the Government, and without even the payment of the usual fee to the shipping companies. These latest immigrants have come of their own motion, as a result of the success of the first comers. Most of them are people who had property at home, and waited to see the result of their friends' venture before selling out. They come, therefore, with more money to start with than was the case of the earlier settlers. On their arrival they are taken care of by their friends, and require none of the attention from the Government officials that was necessary with the original Galician settlers.

Cattle Well Cared For.

The care which the Galicians devote to their machinery and cattle is as noticeable as that with which they tend their crops. Their early poverty has taught them the value of money, and the Galician is also classed as a good judge of cattle. His machinery is carefully housed in the winter, and so are his cattle. They are also treated with great kindness, as the following story will illustrate, and this is not an exceptional case. The owner of a team of oxen, for which he refused \$200, preferred to carry fifty pounds of flour seven miles to his home, rather than drive his oxen into town for the purpose of an extremely hot day. He said that the work would not hurt him, but would take \$25 off the value of his team.

The Galician colony at Stuartburn has settled on land that was abandoned by English settlers fifteen and sixteen years ago. While the land immediately about Emerson is first-class and yields this year about thirty bushels of wheat to the acre, the land further east, 25 miles from Emerson, is more of a gravelly formation. It was here for the first time that ten bushels of wheat to the acre was mentioned as the probable yield this year, and this by an English farmer settled in the centre of the Galician colonists, all of whom expect 25 bushels to the acre, and some as much as 30 bushels. Owners of land in this district do not hesitate therefore to praise the Galicians as farmers. Their progress may have been slow, but this can properly be attributed to their thrift. They seldom buy except for cash, at any rate, implements. This is the true reason, not only of their apparent slowness but of some of the objections that have been urged against them by tradesmen. Most of the complaints against their qualifications as settlers have been made in ignorance. From their neighbors on all sides it is evident that the local opinion has entirely changed, and one of the main causes of this change has been their industry, their thrift and their ambition not only to become good farmers, but to become good Canadians. Unlike the Ontario or eastern settler, who after a profitable year feels entitled to enjoy "a trip east," these foreigners have no such desire to visit home, and the money saved from this indulgence is immediately invested in the farm. In fact, it is impossible to find that they seek to indulge themselves in any way other than in satisfying the ambition that they have set for themselves.

Galicians as Strikers.

The story of the Galicians who struck with the other C.P.R. trackmen is this: After completing their spring ploughing and seeding it is usual for those who have not as yet a large amount of land under cultivation to go to the better settled districts in search of work, while the other members of their families take charge of their farms during the summer. At Edmonton some of these Galicians agreed to go to work as trackmen on the main line of the C.P.R. at the current wages. They were then brought to Calgary without charge for transportation. When the trackmen's strike was ordered these Galicians (although not members of the union) also stopped work, and later refused to return, although offered fifty cents an hour and their keep. After waiting about Calgary in hope of a settlement of the trouble and the resumption of work they determined to go home. The railway company, under the circumstances, declined to carry them back for nothing. The men then set out on foot, and went all the way home in this way about 250 miles. From Calgary to Edmonton they walked along the railway track. It is remarked as greatly to their credit that no damage of any sort was done by them to the line, notwithstanding their supposed grievance against the company. Each year, however, as these new settlers become better established on their farms, they will less frequently be looking for work of this sort, and while it is from this class that the demand for harvesters in the Edmonton district is now supplied, it may not be many years before it becomes necessary to bring help from the east, even this far in the harvesting season.