

Communications.

LIFE IN THE WOODS.

We were aroused before daylight next morning by the voice of Tucker, singing merrily whilst preparing breakfast. With a readiness in rhyming, he had prepared a Song, (when no doubt he should have been sleeping) wherein he had travestied our tour and ourselves in the most amusing manner. "Would you like to hear a new song to an old tune?" he enquired, with an assumed gravity. Not knowing what was coming, we readily assented to the proposition, when he favored us with some twenty verses, that described our journey throughout. Only a verse here and there is now remembered of this laughable medley, which will give a pretty correct idea of the poetry of the "Tucker School":—

This party of five, as I am alive,
Went to search for a mountain of silver,
In the forest got lost, could not steer by the moss,
Which did the whole crew much bewilder.

Old John clim a tree, and endeavoured to see,
Which course it was better to take,
From the top of the Pine, in an easterly line,
He espied the bright gleam of a Lake.

The next day they dined, at an old pumpkin
Pine,
The head-quarters of Bruin was there,
Which rushed from his den, and a pry and two
men,
Were rolled down the hill by the Bear.

A very long tramp, brought them safe to the
camp,
Where now on the boughs they do lie,
And Tucker, the Cook, of them every care
took,
And put owl in their partridge pie.

This last hit set us all in a roar, and I may add, "brought down the camp" and we assured Tucker he must have been born a Poet. With all his mischief and love of fun, he had not forgotten us, but had baked a quantity of camp cake the night before, for our journey home. Although pork fat and molasses enter largely in the cake manufacture of a camp, a very good article is produced, and as an adjunct to a dipper of tea, is not to be slighted. He stored our knapsack with a sufficient quantity for two days at least, and warned us with a great deal of mock gravity, to stick to the portage road, and not to depend upon moss, cedar branches, &c., and to be careful of Bears. "Homewards bound" ever falls pleasantly upon the ear, whether heard from the shores of the Atlantic or the forests of the Sevege, and with a buoyancy of spirit we addressed ourselves to the road. If time had permitted, I was anxious to go by the way of the "falls" and the "square forks," but we intended to reach the settlement that night, and the natural curiosities of the Sevege had to be passed by. It was evening before we reached the Main North West, and night had closed in for some time before we descried a settler where we could find lodgings. The occupant was an old bachelor, who had located himself on a piece of high interval, and built a camp or house in defiance of all the orders of architecture. He rather gruffly consented to give us shelter, and his manner, as well as his visage, indicated that the milk of human kindness was fast dying out of his hard nature. It has often been remarked that man, without woman, would soon pass into savage life, or relapse into a semi-barbarism. Our host certainly would go far to corroborate this idea, for he had lost the finer instincts of our nature and sympathy, benevolence, and the kindred feelings were all dead and buried. A bachelor in the town may pass muster; from association, he does not degenerate near so rapidly, the work of petrification goes on, but almost imperceptibly a saving as well as an antagonistic influence is thrown around him; but to the unfortunate being who is thrust on the outer verge of civilization, "with no kind wife or mother's care, for him the milk and corn prepare," decomposition soon begins, and he sinks rapidly in the scale of being. We, however, had to make the best of him, and as he would not talk to us, some one of our party kept incessantly talking to him. But there was no thawing him out. "Why don't you have a wife here to keep things in order," I observed, hoping that I might touch a chord that had vibrated at some time or other in his past history, but it was no use, he ventured a reply to my interrogatory in the significant expression, *Bah*. The only indication of humanity about him was, he set down a jug of milk, which, like Shakespeare's description of the quality of mercy, "was not strained"; but the motive was a good one, and we accepted it as such. We were glad to leave this old hermit as early as possible next morning, and took a pathway which was followed until we came to another house. Here the wife was away from home, but her daughter, a "Little Dorrit" sort of body, bustled around and got us breakfast. In a short time the father came in from the field, and gave us a hearty welcome. What a contrast to the petrification we had spent the night with. We here set to work and made a "Catamaran" of sufficient size to hold our stores, and fixing an oar to direct its course, embarked for the Port of Newcastle. We glided along quite comfortably, and was speculating at what time we would reach the tide, when bump went our ship against a rock, latitude not known, and the man who was at the outer edge, obeying the law of inertia, shot ahead of the deck, and plunged into deep water beyond. As he was a good swimmer he soon put for the shore, and hailed us to bring the ship too. We now saw the necessity of more careful navigation, and before putting to sea again, made another oar, and determined to keep a sharp look out for rocks. The water in the river was high, and we sped along rapidly, but as we rounded a point, we saw a few rods below us the water boiling like a pot. "Hard up your helm" said the man on the look out, that is the "white rapids." To get to the shore was now the struggle, and no two oars ever did better service. We were nearly swept into the vortex, and only escaped by jumping from our craft to the shore. Part of our cargo was lost, and Tucker's camp cake, with all our sea stores, as far as we know to the contrary, went out to sea. We would no longer trust ourselves to the treacherous element, but kept for the remainder of our journey to terra-firma until we reached home. On the whole, we had a pleasant cruise; true, we did not find a mountain of silver, or any rich deposit in the mineral kingdom, but we found a Pine grove, a gem of a Lake, good Trout, and not a bad Bear. In truth, we concluded we found

"A pleasure in the pathless woods."

ANON.

Post Office, Cape Cove, County Gaspé,
September 6, 1858.

To the Editor of the *Miramichi Gleaner*,

SIR,—I perceived in your issue of the 21st ult., your remarks on a Correspondent's letter from this quarter, complaining of the irregular delivery of the "Gleaner." I presume he meant at this Office. Had you favoured us with the name of your correspondent, although known here, I would not have troubled you with this communication. The facts of the case are these: A copy of your paper came to this Office addressed John S. B. Miller, Cape Cove. I did not know who this Mr Miller was, but supposing it to be for some person of that name, who had arrived in the Village without my knowledge, I made enquiry, but could find no such person, and was going to give you notice, according to Post Office Regulations, that copies of your paper were remaining at this Office to that Address, unclaimed, for when a Gentleman, a member of the Agricultural Society (to which Society your correspondent has made himself rather notorious when here before) told me that your correspondent had, a few days previous, made his appearance again in this locality; and as the initials agreed with that person's name, the paper might be for him. I accordingly sent him the papers on hand by the first opportunity. Your correspondent also states that some of his neighbours, as he is pleased to call them, have similar complaints. Were such the case, I am very confident they would not leave it to that person to do it for them; they are persons perfectly competent to make known their own grievances. The "Gleaner" is the most regularly received paper at this Office, and the one most punctually called for. Your correspondent would have had no cause of complaint had he called at my Office and explained to me that he had given you an ambiguous address. I hope, Mr Editor, you will, in justice, give an insertion to this, as Post-masters are too frequently found fault with without sufficient cause. I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,
WM. TILLEY, Post-master.

From the New York Albion.

FREE GRANTS OF LAND IN CANADA.

The scheme of the Canadian Government for giving 'Free Grants' to actual settlers, was opened about the month of July, 1856, but no actual settlement took place until the fall of that year.

The three great roads laid out for the purpose of settlement are the Ottawa and Opeongo, the 'Hastings,' and the 'Addington' roads; to be when completed respectively 171—74— and 60 miles in length. The first, running east and west, connects the Ottawa river "Territory" with Lake Huron. The others run nearly parallel to each other, and at right angles with the first, which they intersect. According to the report of the Minister of Agriculture, published in May, 1857, there were opened on these roads 52 miles of the "Opeongo," 45 miles of summer, and 30 miles of winter road on the "Hastings;" and 17 miles of summer, and 39 miles of winter road on the "Addington." There were also 37 miles of other roads made in connection with the main roads, in order to facilitate the settlement of that part of the country, making in all 137 miles of good Summer road, and 83 of good winter road. Good and substantial bridges having been built over all the streams.

At the present date, 56 miles of the "Addington" road are completed; the whole length is to be over 70 miles, being an increase on the originally intended length of 10 miles. Of the "Hastings" road 72 miles, and of the "Opeongo" road 100 miles are completed.

Although at the time of the announcement of the "Free Grant" scheme the terms of settle-

ment were published in some of the New York papers, it may not now be amiss to repeat them.

One hundred acres of land will be given free to any settler of 18 years of age, who shall take possession of the lot within one month from his application; erect on it a dwelling, 18 by 20 feet, put in a state of cultivation at least 12 acres in the course of 4 years; and live on the lot during that period. Should he comply with these conditions he will receive an indisputable title to the land. Families comprising several settlers, preferring to reside on any one lot, will be exempted from residence, except upon the lot on which they live; but the required clearing and cultivation must be made on each lot.

On the "Opeongo" road 432 lots were laid out, of which 164 are taken up. On the "Hastings" road 530 lots were laid out, of which 220 are taken up. On the "Addington" road 299 lots were laid out, of which 132 are taken up. When I say taken up, I mean occupied by actual settlers.

Lands in the immediate vicinity of these roads can be purchased from Government for 80 cents an acre, payable, 16 cents down, and the balance in four yearly instalments of 16 cents each. This enables families to secure farms for sons under the age of 18 years, and affords an opportunity of their settling around the homestead.

THE ADDINGTON ROAD.—This road commences about 40 miles North West of the city of Kingston, and runs nearly North. It passes over two ranges of granite ridges; the first about 16 miles wide; the second about 5 miles wide. A fine plot of good land, about 15 miles wide, called the Massena Valley, lies between the ridges; and the valley of the Madawaska lies North of the second range. The country is well watered by springs, creeks, and lakes. The soil is a rich sandy loam, which is easily tilled, and produces excellent Winter Wheat, Rye, Corn, Oats, Peas, and Barley, are fine crops. Potatoes, Turnips, and other roots raised here, cannot be excelled, in quality or return, in any other part of Canada. Valuable timber covers the whole country. Large groves of White and Red Pine grow on the broken land. The Sugar Maple, Beech, Basswood, Elm, and Birch, on the best locations; and Cedar, Tamarac, and Black Ash, on the marshes. Hay-marshes, or Beaver meadows, are found all over the country, covered with what is called "Bluejoint," which makes hay very little inferior to the cultivated grass; some of these meadows are extensive enough to produce 50 tons of hay.

The waters teem with fish, among which is found a small delicious salmon, weighing, on an average, 5 pounds, and also a larger kind frequently weighing over 20 pounds. Game of every description is abundant; and for the daring Nimrod there is also game of a wilder sort; consisting of bears and wolves; for the destruction of each of the latter the enterprising hunter is entitled to \$6 from Government. In the way of Peltre:—Otter, Mink, Marten, Fisher, and Muskrat are plentiful.

This Settlement commenced in the Fall of 1856. From the dearth of provisions, &c., during the year, many persons were deterred from entering upon occupation of the farms; but some moved into the bush, and commenced operations by erecting dwellings, and chopping down what they could during the winter of 1856 and 1857.

They got in some Spring wheat, corn, &c., and the yield was very encouraging. They have a supply of provisions until next harvest.

Many have sown Fall wheat, and should it yield (as they expect it will) as well as their Spring crops, they will have a large surplus.

Some are felling 25 acres for Summer cropping, and others are preparing to manufacture potash. The extensive lumbering operation, carried on in the vicinity of this settlement, will furnish ready purchasers for all the surplus produce which can be raised by the settlers for many years; this will enable one who has no team to go to market, to obtain a price for his commodities at his door, equal to the market price; the saving is mutual; the lumberer saves the expense of transporting so much of his supplies into the woods, and the farmer saves the expense of a long journey, to sell what he may have to dispose of.

There has been no abandonment of lots by any one who has actually entered upon occupation. Some persons have entered their names as applicants for lots, but never having had possession, such lots cannot be looked upon as having been abandoned. Mr Perry, the active and practical Superintendent of this district, will give every assistance to persons who may apply to him for information.

THE 'OPEONGO' ROAD.—Mr Frenon, the obliging agent, has furnished me with the following information respecting the Free Grant district under his able management:

The Government in the Free Grant Scheme, had not in view the merely benefitting a poor class of people by offering them the boon of gift-lots, to induce them to settle upon the localities on which the roads are laid out. The object was a settlement of a tract of country which, without the plan adopted, might have remained long uninhabited. I have no hesitation in saying, that the scheme has been, at least in my agency, eminently successful.

When the remoteness of the locality is taken

into consideration, and, that until lately there were no road completed, I think you will be surprised and gratified to hear that there are now 164 of the Free Grants conceded. From the numbers that I have been instrumental in sending in upon the lands at the rear of the road, on both sides, I am certain the list of sales by the Crown Land Agent at Renfrew, will afford equally conclusive evidence of the rapidity with which the settlement of this section of the province is progressing. Of the 164 locatees of Free Grants it is possible that some 6 or 8 may decline coming on their lots; but so far as I can at present judge, I think none of them will be found absent on the 1st March. Only two instances have occurred in which settlers entered into occupation of, and then abandoned their lots; and in both cases the men were discontented, indolent persons, who would not be satisfied with any pursuit, however remunerative, which would require of them close attention and labour. Their lots were very good ones, and soon found more worthy owners.

With every settler on the Free Grants, and with very many on the purchased lands adjoining, I have a personal acquaintance, and continual intercourse, and I am therefore in a position to assert positively, that, with one solitary exception, all are perfectly satisfied with the change they have made, and with the prospects that seem opening up to them. Hard-working and hopeful, as I am happy to be able to say, each of them appears to be, the forest is fast falling before their axes, and the country now presents an aspect which affords a striking and pleasing contrast with that which it exhibited two years ago. Such of the settlers as have been a year or more on their lots all raised excellent crops last Summer, and I think few if any of them will require to buy any more provisions. From what I now know of the land in the township of Grattan, Sebastopol, and Brudenell, it is my opinion that the Opeongo road passes through nearly the worst part of them, and it is my firm conviction that there are as good farms to be had in these townships, especially in the two latter, as in any other part of the Ottawa country. The great difficulty however is to find them, for it would take even the most experienced bushman some months to follow the various lines through a township, and find out where in it the best land was; and this time none of the ordinary settlers can afford to spend. It is a well ascertained fact that some of the very best lands in a township are often untenanted for years, while poor men have been striving to obtain a living from lands of a far inferior quality; the good farms lying not unfrequently in the adjoining concession. Even among the Free Grants on the road under my charge, I have known some of the best lots, to have been passed by a hundred times, simply because the fronts of them did not look very inviting, and the people had not the time, and perhaps not the inclination, to examine the whole of them. I mention this fact to combat the rather popular error, that when a couple of hundred settlers have taken up farms in a township, they have monopolised all the good land, and that the remaining lots cannot be worth looking after. Many men have come to this agency, often from a great distance, with the view of settling, and have returned again seemingly disgusted with the country, because indeed they could not find suitable farms, after a search of sometimes only a few hours. It is absurd for men to come to any new locality, to look for land, unless fully prepared to spend some days, and if necessary, weeks, in exploring the country.

The selection of a farm in the bush, from which a future maintenance is expected, and to which a man intends to remove his family, should not be deemed a matter of little moment; a considerable time should be devoted to the search, and no trouble spared in selecting his new home. This is a fact that my experience tells me should be thoroughly impressed upon the mind of every man, before he leaves home with the intention of looking for land.—There is not the least doubt but there are thousands of excellent farms within a radius of fifty miles from the spot where I now write, but it is not in a day, or a week, that a man can reasonably expect to stumble on them.

Whenever I have been written to regarding land, on behalf of a number of persons from the same locality, I have always advised that they should select from among themselves one man, in whose judgment they all had confidence; and that each should furnish a portion of his expenses, while he came to select lots for the rest. By such an arrangement much saving of time, trouble, and money is effected.

With regard to newly arrived emigrants from Europe, it should be made generally known that they are to a great extent unfit for settling at once on wild lands.

Such men must necessarily be ignorant of the character and capabilities of the soil, and the particular effects of the climate upon its productions; of the manner of clearing lands; the rotation of crops, and a variety of other matters essentially necessary for them to be acquainted with, before they could hope to raise sufficient grain to make a barrel of flour from land not previously cleared. This knowledge can only be acquired by a residence, say of one year, in the country, and by the closest possible observation during that period. The use of the axe to advantage is the first requisite, and this some