We [illegible] farm of 320 acres in Red River Valley, west of Pembina, [illegible] acres of which is under the plough, and the remainder is [illegible] wild hay, and the balance [illegible] marsh. We can plough the largest field (a mile) and not see a stone, large or small (this is different from Holland.)

Our crops are excellent, wheat yielding from 25 to 40 bushels per acre, oats 60 to 80, barley 40 to 70, [illegible] bushels of potatoes this season, ploughing them in on the prairie sod. [illegible] irrigation they got, and [illegible] bushels. All kinds of roots and vegetables do well, equal to the best cultivated plots in Holland. There are no potato bugs, cabbage worms or grasshoppers. There is an unlimited quantity of hay free for cutting.

Stock is very high. Horses are worth from $500 to $600 per span; oxen, which are much used, are worth from $200 to $250 per yoke; cows from $50 to $60. Sloughs, self-binding reapers are used exclusively, and cost $320. Four horses, a driver and two to a stook, with a self-binder, will cut and bind up 16 acres per day. Threshing machines are all steam power. The harvest is gathered into heaps of about 40 acres in a place (there being no barns) and threshed about 1400 bushels being an average day's threshing which costs 5 cents per bushel for wheat and 3 cents for oats; we burn straw as fuel for the engines.

Building material is high; boo pine lumber is $30 to $40 per thousand. Hardware and stoves about 100 per cent. higher than in Ontario. We are 20 mile from Grafton, the nearest railway station, which was only a farm house and post office 18 months ago, and is now as large as Owen Sound, doing four times the amount of business.

We came here in June, 1881 and were the first family in this township; now we have stores, blacksmiths, a post office, and neighbors from Holland and Bruce township, and many from Bruce county, besides a large number of Norweigans who are good neighbors and very obliging.

Some of the drawbacks of this country are the severe winters, the bad water and the drowned lands. The winters are not severe except when a blizzard comes on, which sometimes last three days. There is some good water but a great deal very bad. The wet land is being drained with ditching machines which are a grand invention.

The country is making rapid improvement and is destined to be a fine place.

Mrs. Mathers and the Trustees.

To the Editor of the Free Press:

Sir,—Mrs. Mathers has been pleased to make a statement to the effect that I had told her that the trustees were a set of fools. Now, Mr. Editor, I have never corresponded with Mrs. Mathers, and I have never had any conversation with her, except on one occasion, when she called at my office to complain that I had not punished her children, who had been playing truant from school. I told her that I had always been delicate in punishing other people's children, but allowed her to have her own way and, as a consequence, the child had grown up more stubborn and headstrong than the others. I replied, "If you think I can do anything with your children, you are very much mistaken." She then left the office in a huff, and said she would punish them herself. I also said to Mrs. Mathers that if she had any complaints to make against the teachers she should lay them before the trustees. She replied that she had been to the trustees, but they gave her no satisfaction. Then, exhibiting considerable perturbation, she broke forth, "they're only a lot of fools, that's what they're not fit to be trustees, and those who put such men in for trustees were as big fools as they," and much more in like strain, to which I jocularly replied, wishing to bring the colloquy to a termination, "my dear woman, be calm. You should remember that "your husband was one of those whom you are pleased to call fools."

This then, Mr. Editor, is the only foundation for the statement above referred to, and, in fact, I would not have made the remark only I thought that she, in her own homely way, intended to flatter me by disparaging the other trustees. When first I heard that Mrs. Mathers had made such an absurd statement I proposed treating the matter with indifference, but recent disclosures have convinced me that in justice to myself I should have publicly made this denial sooner.

WM. BROWN.

Markdale, Oct. 21st, 1882.