

THE  
NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES:

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR EXTENT, SOIL, AND NATURAL RESOURCES;  
THE ROUTES OF TRAVEL; WITH A SKETCH OF THEIR HISTORY  
DOWN TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE

PROVINCE OF MANITOBA.



ILLUSTRATED BY A MAP.

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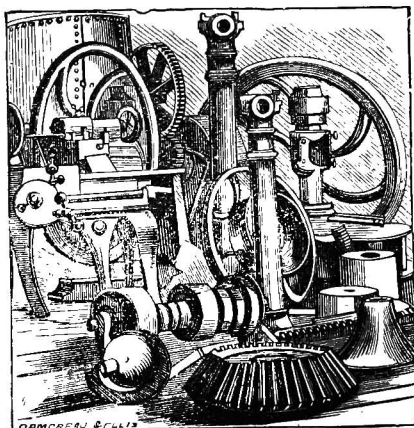
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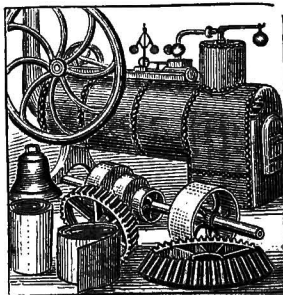
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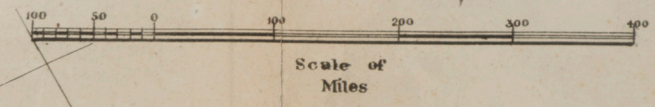






# THE NORTH WEST TERRITORIES

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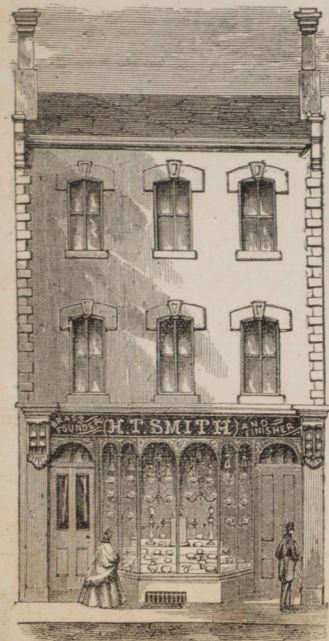




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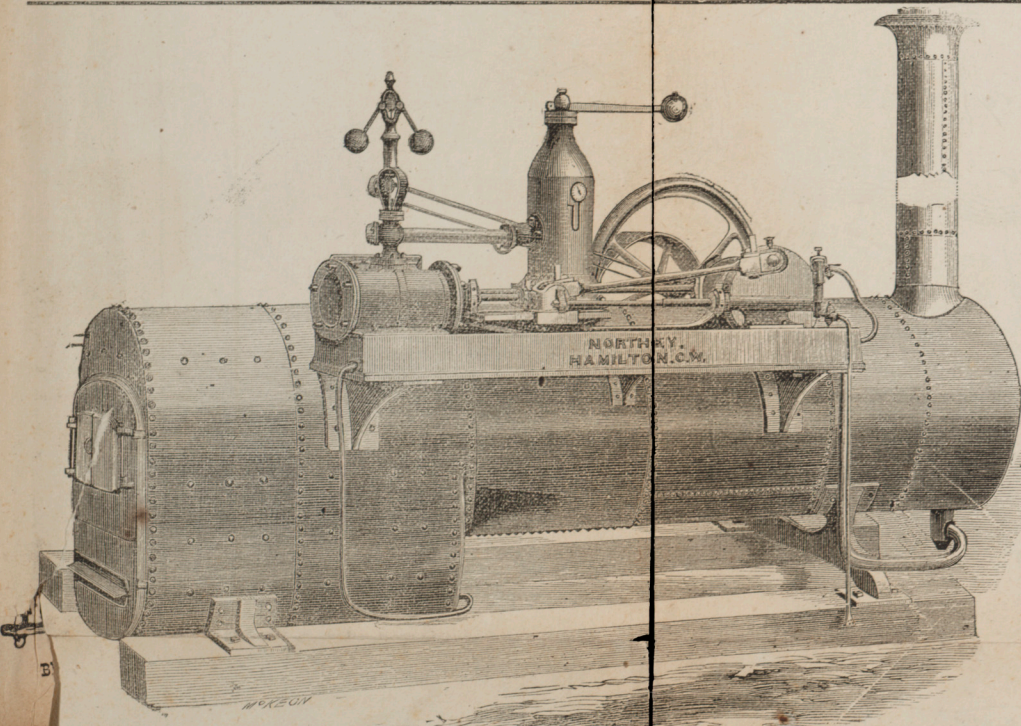


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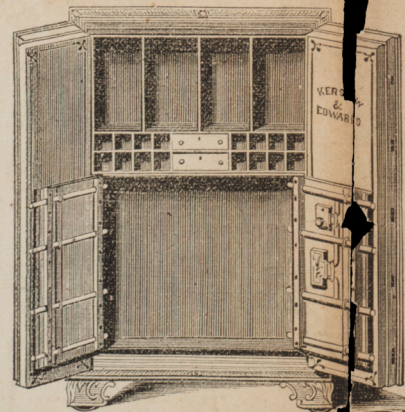
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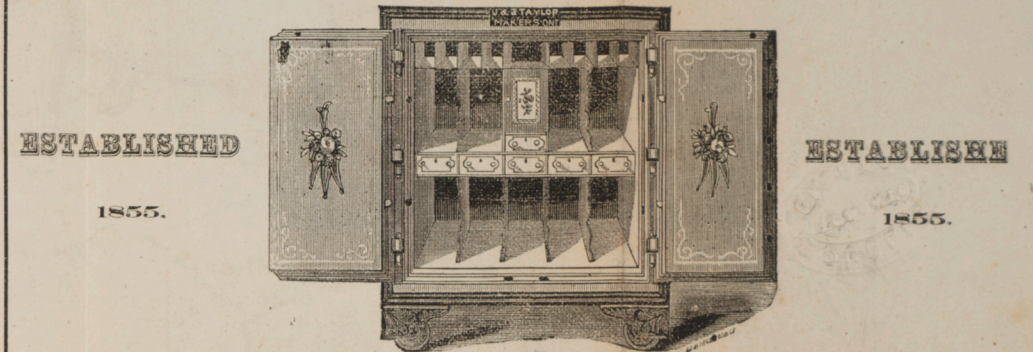
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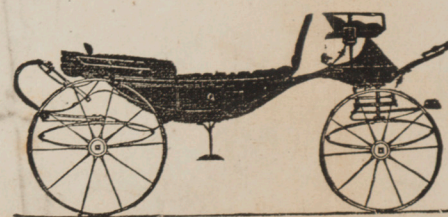
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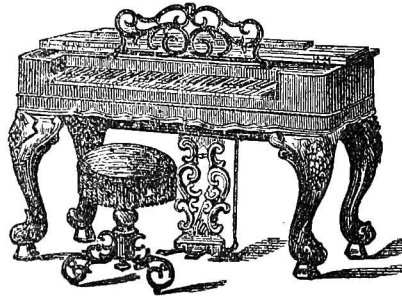
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TORONTO:  
A. S. IRVING, PUBLISHER, KING STREET.

1871.



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## PREFACE.

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ON the 15th of July, 1870, that vast region, commonly known as the North-West Territories, was formally transferred to the Dominion of Canada. By this important measure, a prolonged struggle between the spirit of free colonization and the expiring genius of monopoly was brought to a close. The possession of this noble domain, so far from diminishing the interest felt by our people, during years of discussion, has only served to intensify it. The prospect opening to our view is a most magnificent one. In whatever aspect it be regarded, the transfer of the North-West is pregnant with the most important results, not only to Canada, but also to the struggling millions of Europe, for whom that fertile land, like a generous mother, is unfolding her ample bosom. It is only recently that we have learned to realize in part the value of the prize. As long as the Hudson Bay Company and its agents could do so, they never ceased to misrepresent the nature and resources of the country. Now that their arts can no longer avail them, we have begun to appreciate its vast prairies, its mighty rivers, its navigable lakes, its mineral wealth, its immeasurable capacity for future greatness.

In a political point of view, the possession of the territory is scarcely less important. With the annexation of British Columbia, now on the eve of accomplishment, the Dominion of Canada will stretch, in an unbroken line of British territory, from the Atlantic to the Pacific—a power capable of resisting aggression, and strong enough to preserve its autonomy on the Continent by its own strength and with its own resources.



It is not surprising, therefore, considering the vast importance of the subject, that a demand for reliable information regarding the North-West is constantly increasing. A large number of books have already issued from the press. These, taken together, cover the entire ground; but they are scarcely accessible to the great mass of the people. In the following work, an attempt is made to abridge and condense these books, and to present all that is likely to interest the general reader in a concise form and at an extremely reasonable price. Of course, we lay no claim to originality; our book is professedly a compilation, and as such is submitted to the public. At the same time, every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, and to afford as full a view of the subject as can be given in the limited space at our command.

The work is divided into three parts. The first contains an account of the nature, extent, and resources of the country. The second discusses the means of communication with, and through it; including some remarks upon the proposed railway to the Pacific. In the concluding division, a sketch is given of the country's history, from the Hudson Bay Charter of Charles II. to the establishment of Canadian rule in Manitoba under Lieutenant-Governor Archibald. So far as regards the Hudson Bay Company, we have not thought it necessary to occupy more space than is required to enable the reader to understand fully the nature and scope of the compromise effected under the auspices of Earl Granville. The events which have subsequently occurred belong to the debateable ground of contemporary politics. People are not yet agreed as to the view which ought to be taken regarding the abortive insurrection under Riel—the visit of Mr. Howe—the unsuccessful mission of Mr. McDougall—or the merits and demerits of the Manitoba Act of 1870. It is, of course, impossible to narrate passing events, uninfluenced by preconceived opinions; still, we have endeavoured to present a sketch as fair and unbiassed as possible.

We may add that the map which accompanies the work has been

designed and executed expressly for it, and is as complete as we have been able to make it.

In conclusion, we desire to express our obligations to the published accounts of Messrs. Russell, Hind, Dawson, and Mair, as well as to those of Lord Milton, Sir George Simpson, Bishops Machray and Taché, Dr. Schultz, and others, from all of whom we have borrowed freely.



# THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES.

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## FIRST PART.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### GRAND DIVISIONS.

As Mr. Russell's very able and exhaustive work on "The Hudson's Bay and North-West" is now an admitted authority, we shall follow it in the "grand divisions" and boundaries as therein given. The grand divisions are as follows :

1. East Main, or the peninsula of Labrador.
2. South Hudson's Bay Territory—between that Bay and Lakes Winnipeg and Athabasca, from the northern water-shed of the St. Lawrence to lat.  $60^{\circ}$  N.
3. North Hudson's Bay Territory or Barren Ground, extending from the preceding to the Arctic Ocean.
4. The Mackenzie River Country, from lat.  $60^{\circ}$  N. to the Arctic Ocean.
5. The Pelly River or Mountain Territory, embracing all north of British Columbia from the crest of the Rocky Mountains to Alaska.
6. The Red River, Saskatchewan, and Peace River Country, or Central Prairie Land, extending from the Lake of the Woods and Lakes Winnipeg and Athabasca to the Rocky Mountains, and from the United States boundary line, lat.  $49^{\circ}$  N., up to lat.  $60^{\circ}$  N.

To the first five grand divisions, it is not considered necessary to devote more than a brief space, not only because they cannot properly be termed agricultural—though two of them have undoubtedly large portions of arable land ; but, as the Hudson Bay Company, by the "compromise" of Earl Granville, retains the exclusive right to the fur trade in those parts, it is presumed that the interest of the "requiring present" is more particularly centered in the Fertile Belt. However, the boundaries and some few extracts are necessary, if for no other purpose than as an introduction to the proper description of the 6th division—the Central Prairie Country.

#### EAST MAIN.

The boundaries of Labrador, or East Main, are as follows : James'

Bay on the West; Hudson's Bay and Hudson's Straits on the North-West and North; on the East, the Atlantic Ocean. From South Hudson's Bay Territory it is divided by Rupert's River, which crosses the ill-defined boundary of East Main and the Province of Quebec, as shown on the map. The area thus contained is set down at "about four hundred and twenty thousand superficial miles." Keeping to the evidence of Mr. Gladman—who was upwards of thirty years in the Hudson Bay Company's service—given before a committee of the Canadian Legislature in 1857, we find that he raised "good potatoes, turnips, and vegetables," at East Main Old Factory, which is upwards of fifty miles north of Rupert's River. And he also stated that at Big River, which is about one hundred and twenty miles above East Main Old Factory, there were grown potatoes and other vegetables. These facts derive a certain importance when contemplating the probable future extent of the fisheries on the shores of this immense tract.

#### SOUTH HUDSON'S BAY TERRITORY.

Crossing Rupert's River from East Main, we enter the second division, South Hudson's Bay Territory, and taking for our boundary on the left, as we proceed toward Lake Winnipeg, the height of land or watershed where the separate rivers which empty into Hudson's Bay and those which feed the St. Lawrence take their rise, we shall reach the northern part of the Lake, though in a somewhat circuitous manner, having first turned southward to Rainy River and then north-westward. From thence, by the northern part of Lake Winnipeg, continuing in a north-westerly direction, we shall cross Lake Athabasca at about parallel of lat. 60° N. From this line eastward to Hudson's Bay we have the confines of the second division, which contains four hundred and thirty thousand superficial miles. Of the general features of this tract it will be necessary to speak somewhat fully when we come to consider the question of "routes." At present we can only make room for some extracts describing the richness of this large and extensive farming country in the south-west corner of the division, which large tracts become the more important when we know that through them passes the road that is now constructed between Lake Superior and Red River.

Mr. Dawson, in his report of 1858, wherein he more fully than elsewhere describes this country, alludes to Rainy River as follows:—"Rainy River, which forms here the boundary between Canada and the United States, is a beautiful stream varying from 250 yards to a quarter of a mile in width, and flowing, with a winding course, through a valley of deep alluvial soil. The banks rise from the height of 30 to 40 feet, with a gentle slope to the river, while back of that the country is apparently level. The prevailing growth of wood is poplar, as in the rich alluvial soil at Red River; but the balm of Gilead tree is abundant, and elms, in many places, line the margin of the stream. On landing to dine to-day, I went a few miles into the woods, and found the soil of the richest description, growing poplar and balm of



Gilead trees of a very large size. We camp in the evening on a sandy point, the first we have seen growing red pine. The distance we have come to-day cannot be more than forty miles; such an extent of rich land without a break, or a country so well adapted for settlement, I have seldom seen. Rainy River does not seem subject to great floods; the trees on the bank grow within a few feet of the water as it now is; four feet over the present level I should think the greatest height to which it ever attains. It is said, however, that it is sometimes as much as three lower, so that there may be a difference of six or seven feet between extreme low and high water. \* \* \* About Rainy Lake and from thence to Rainy River and the Lake of the Woods, following from the latter place the proposed route across to Red River, the country is, I think, as well adapted for settlement as any other part of North America. The climate is good, the soil in general fertile, water-power is to be had in abundance, and in the woods there are many valuable kinds of timber. This, of itself, is a country of considerable extent; the distance from the head of Rainy Lake, by the proposed route, being about two hundred and sixty miles, and yet it is but small and insignificant when compared with the vast region with which the road would open a communication."

Sir George Simpson in his "Journey Round the World," used the following words when referring to Rainy River: "Nor are the banks less favorable to agriculture than the waters themselves to navigation, resembling, in some measure, those of the Thames, near Richmond. From the very brink of the river there rises a gentle slope of green sward, crowned in many places with a plentiful growth of birch, poplar, beech, elm, and oak. Is it too much for the eye of philanthropy to discern through the vista of futurity this noble stream, connecting, as it does, the fertile shores of two spacious lakes, with crowded steam-boats on its bosom, and populous towns on its borders?"

That the noble baronet denied the truth of this glowing picture, in his oral testimony before the Committee in England, is well known, but the public have long since felt convinced that the reason of his doing so, was that the very existence of the Hudson Bay Company, in which he held a very high position, would be jeopardised by such knowledge becoming general. Accordingly the welfare of the monopolists was preferred to the common weal, in Sir George Simpson's self accusation. Or, as one reviewer puts it:—he first described a Garden of Eden, and then asserted that a human being could not live in it. However, while the foregoing extracts, now fully and frequently corroborated, leave no doubt on the public mind as to their truthfulness, we need not stop to question the veracity of one, whose zeal for the monopoly obscured many of those finer principles which had at one time raised him high in the estimation of the world.

Professor Hind has also, in reference to this tract along Rainy River, given his testimony. He says that it stretches in direct distance about sixty miles, with a breadth of from half a mile to twelve miles, and contains over two hundred and twenty thousand acres of rich alluvial land, highly suitable for cultivation. On the north shore of

Lac Seul, which is about one hundred miles north of Rainy Lake, there is a large grain-growing tract, and when we find that at New Brunswick House wheat was grown with apparently good success, we are prepared for Mr. Russell's statement, "that a line from the north side of Lake Abittibi, passing a little north of New Brunswick House and a hundred miles north of Rainy Lake, striking Lake Winnipeg north of Fort Alexander, may be taken as the northern line of the cultivation of wheat." As the "immense space" between this line and Rainy River has not as yet been explored, there is every reason to believe that other large tracts similar to those lately discovered near the shores of Lake Nipigon, are inviting cultivation.

#### NORTH HUDSON'S BAY TERRITORY.

Is bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, or the east by the Hudson's Bay, on the south by the  $60^{\circ}$  parallel N. lat., and on the west by a line from Great Slave Lake to Great Bear Lake and thence to Coronation Gulf. This whole tract which has a superficial extent of over four hundred thousand miles is extremely cold and barren, the only animals being the Reindeer and Musk Ox. Mineral wealth, especially copper has been much sought after in this region, many of the explorations made by the Hudson's Bay Company having been undertaken with this end in view. Of the results from mining many writers appear very sanguine. Passing westward to the Rocky Mountains we cross what is laid down as the

#### MACKENZIE RIVER COUNTRY.

This division, running northward from  $60^{\circ}$  North latitude to the Arctic Ocean, encloses an area of about two hundred and seventy thousand square miles, and though it lies in the same latitude as the former, has a climate much less severe, which may be attributed, in a great measure, to breezes from the Pacific Ocean, passing through gorges of the mountains, and also to the prevalence of limestone. Trees grow on the very shores of the Arctic Ocean. Mr. Russell condenses authorities as follows :—"Being of Silurian and more recent formations, and generally a plain, it would have been a good agricultural country had its climate admitted. Such as it is, though its southern boundary is the limit of profitable wheat cultivation, Colonel Lefroy and Sir John Richardson say that at Fort Simpson, a hundred and fifty miles further north, with a mean summer temperature of  $59\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  Fah., barley grows well ; and the latter says that at Fort Norman, three hundred and forty miles north of latitude  $60^{\circ}$ , (the assumed southern boundary of this section) potatoes are raised, and in good seasons barley ripens well, and that latitude  $65^{\circ}$  may be considered as the northern limit of the growth of barley. He adds, that at Fort Good Hope, a hundred and eighty miles north of Fort Norman, that is fifty north of the Arctic Circle, turnips attain the weight of two or three pounds in favourable seasons, but barley has failed when tried. Fort Simpson is evidently within the limit of barley cultivation, for



which, on the authority of Ernan, quoted by Sir John Richardson, it is necessary only that the mean temperature of any one of the three summer months shall not fall below  $47^{\circ} 75$  Fah. At Fort Simpson, the mean of each of five months is above that, being for May  $48^{\circ} 16$ , June,  $63^{\circ} 64$ ; July,  $60^{\circ} 97$ ; August,  $53^{\circ} 84$ ; September;  $49^{\circ} 10$ . The three winter months, however, are there extremely cold, the mean being  $10^{\circ}$  below zero, that of the spring months,  $26^{\circ} 66$  above zero, and of autumn,  $27^{\circ} 34$ . If, therefore, we draw a line across this territory at latitude  $65^{\circ}$  north, we find that we have in the south part of it an area of a hundred and twenty thousand square miles, which, with the necessary allowance for waste lands and positions unfavourable in elevation or aspect, nearly all admits of the growth of barley, as well as vegetables, and that most admit of the growth of rye in the part of it adjoining the limit of profitable wheat cultivation."

Crossing the Rocky Mountains, we enter the

#### PELLE RIVER, OR MOUNTAIN COUNTRY,

which extending westward to the Pacific, has for its southern boundary the Simpson River, while Alaska, lately bought by the Americans from Russia, and the Arctic Ocean, limit its extent on the north. This section is noted for its mountainous nature, and the peculiarity of its climate, in being proportionately warmer in winter, and colder in summer than any other part of British North America. The mean winter temperature ranges with that of New York City, and yet the summers at Sitka are not sufficiently warm to ripen grain. Still, with all these disadvantages, we have north of the Simpson River very extensive valleys inviting cultivation.

The fishing is good also, and all parties agree in advancing its mineral wealth, as something that compensates for all other drawbacks. Mr. R. concludes his chapter as follows:—"Such advantages may not be common, and may be limited to a small part of this territory; but, good lands, with a moderate climate, on fine salmon rivers, with valuable timber forests and beds of coal, situated within a hundred miles of the continually open navigation of the Pacific and its commerce, taken together with the gold-bearing character of the country, (for which the River Stikene to the northward of the Simpson is famous,) render the southern part of this territory of considerable, immediate, and still greater future value."

## CHAPTER II.

### CENTRAL PRAIRIE DIVISION.

Such being the surrounding sections, we now come to the sixth grand division, generally alluded to as the North-West or Red River Territory, although the latter term in strictness only embraces a comparatively small portion of the former, which, following Mr. Russell, we will term "The Central Prairie Land." This division is bounded on the south by  $49^{\circ}$  N. lat., the boundary line between the British Possessions and the United States; on the east by the Lake of the Woods, the River Winnipeg, Lake Winnipeg, and from thence by a line drawn through Athabasca Lake to  $60^{\circ}$  N. lat.; continuing westward along that parallel of latitude to the Rocky Mountains, is the northern boundary; while the Rocky Mountains divide it from British Columbia on the west. It contains within these limits an area of about four hundred and eighty thousand square miles, which is about ten times the size of the State of Pennsylvania; or, taking a European comparison, we find that the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, Prussia and Belgium, and the Empire of France, could all be comfortably placed within the limits of this Central Region. Now, the united population of those enumerated countries is above 95,000,000; accepting the theory of certain writers as to the requirements of a healthy population, and only calculating on one inhabitant to the same amount of land in the Territory as in Europe supports three, we have still room and scope enough for upwards of 30,000,000 of men. Figures, however, or proportionate extents, are of very questionable value when forming an opinion of a country; as mere statistics they may assist, but seldom receive great consideration when a distinct idea or realization, if we may use the term, is sought to be attained. This being so, and it also being paramountly requisite that the people should, as speedily as possible, become conversant with all the capabilities and resources of this immense division, both for their individual interests, and from national considerations, the extent, resources, and unrivalled advantages of the separate sections within the "Central Country," or Fertile Belt, will, it is hoped, be sufficiently unfolded within the following pages.

By referring to the map, we see that the section now treated of, and it is the only part particularly claiming the immediate consideration of the Canadian public, presents the appearance of a vast plain, drained by the Assiniboine, Saskatchewan, and Peace Rivers. These waters, all taking their rise at the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, in close proximity to each other, between lat.  $49^{\circ}$  and  $52^{\circ}$  N., (a section noted for a great amount of limestone) have, of course, largely con-

tributed to the fertility of the prairies through which they pass. A glance at the map will show the separate tracts that these rivers drain: the great extent of which, as a whole, will become more readily apparent by giving the length of the boundaries of the "Central Prairie Land," or, as we have been accustomed to hear it denominated the North-West Territory. From the south-east angle of the Lake of the Woods along the northern boundary line of the United States, to the base of the Rocky Mountains, which junction forms the south-west angle of the great section, the distance is stated as about 890 miles. This boundary runs almost wholly through a prairie country, a great portion of which is claimed to be of the richest soil. The exception being that "barren ground" which, skirting the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, for about 150 or 200 miles in our territory, is known generally as the American desert. Turning northward for our western boundary, and along what has been so frequently termed the "backbone of the country," we reach the 60° parallel north latitude, at about 950 miles from the south-west angle. The eastern boundary, following lakes and rivers as it does, is longer, making the figures more than a 1,000. As the natural features of both sides have, in a manner, tended toward each other in their northward course, they shorten the line along their 60° N. lat. to about 300 miles. Now, when the reader has made the slightest comparison of these distances with those of places well known, and has realized the fact that so large a proportion of this immense division is as susceptible of the very highest state of cultivation as any other similarly large division of the habitable globe, he will have, we think, good grounds for continuing his research into the varied advantages of the different sub-divisions hereafter to be severally treated of.

By the map, having seen that the Central Plain or Prairie Land is about equi-distant from the Pacific and Arctic Oceans, and from Hudson's Bay, the denomination of "central" becomes quite appropriate. Now from this, and the fact of the sources of so many large rivers being either in or on the borders of this division, there may arise the impression that its elevation must be extremely high. This, however, is not so. The Saskatchewan finds its level in Lake Winnipeg at 620 feet above the sea, and this river in its thousand mile course has comparatively no rapids. Again, Lake Athabasca is only 600 feet above the sea. And while the same even flow in the waters of the River Athabasca which empties into it, is observed the Mackenzie River, or River of the North, which, rising in close proximity to the Saskatchewan and Athabasca rivers, amidst the glaciers of the Rocky Mountains, has nearly from its source a gradual descent to the Arctic Ocean,—1000 miles of uninterrupted navigation, the current flowing at six miles per hour. Now, accepting these figures, we may safely assume, as all writers agree, that from a point in the east base of the Rocky Mountains at about 52° north latitude, the plains are a gradual declination eastward to the Lake of the Woods, and northward to the Arctic Ocean. This depression in going northward will assist in explaining why wheat can be grown so much farther northward, near the



base of the Rocky Mountains, on the Atlantic coast, than on this point, we may also allude first to the isothermal line which followed on the map designates the mean temperature across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And secondly, to the northern limit of "coniferous trees." The latter, it appears by the latest maps, do not grow higher than about the centre of East Main, on the Atlantic coast, but the line turning northward as it goes westward, makes the Arctic Ocean at the mouth of the Mackenzie River its boundary. The line of "Pasture Grapes" corresponds with the foregoing in ascending proportionately higher as they tend westward than the isothermal line, though the grapes are not marked as extending beyond the Great Bear Lake. The foregoing brief reference to the gradual fall of the rivers through the alluvial plateau, the richness of which none attempt to deny, the impression will undoubtedly present itself of an immense tract interspersed with prairie and wild land, with frequent ridges of hills. And by again turning to the map, it will be seen that there must be a height of land or watershed near the boundary between ourselves and the United States, where many of the great rivers of the Western States take their rise but a short distance below the  $49^{\circ}$  parallel of north latitude. Thus we have the section treated of as the "Central Prairie Land," claiming the characteristic of a basin, though on a very extensive scale. From the different altitudes given by many writers, this could be easily shown, but for present purposes we may accept the natural features of the country, the course of the rivers, &c., &c., as sufficient verification of the statement, that the average height of the States immediately south of the boundary is about 1000 feet more than that of the Fertile Belt. In this fact alone, we have strong testimony in favour of the assertion that Minnesota in comparison with the richness of the North West is but a sand pit. Of course the name "Central Prairie Land" must not be accepted strictly, as by an authority which will frequently be drawn upon, we shall show an intermixture of grassy plains with wooded lands, the former greatly prevailing over the latter in the southern half of the section, and *vice versa* in the northern half. But taken as a whole a greater preponderance of cleared land, as farmers in Ontario would term it, with neither stump nor stone, is witnessed stretching away to the northward, as the pioneer goes westward. Even on the banks of the Hay River, near the  $60^{\circ}$  north latitude, he is revelling in these great natural meadows, which undulating to the breezes of the Pacific, apparently invite the impoverished millions of the Old World to come and take possession.

#### RED RIVER SECTION (EAST SIDE.)

Commencing at the eastern boundary, and accepting Lake Winnipeg, which recommends itself as such in preference to other points, as our starting place, we will in rotation as quickly as possible traverse the streams which feed it. Turning southward then on the Red River, which is better known to Canadians than any other, we pass Fort Garry at the junction of the Assiniboine, and continue our way

as far as Pembina, an American fort, near the boundary. This river is nearly 600 miles in length, but only about 100 miles of its course is within British territory. From Red River, eastward to the Lake of the Woods, a distance of about 90 miles, wooded land is intermixed with prairie, the latter, however, being almost continuous for about 25 miles from the river banks.

As to the soil in this tract, Mr. Dawson and Mr. Hind agree as to there being between ten and twenty feet of "black mould" on a "thick bed of alluvial clay." For a graphic description of the general features of the 90 miles between the river and the Lake of the Woods, we draw upon the correspondence of Mr. Charles Mair, paymaster on the road between Fort William and Fort Garry. He writes as follows:—

"To generalize truthfully regarding this country, one must travel extensively in it, and observe closely, and this the writer has not as yet been able to do. There is a section of it, however, and that a considerable one, which is now sufficiently familiar to be written about with confidence, and from personal knowledge. The section is known in this country as the Oak Point Settlement, and is the place selected as the Head Quarters of the Government road, now under construction from Fort Garry to the Lake of the Woods. It lies some 25 or 30 miles due east from the Village of Winnipeg, and is situated just at the termination of the prairies. The whole tract is watered by the Riviere la Veine, which draws its supply from three branches that unite within the woods, and cuts its way westward until it loses itself in an extensive peat bog and juniper swamp about 8 miles from its forks. On the western edge of this swamp it re-appears, and continues its way sluggishly, and with greatly decreased volume, to its junction with Red River, about two miles below Fort Garry. Following these branches up stream, the eastern one penetrates for a number of miles into the woods—its water slightly brackish—and the middle one is unimportant. But the remaining and main branch, after taking an east course for two miles or so, bends sharply to the south, and follows the line of junction of the woods with the prairie to a great distance. The water is deliciously pure and fresh, and gratefully cool in summer; and the stream abounds with fish—principally carp and pike.

"The settlement, such as it is, consists of some thirty families, some of whom are Canadians, with a parish church, though not as yet a resident *cure*. It owes its origin to the last great overflowing of the Red River, which forced numbers of the settlers to seek a less exposed district, and at present it is one of the two parishes which suffer comparatively little from the calamities of last summer. The settlement, as compared with the tract fit for settlement, is, of course, a meagre affair; and it is of the latter, the writer desires to give Canadians some idea, presuming it to be, as it doubtless is, (with one exception) an index to the country west of it. The exception referred to is the great abundance of wood which stands ready for use when the mighty wave of immigration pours in to possess and occupy. From

this point a level, and unbroken forest stretches eastward for 60 miles to the Lake of the Woods. This forest bears but little resemblance to a Canadian one. It consists principally of aspen, generally of small girths; white spruce, of fair sizes; some oak in places; considerable quantities of juniper (the Canadian tamarack), and white cedar, together with balsams and immense quantities of *quapemug* or red willow—the inner rind of which is universally used in this country as tobacco. There is a species of fir, too—the Banksian pine—closely allied to the red pine of Canada. It is rare, however, though a large pinery is said to exist about the sources of White Mouth River, many miles east of this. Most of these woods are substitutional or secondary. The primeval growth was possibly oak—an immense forest of which probably at one time covered the surface now usurped by lighter and inferior timber. The charred oak stumps are still to be seen here and there amidst the young aspens that have sprung up in their stead—just as the poplar or cherry usurps the place of the pine in Canada. A great quantity of young timber has been destroyed by fire; and a still greater quantity by wind-falls—the force and range of which must have been terrific; for everywhere are to be seen trees whose tops have been snapped off like pipe-stems; and the earth is strewn with their trunks in all directions. So speedy is the growth, however, that but few vacant places are now to be seen, and the forest, if unmolested, will become denser and more valuable year by year.

“A coarse, nutritious grass is abundant everywhere in the woods, and the meadows, or muskegs, as they are called here, nourish an exceedingly luxurious growth of “blue-joint” and beaver-hay. The soil which supports this vast expanse of wood is very poor indeed. There are portions, no doubt, where oats or potatoes might succeed ordinarily well, but even the best of it is inferior. The surface mould is nowhere more than an inch or two in depth, and the subsoil is a hungry compound of water-worn pebbles, gravel and sand. The value of the tract lies in its wood, and in its hay meadows scattered at convenient intervals along the road-line to the lake. It would seem, indeed, that the rich land begins where the forest ends.

“No sooner will the immigrant who has toiled his way four hundred miles westward from Lake Superior, emerge from the wilderness of woods, than he will feast his eyes upon one of the richest prairie tracts in America. One is almost afraid to speak what is merely the sober and now familiar truth, lest it should be imputed to imagination. For my own part, and much as I long, in common with every right-minded Canadian, for the honourable and powerful extension of our interests westward, I would perish rather than deceive any one in this regard. There is, in truth, a prospective poetry in the soil here—the poetry of comfort and independence; comfort not to be wrung from the sour and ungracious earth by slavish and destructive labour, and independence unpurchased by years of biting anxiety, and a constitution in ruins.

“What would the young Canadian farmer, ploughing and cursing amongst his rocks, think if he were told that within a bow-shot from



where I now write he could run a furrow for miles through a vegetable loam two feet deep? He has heard of Minnesota, perhaps, and its boundless prairies, but Minnesota is *sand* compared to this. The best of it requires manuring, after a few successive crops of wheat, whilst this would yield wheat without manuring for a century. He has reaped, perhaps, his twenty bushels of it to the acre, on his new land, and thought it a famous average. What would he think of the puzzle-headed and very unscientific Mr. Amable Ducharme (the ignorant, yet something agreeable old fellow from whom we rent our headquarters,) reaping, two summers ago, 57 bushels of wheat from  $2\frac{3}{4}$  bushels planted?

#### RAINY LAKE SECTION.

Passing eastward over the Lake of the Woods, we come into what Bishop Tache terms the RAINY LAKE DISTRICT, and which he thus describes:—

“The eighth district comprises the region watered by Winnipeg River, its sources and its affluents. This country is generally ill-suited for colonization, except on the banks of the Rainy River, some islands on the Lake of the Woods, and some isolated spots on Winnipeg River. Fine forests, in which are many of the most useful kinds of timber, as I said before, give a great advantage to this section of the country. It is, in fact, almost the only place in the Northern Department which furnishes first class timber. Game is here less plentiful than elsewhere. Furs are found here as in all wooded districts. The district also produces wild rice, *zizania aquatica*, known to travellers as ‘wild oats’ (*folle avoine*). I am not aware that the grain is to be found elsewhere in this country. The precious plant grows in sluggish and shallow rivers, and is a valuable resource. The Indians collect the grain in canoes by beating the grass with sticks as they paddle through the crop. They heat the grain to free it from its husk, and make soup of it. It makes an excellent soup, and is preferred by many to common rice.

“Rainy Lake District, which connects Red River Settlement with the west of Canada, appears to be the natural route by which British subjects would travel to this part of our Gracious Sovereign’s dominions. Roads through it have been made the subject of special study by order of the Canadian Government. The resulting official reports may greatly assist in enlightening the public mind; but I take leave to say that the difficulties appears to me to be greater, and the advantages less, than they are estimated by the authors of these reports.

“Cataracts, waterfalls and rapids, we have said, constantly interrupt navigation. As it were in compensation, these obstructions multiply the grandeur and picturesque views which they are ever unfolding to the enraptured gaze of the astonished traveller. Willingly he halts by cataracts to watch the roaring waters leaping down in foaming waves, and again rushing forward to new leaps, dividing the flood in descending steps. Then the whirling pool returns back on

itself as if to examine the obstacle overcome with so great an effort ; and in the violently agitated water under the falls, eddies twirl round one another in wild confusion. And now, become calm, the stream rests in mirrored lakes, to the margin of which come rocks to admire themselves, and to display the richness and variety of their forms.

“Fort Francis, at the extremity of Rainy Lake, was for a long time the principal post in the district. It has, however, ceded the post of honor to Fort Alexander, at the mouth of Winnipeg River, only a few leagues from the mouth of Red River.”

## CHAPTER III.

### RED RIVER SECTION. (WEST SIDE.)

To the soil and climate on the west side of Red River, for about fifty miles west along the boundary. 49° north latitude, and from this point of fifty miles west, stretching away north-westwardly, the same general description as that given to the east side, between the river and the Lake of the Woods, is applicable. The same alluvial plain still continues to spread westward and north-westward. Too level it may be in some places near the Red River to warrant dry farms without drainage, but herein being the great secret of its extraordinary richness, it is not anticipated that this momentary disadvantage or outlay will long prevent the emigrant from occupying even the very lowest sections; especially as we find that the big swamp in rear of the Red River settlement is nearly thirty feet above the surface of the river; and that the swamp on Rat River—a small tributary of the Red River, on the east side—admits of still more easy drainage. Of course, to the traveller who enters the Territory in the spring or fall, these numerous swamps, marshes and ponds—then, more or less, filled with water—will present such an obstacle to immediate settlements along Red River, that, without a corresponding knowledge of the remedy—easy drainage—many may be deterred from locating in this section; they preferring the higher prairie grounds of the Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan—the Mississippi of the north. Portions of it, too (the Red River section), are at times subject to inundation; but this is now of rare occurrence, and not thought a matter worthy of much consideration by the resident farmers, who only see in it the wavelet of that former annual rush of waters, that during many centuries had been enriching the section by alluvial deposits drained from the present State of Minnesota. The river itself is about 500 feet in width; sluggish, and of a dark brownish color, with a depth that admits of constant navigation, with a small steamer, to the United States boundary; unless in an extremely dry season, when, for some time, interruptions occur. At the enlargement of its waters by the junction of the Assiniboine is situated Upper Fort Garry, which, being the seat of government and chief centre of commerce, was chosen as the headquarters of the insurgents under Riel—the circumstances of which uprising, both as to its cause and effect—will hereafter engage our attention. As to the extent of the settlement of which Fort Garry is the admitted capital, irrespective of its being the seat of government, it appears to extend about twenty miles up the Red River towards the American boundary, and about thirty miles in the opposite direction to Lake Winnipeg; while westward up the Assiniboine it reaches about sixty miles.

Of the beauty and picturesqueness of the scenery in and around Fort Garry, and on the banks of the Red River, we have seen nothing more worthy of a place than Governor Ramsey's (American) happy and artistic portraiture "of the contented settlers having their dwellings and out-buildings spread along the river front, with lawns sloping to the water's edge, and shrubbery and vines literally trained around them, and trees intermingled—the whole presenting the appearance of a long suburban village—such as you might see near our eastern seaboard, or such as you find exhibited in pictures of English country villages; with the resemblance rendered more striking by the spires of several large churches peeping above the foliage of the trees in the distance. White-washed school-houses glistened here and there, amid sunlight and green; gentlemen's houses of pretentious dimensions, and grassy lawns and elaborate fencing, the seats of retired officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, occasionally interspersed. Here an English Bishop's parsonage, with a boarding or high school near by, and over there a Catholic Bishop's massive cathedral, with a Convent of the Sisters of Charity attached, while the two large stone forts (at which reside the officers of the Hudson Bay Company or of the colony); one called Upper Fort Garry, and situated at the mouth of the Assiniboine; and the other termed Lower Fort Garry, which is twenty miles further down the river, helped to give additional picturesqueness to the scene."

Westward from Fort Garry, about one hundred and fifty miles up the Assiniboine, we reach Portage la Prairie, which, although long known, has, as it were, received its proper introduction to the world from the pen of a Government official, who, in the following graphic and comprehensive picture, has given such a description as only personal observation can produce. It is as follows:—

#### PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE.

"With these general remarks, we shall now take our trip to Portage La Prairie, ascending the left bank of the Assiniboine. The most forbidding portion of the route is in the neighbourhood of the village of Winnipeg, which stands on comparatively high ground, flanked on the left by Red River, and on the right by a series of extensive marshes, good for grazing, but worthless at present for farming. Low grounds lie westward along the road for several miles, though there are some fine farms even here, and, onwards, extends a sallow and comparatively meagre country, strewn with small boulders, until we reach Sturgeon Creek—a little pebbly stream, over which stands a miserable, rickety old mill, with an external undershot wheel. This is the only tributary of the Assiniboine for seventy-five miles, and above this point to Headingley, a distance of six miles, the soil is dense and stiff. This feature characterizes the country as we ascend to Lane's Post, twenty-five miles further on, and though it is all that would be called excellent farming land in Canada, and is covered with luxuriant grasses, it lacks sand to give it looseness. Over all this the road is beautiful; and I may here say, once for all, that, with the ex-



ception of one or two wet places, the road to the Portage is magnificent. One may drive at the fastest trot over it, and will meet with exactly three stones on the way, and these are small ones and pleasant things to look at. The same road, or cart track, extends westward quite as good to Edmonton House, a distance of nearly one thousand miles, and three hundred miles after that to the mountains. Nature is the road maker here, and she has done her work admirably. Beyond Lane's Post for many miles, the ascent is gradual, but more noticeable, and the surface soil is characterized by eccentric alternations of loam, sand and clay. Throughout, the route on the left is bounded by the timber which lines the river, and, on the right, by near or far belts or clumps of wood,—or by the horizon, into which vast expanses of prairies weep and lose themselves. As we ascend, the country improves at every step, the right extent being relieved by the Big Ridge, as it is called—a long belt of timber, some three miles off, which stands on slightly elevated ground with a direction from west to east—and, as usual, by the timber belt along the river on the left. To Poplar Point, however, fifteen miles from Portage la Prairie, the route, though very fine and inviting, has little of the vastness peculiar to the upper country. There is an indefinable sense of narrowness and constriction, due, doubtless, to the frequent occurrence of timber, with which the country is studded; and, though the soil is in the main rich and productive, yet one grows exceedingly nice about soils in this country, and land which would be fought for in Canada is passed here with a leer and a scowl. It is at Poplar's Point that the true, the virgin, the sublime prairie begins. There the awful solitude opens upon the sight and swells into an ocean, and the eye wanders over the "silent space" of the West. The man must be corrupt as death, who, unaccustomed, can look unmoved upon this august material presence, this calm and unutterable vastness. Man is a grasshopper here—a mere insect, making way between the enormous discs of heaven and earth. And yet man is the master of all this. Hither will he come and plough, and plant, and reap, and pocket his greasy gains, and feel no awe of anything. Many things will he grumble about, doubtless, for man is an habitual grumbler; but he will not complain much over his land.

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Half an hour's drive brings us to the Portage, a mixed settlement of half-breeds and Canadians, amongst whom the most substantial farmers are Mr. McLean and Mr. McBain.

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The soil of the greater portion of the district is incredibly fruitful, being loose, friable, and easily worked, and consisting of a deep admixture of deep, black sand, with rich vegetable loam, resting upon substrata generally of sand, but in some places of clay. The sandy subsoil includes the very best land in the district, as it retains the moisture, and is, besides, in some mysterious way, a perennial medium of underground communication with the waters of Lake Manitobah, and an infallible register of the water-level in that vast reservoir.

Water is found everywhere at an average depth of 6 feet, affording an unfailing supply of moisture to the vegetable tissues above, whilst on the other hand, the surface soil is preserved from the sourness incident to long continued rains, when such do occur, by the porousness of the subsoil, which immediately absorbs the excess of moisture without increasing the average level beneath. Whilst the foregoing is but a rough statement of the nature of the district and its adjuncts, it must also be observed that there is a characteristic fertility of the soil which seems to be inherent and peculiar to itself. There is a spontaneity, so to speak, about it, a generous and surpassing productiveness which seems to set time and seasons at defiance. The potato planted in July, matures in October, and, though not a drop of rain should fall for an entire summer, a circumstance which occurred a few years ago, yet the cereals spring up and yield abundantly, in defiance of all known precedent.

The climate, besides, is one of the finest that can be imagined. In the month of March, at a time when the inhabitants of Red River settlements are shivering with cold, the inhabitants of the Portage la Prairie district, a degree further west, are generally enjoying genial weather; and at no time is the winter season so severe as in the lower settlements. There is enough snow to facilitate winter employments; but never enough to impede travel; and scarcely ever more of it than one foot in depth on a level. In summer the weather is, of course, hot enough, though a pleasant breeze is generally stirring on the prairies. The nights, however, are invariably cool and pleasant; and the dreadful suffocation, restlessness, and exhaustion of ordinary Canadian July weather, are entirely unknown. If a man sweats and fevers by day, he, at all events, sleeps soundly and comfortably by night—a blessing which only those can appreciate who have endured the unmitigated torture of the heated terms in the east.”

That the foregoing description is not quite borne out by Mr. Russell in his work, will perhaps be the more easily understood when we remember that the former wrote from actual observation, surrounded by that vast richness which he so ably portrays, while the latter takes his data from reports, and apparently puts great faith in surveyors' notes. Nor when we grant to the one that his personal acquaintance with his theme is greatly in his favor, could we do better than endeavor to find a solution of whatever slight discrepancies there may be between these gentlemen, in the fact, that one rather leans to the character of an advocate, and the other to that of a judge. Not that there is virtually any material difference between them more than might be supposed to arise where the first speaks of the whole from a part seen, and the rest “heard of;” while the second condenses from blue book and reports, where every line by its technical and mathematical exactness, chills the slightest touch of imaginative allusion. As an instance, the resident writer in one of his articles closes a paragraph, in which he refers to the “inexhaustible fertility” of the soil, with the following words: “And from Portage la Prairie it stretches northward to Manitobah; and westward—everywhere.” Now had he said north-

westward, instead of westward ; or, westward with some exceptional sections, Mr. Russell's exactness could have found nothing wrong. As it is, we have north of the boundary in the southwest corner of the Fertile Belt, skirting the Rocky Mountains, and stretching easterly along the height of land drained by the tributaries of the Missouri and the Assiniboine, what has before been alluded to as the continuation of the "American Desert." That we have such a portion of 'barren ground' is certain, but that even this comparatively small section is diversified by tracts of "rich land" is as certain ; while for its extent we have every assurance that it does not reach nearly to the upper branches of the Assiniboine. This, some writers go far to prove by a calculation of the comparative bodies discharged by rivers draining certain extents of this territory, which is either in or on the borders of this "barren ground." Now taking into consideration the different areas drained, and the amount of water discharged by the Assiniboine—the Qu'Appelle and the Souris, the latter of which is the most southerly, and the Assiniboine, the most northerly. We can only accept the disparity of the country through which the Souris runs, to that which borders on the Qu'Appelle, as a solution of the fact that the length of the rivers being the same, the Qu'Appelle discharges double the quantity of water that the Souris does. Thus we have the "light sandy soil" of the latter absorbing twice the quantity of "the comparatively sandy soil" of the Qu'Appelle ; and the same rule holding good, we can not do otherwise than attribute the great body of water in the Assiniboine—always remembering the extent of territory drained to be equal—as attributable to the rich, loamy soil through which it takes its way. All this, however, while it shows that we have some "poor land," though a very small portion, is more particularly a proof of the inferior soil of Minnesota when compared with the Fertile Belt ; at the same time admitting that the line separating the good from the bad has at times run considerably north of the 49° parallel north latitude. Still, on consulting Mr. Hind, we see that when alluding to the "infertile tract," every page of his work has many allusions to "good portions : " small prairies of several miles across, sometimes nine and ten miles. Nor must we forget what that gentleman would select as good land after having traversed hundreds of miles through the Fertile Belt, where there was so little that even he could term questionable.

Mr. Russell, when closing his chapter on "Infertile Lands on the Souris and Qu'Appelle," after drawing largely on Mr. Hind, gives his decision as follows : "When we read such descriptions, and turn to Mr. Hind's large map of exploration that accompanies his report, as published by the Canadian Government, and see large tracts, watered by fine streams, designated as 'rolling prairie, good clay soil ;' 'level plain, dark rich loam ;' 'open level prairie of light sandy loam, with clumps of willows ;' 'rolling prairie of light clay loam, marshy in many places,' (thirty miles of this in one tract apparently) ; 'rich black soil ;' 'rolling prairie of sandy clay ;' 'level open prairie, full of marshy ponds ;' and in the first great bend of the Souris, a tract of

twenty miles by ten, apparently with several streams issuing from it, of 'slightly undulating prairie, of rich sandy loam, with clumps of young poplar;' and when we consider that these tracts, with the exception of marshy spots in them, are generally ready to receive the plough, without the trouble and cost we have in Canada in clearing and in taking out stumps and stones, we are led to believe, that if these expressions have been used with accuracy, which there is no room to doubt, considerable tracts of this region, not included in the fertile belt, commonly spoken of, are really far from being quite unfit for settlement."

## CHAPTER IV.

### WINNIPEG BASIN.

Returning now to the Red River, and following its course to Lake Winnipeg, we come upon this sheet of water, two hundred and eighty miles long and fifty-seven broad.

The lake, as before stated, is about six hundred and twenty-eight feet above the sea, and empties into Hudson's Bay, by the Nelson River, which river traverses South Hudson Territory, a rocky or Laurentian country, southward of the Nelson, and generally westward of Lake Winnipeg, is of the same rocky formation, while that to the eastward, generally termed the Winnipeg Basin, is Silurian lime-stone formation, which, more or less predominating through the Fertile Belt, stretches a thousand miles westward to the base of the Rocky Mountains. As to the extent of the Winnipeg Basin, or more properly what is termed the Winnipeg Basin, there appears to be no certain answer as yet given; some writers allowing it much more of length and breadth than others. But be its boundaries what they may, whether they are held to tend westward on the Saskatchewan, or skirt the shores of Lakes Manitoba and Winnipegosis, they nevertheless comprise a very large area, the mineral wealth of which cannot be better described than by incorporating the testimony of Professor Hind, delivered before the British Statistical Society, 1864, as follows:—

“I now proceed to glance at the mineral wealth of this central region of British America. The little that is known of it already establishes the great fact, that within one hundred miles of the entire length of Lake Winnipeg, on the west side, there are salt springs sufficient to produce as much of that important material, at a very small cost, as will be required for generations to come. Iron-ores of the best description for common purposes are distributed over vast areas adjacent to workable beds of lignite coal. Some of the beds of coal are twelve feet in thickness, and have been recognised in the western part of the basin of Lake Winnipeg over several degrees of latitude and longitude.

“It is important to bear in mind that with the lignite coal the vast deposits of clay ironstone are associated. These extend much further east than the lignite layers, which have been removed by denudation and form a very peculiar and important feature in the rocks west and south of the Assiniboine after it makes its north-westerly bend.

“A large part of the region drained by the north and south branches of the Saskatchewan is underlaid by a variety of coal or lignite. On the North Saskatchewan, coal occurs below Edmonton in workable seams.



"A section of the river bank in that neighbourhood shows, in a vertical space of sixty feet, three seams of lignite—the first one foot thick, the second 2 feet, and the third 6 feet thick. Dr. Hector, who made the section, states that the six-foot seam is pure and compact. Fifteen miles below the Brazen River, a large tributary to the North Saskatchewan from the west, the lignite-bearing strata again come into view, and from this point they were traced to the foot of the Rocky Mountains. On the Red Deer River the lignite formation was observed at various points. It forms beds of great thickness; one group of seams measures twenty feet, 'of which twelve feet consisted of pure compact coal'—(Dr. Hector). These coal beds were traced for ten miles on Red Deer River. A great lignite formation of cretaceous age, containing valuable beds of coal, has a very extensive development on the upper waters of the North and South Saskatchewan, the Missouri, and far to the north in the valley of the Mackenzie. Colonel Lefroy observed this lignite on Peace River, and Dr. Hector recognized it on Smoking River, a tributary of Peace River, also on the Arthabasca, M'Leod River and Pembina River, all to the north of the Saskatchewan, "thus proving the range of this formation over a slope rising from 500 to 2,300 feet above the sea, and yet preserving on the whole the same characters, and showing no evidence of recent local disturbance beyond the gentle uplift which has effected this inclination,"

The learned gentleman when referring to the gold fields of Winnipeg, dwelt with a great degree of minuteness on the probable extent of the gold-bearing rocks, asserting his confidence in "an eastern or Winnipeg gold-bearing area, wholly distinct from the Rocky Mountain gold-fields; that the St. Martin's rocks formed part of this area; and that it extended in a north-westerly direction towards Lake Arthabaska in the form of a narrow belt of intrusive gold-bearing quartz veins, penetrating Silurian and Devonian rocks, and resembling in some important particulars the auriferous region in Victoria." Gold, he said, had also been found on the Assiniboine—the Qu'Appelle River, near the Touchwood Hills—on numerous tributaries of the North Saskatchewan, and in the flats of the great river itself, while at Edmonton, they obtained \$15 a day in pure gold, by simply washing the alluvial mud of the Saskatchewan.

#### THE SASKATCHEWAN RIVER.

Of the Saskatchewan River and country, the extract from Professor Hind's address we have just given—though more directly relating to the Winnipeg Basin—advances no uncertain opinion as to the vast mineral wealth of the different sections drained by this great river and its numerous tributaries. And as somewhat introductory to the subject of its fertility, as a whole, we clip from the testimony of Governor Ramsay, (formerly Governor of Minnesota), the following:—

"But without casting more than a passing glance on the agricultural capacity of remote Peace River, we may come down to the fertile

valley and plain of the great Saskatchewan, the Mississippi of the North, which pours its waters from the Rocky Mountains over more than a thousand miles of agricultural territory, teeming with coal and other mineral treasures, into Lake Winnipeg; and we may note the still more fertile and desirable lands of its south or Bear River branch, the winter home, in its wooded valleys, of the buffalo and myriads of other game; as far north as these regions are, actual experiment has shown them to be capable of raising successfully nearly every cereal, hardly excepting corn, and every vegetable that can be produced in our lands of the temperate zone further south.

"From what I have seen of the land in that section, and from what I learned respecting its capacity, and making every allowance for its extraordinary fertility also, I hesitate not to ascribe to the whole of the upper plains on both branches of the Saskatchewan River, an agricultural value superior naturally to the fields of our New England in their primitive condition, and though lack of timber might be an objection to some portions of the Saskatchewan Territory, yet it has mineral coal in abundance, which may be easily mined to supply fuel for a population of the densest character."

Accepting this latter extract, corroborated as it is by the former from Professor Hind, and by numberless writers of still later date, to whom we shall refer, as a fair representation of the innate wealth of this vast tract, which stretches westward for a thousand miles to the base of the Rocky Mountains, we will now glance briefly at the prominent features of the principal sections as mapped out or bounded by the great river itself or its tributaries.

#### MAIN SASKATCHEWAN.

Ascending the Main Saskatchewan from Lake Winnipeg, to what is termed "the junction," where the north and south branches meet, we first encounter numerous rapids between Lake Winnipeg and Cedar Lake; the extent of which is seen by noting the distance between the two lakes as being but twenty miles, whilst the difference in their level is upwards of sixty feet. But from Cedar Lake to Tobern Rapids, a distance of about one hundred and eighty miles, there exists no obstacle to the navigation of steamers; and beyond these Falls, which are not of much magnitude, the river is usually seen winding in magnificent curves through a valley about a mile in width, and "from 150 to 200 feet lower than the general level of the country on each side."

Of the soil on the north side of the Main Saskatchewan, above Cedar and Marshy Lakes, there is not such fine quality as that on the south side. Large tracts on the former being but a little above the level of the river, are necessarily marshy and "unsuitable for cultivation." To the southward, however, from the main stream, the tract in general, claims from Mr. Hind, the character of "rich black mould," with "wooded portions" interspersed, though a narrow strip of sandy soil, averaging about two miles in breadth, borders the river bank. He

adds, referring to that section south of Fort à la Corne, "on the slopes, the grass is long and luxuriant, affording fine pasturage. The general aspect of the country is highly favourable for agriculture; the soil deep and uniformly rich, rivalling the low prairies of Red River and the Assiniboine. Mr. Russell closes his chapter on this point as follows:—"This favourable country of mixed woodland and prairie, extends southwards from the forks of the Saskatchewan, eighty miles, to the treeless prairie region on the northerly waters of the River Qu'Appelle, south-easterly it extends, including the wooded region on Root River, through to the fertile country on the Assiniboine already described, making together in that direction, a breadth of three hundred and twenty miles of fertile country, interspersed with woodlands, between the forks of the Saskatchewan and the Assiniboine, opposite the mouth of the Souris."

Leaving the main stream, we find that the length of the North branch from its source in the Rocky Mountains, to the junction, is about seven hundred and thirty miles, while that of the south branch, which is the principal stream, is about forty miles more. Both branches take their rise in the Rocky Mountains, and near each other; but diverging one to the northward and the other to the southward as they gain volume, they acquire a distance from each other at two hundred and fifty miles from their source of about three hundred miles. Thus between the forks of this great river, we have a plain greater in breadth than Ontario between Toronto and Windsor, and nearly equaling the distance between the former city and Montreal. Such a comparison, making at once apparent its great extent, may serve to give an adequate idea of the estimated amount of land that the Saskatchewan drains, amounting to the enormous surface of about five hundred thousand square miles.

At the commingling of the two branches, Mr. Hind has placed the temperature of the south branch at  $5^{\circ}$  higher than that of the north branch. The waters of the former are a yellowish brown in color, and turbid; while those of the north branch are a shade lighter and clearer—the one resembling the waters of the Mississippi, the other those of the St. Lawrence—another instance, if we required one, proving the prevailing character of the soil on the respective branches. To particularly describe the tracts on these rivers appears somewhat unnecessary, not only as many of the extracts in the following chapter refer to them, but since we find that the worst part of the South Saskatchewan—that which runs through what is termed the American Desert—has no inconsiderable share of "fine prairie land." We may be prepared to concede to the 200 miles of the south branch immediately above the forks the character it claims for "richness and fertility," the more especially when we find that Mr. Hind alludes to the Moose Woods section, about mid-way between the forks, and where the "light sand" commences, as follows:—"As we approached the Moose Woods, we passed for several hours between a series of low alluvial islands from ten to twelve feet above the water. They sustain some fine elms, balsam, poplar, ash, ash-leaved maple, and a vast

profusion of *la poire*. The river valley is bounded by low hills leading to the prairie plateau, four to eight miles back. The country here furnishes an excellent district for settlement. The spot where we are encamped for the night is an extensive, open, undulating meadow, with long, rich grass; and, on the low elevations, rose-bushes in bloom grow in the greatest profusion. It is only ten feet from the water, yet it does not appear to be flooded in the spring. Water marks and ice marks are nowhere seen above four feet from the present level of the broad river. . . . Beyond the Moose Woods, on the east bank, the prairie is occasionally wooded with clumps of aspen; on the west side, it is treeless, and shows many sand-hills. During the afternoon, we landed frequently to survey the surrounding country. Nothing but a treeless, slightly undulating prairie was visible. Many large fragments of limestone, not much water-worn, lie on the hill-bank of the river, which is about 100 feet in altitude. The river continues very swift, and maintains a breadth of 250 yards."

To nearly the source of the north branch, the same general description of rich undulating prairies, with wooded land interspersed, applies; though these extensive tracts are generally more valuable than those on the south branch—there being immense plains 200 and 300 miles in length classed as highly favourable for agriculture; the soil deep and uniformly rich, rivalling the low prairies of the Red River and the Assiniboine. The various exploring parties describe it as extremely fertile, with a climate corresponding to that of Red River. Mr. Russell condenses the authorities as follows:—"The north branch, for 520 miles up from the Forks, and the Battle River, for its whole course of 450 miles (excepting a short elbow of it), traverses a rich prairie country, more or less interspersed with woods."

The remaining two hundred and eighty-two miles of the upper course of the North Branch lie in the thick wood country, which to the commencement of the mountains, about two hundred miles, is represented as abounding in marshes with patches of fine land in parts. In this distance the banks of the river display beds of lignite coal. Beyond it the remaining course of the river lies in the valleys of the mountains to the glaciers at its source.

The Battle River enters the north branch about a hundred and seventy miles above the main forks. It drains a large part of the country between the north and south branches. It has its source about ten miles from the north branch, thirty miles above Edmonton, but they are a hundred and thirty miles apart at the middle of its course, and between them the pasturage is described as very rich. Coal presents itself there in the banks of the stream, two hundred and fifty miles from its mouth. The river runs in a deep and narrow valley through a rich country. The name of the river in a manner commemorates the numerous fights that took place on its banks, and in its neighbourhood, between the Crees, Blackfeet, and whatever other roving bands of Indians passed this dangerous ground. Prominent among other tributaries are the Rapid River, Carrot or Root River, the Little Pas River, and the outlet of Moose Lake; but as these drain

tracts of country equally rich with those which have been heretofore described as drained by the North Saskatchewan, particular mention is hardly required, as when we have it on good authority that a party desiring to locate cannot go ten miles in any direction in the section now treated of—the North Saskatchewan, without coming upon the prairies, stretching away in their vastness before him; it would be presumption on our part to attempt to influence him in his choice.

However, somewhat in opposition to the foregoing description of the Saskatchewan, we must give place to the opinion of Bishop Taché, whose work is hereinafter particularly alluded to. He says: “of the River Saskatchewan, that it is of peculiar importance, as well from its great size as from the richness of the country through which it flows. Its name is an abbreviation of the *Cree* word *Kisiskatchewan* (*Rapid Stream*.) Its principal sources are in the Rocky Mountains, which, thanks to its windings, gives it a length of more than 1200 miles. This great river divides into many branches that flow capriciously through the vast plain which they cut in various and frequently quite opposite directions.

“The principal branch of the Saskatchewan is its northern one, called simply the Saskatchewan, and by our *voyageurs* Pas River. (*Rivière du Pas*.) I said above that it rises in the Rocky Mountains: its source is a small lake near Mount Forbes, at about 51° 50' north latitude. Winding amongst the mountain spurs near its source, it follows a north-easterly direction to Pine Point, (*Pointe aux Pins*) thence it runs nor'-nor'-easterly to the foot of Big Horn Hills, whence having received the streamlet of this name, it hastens eastward to Mountain House. From this point to Fort Edmonton, its general direction is north-easterly; it continues in the same direction till it crosses the 54th parallel of latitude, along which it runs, and then turns southward towards Fort Pitt, and thus between the latter and Fort Edmonton describes a large and almost regular curve. From Fort Pitt the river continues its south-easterly course to the *Elbow*, whence it turns suddenly towards the north-east, first reaching Carlton House, and then Cumberland House. From the latter point its general course is south-easterly, although its great windings sometimes carry it towards the north and sometimes towards the south.

“From its source to Mountain House, about 150 miles, the river is quite unnavigable, although its breadth there is about 130 yards. Beds of coal begin to show there,—but interruptedly. All around is rather dense forest. Quite close to Mountain House there are small falls, followed by rapids. Very near here, too, Clear-water River joins the main stream. From Mountain House to Edmonton, about 150 miles, is navigable with barges. This advantage, however, is not without some difficulties—as much from the rapidity of the current as from very low water at certain seasons of the year. So great has been the inconvenience from these causes, that men have preferred to leave their boats and cut a road through a partly-wooded country. About midway between the two establishments, the Saskatchewan receives Brazeau River, called also North Branch, (*Fourche Nord*),



which has led to its being confounded with the main stream. A little lower down, White-earth River joins from a pretty lake, which there was an effort to render celebrated by statements that there were very rich gold mines on its shores, as well as in the bed of the river."

After referring to many of the disadvantages attending the navigation of this great river, the reverend gentleman thus sums up: "However it may be as regards the difficulties which I thought it right to enumerate, the advantages are not to be lost sight of."

From the lower part of Cedar Lake to Edmonton, a distance of about 1000 miles, for a period of six weeks, and that in the least favourable years, steam navigation would really meet with only one insurmountable obstruction, viz., Coal Rapids; or if you will, from the mouth of the southern branch to Carlton. It has been suggested that this serious difficulty may be lessened by following the southern branch for about 60 miles, to a point where the road from Red River meets it, and then to proceed by land to Carlton, whence traffic might again pass by water as far as Edmonton. \* \* \*

The coal fields which cross the different branches of the Saskatchewan, are a great source of wealth, and favour the settlement of the valley in which nature has multiplied picturesque scenery that challenges comparison with the most remarkable of its kind in the world. I can understand the exclusive attachment of the children of the Saskatchewan for their native place. Having crossed the desert, and having come to so great a distance from civilized countries, which are occasionally supposed to have a monopoly of good things, one is surprised to find in the extreme west so extensive and so beautiful a region. The Author of the universe has been pleased to spread out by the side of the grand and wild beauties of the Rocky Mountains, the captivating pleasure-ground of the plains of the Saskatchewan."

## CHAPTER V.

### LAKES MANITOBAH AND WINEPEGOOS SECTION.

Almost midway between, and nearly parallel with the north branch of the Assiniboine and Lake Winnipeg, are the Lakes Manitobah and Winepegoos. The latter receiving the waters of the Saskatchewan, flow southward and discharge into Lake Manitobah, from which they empty themselves into Lake Winnipeg, by the Little Saskatchewan, a river about 50 miles long. The length of the two Lakes Manitobah and Winepegoos, is in the aggregate, about 200 miles, and their breadth averages about 25 miles. The country between Lakes Manitobah and Winepegoos, according to Mr. Dawson, has "a rich, alluvial soil," below the low ground through which the Little Saskatchewan makes its way. Nor could it be otherwise, it being a limestone country, and in part thickly wooded. In rounding the south end of Manitobah, we come upon Manitobah settlement, which is said to have even a richer soil than Red River. It is principally prairie; and Portage la Prairie, so ably described by Mr. Mair, lies about 20 miles south of it. Turning either westwardly or north-westwardly from Portage la Prairie, we traverse the same undulating and fertile plains, which, according to all authority, continue with comparatively small portions of unfavourable land interspersed—in the former direction about 900 miles, and in the latter, between 1200 and 1500 miles. The White Mud River, emptying into the south end of Lake Manitobah, drains about 80 miles of this rich, sandy loam. From the mouth of this lake in a westerly direction to Lake Dauphin, the opinions of Mr. Hind and Mr. Dawson differ as to the advantages for settlement, the former leaning to an unfavorable conclusion, whilst the latter pronounces it desirable. As regards the tracts on Red Deer River, however, which is 200 miles long and empties into the Winepegoos, there is no divided opinion. Maple is found here, and the soil is extremely fertile; and of Swan River, a little south of it, Mr. Dawson even speaks more glowingly as follows: "About thirty miles above Swan Lake, the prairie region fairly commences. There the river winds about in a fine valley, the banks of which rise to the height of eighty or a hundred feet. Beyond these, an apparently unbroken level extends on one side for a distance of fifteen or twenty miles to the Porcupine Hills, and for an equal distance on the other to the high table-land, called the Duck Mountain. From this, south-westward to Thunder Mountain, the country is the finest I have ever seen in a state of nature. The prospect is bounded by the blue outline of the hills named, while, in the plain, alternate wood and prairie present an appearance more pleasing than if either entirely prevailed."

To the "Swan River District," Bishop Taché also gives a very favourable character, though not so decided as the foregoing. He says: "Swan River District is to the south of Cumberland District, and extends to the frontier of the United States, including Winepégoos and Manitobah Lakes, and the country watered by the rivers flowing into and out of these lakes, as well as that through which Assiniboine River flows, to within 60 miles from its junction with Red River. Like its neighbor to the west, Swan District includes desert, prairie and forest. It is, however, of much less importance than Saskatchewan District. Here not only is the desert sterile, but the prairie is somewhat of the same character. It is the centre of the prairie of which I spoke before, and is not so valuable as the outskirts. Its forests are of importance, and timber of greater utility than that on the western boundary, begins to appear on the eastern. Dauphin Mountains, Duck (*Canard*) Mountain, Thunder Hill, Porcupine Hills, and Pass Mountains are well wooded. These hills, which are connected with Pembina Mountain, \* \* \* now distinctly mark the division between the transition formation on their east, and the secondary formation of the plains on their west. Swan River District encloses a large extent of useful land in the midst of these alluvial deposits, which are not yet sufficiently raised to be free from inundation."

To one of the tributaries of the Swan River, Mr. Dawson thus alludes:—"Numbers of horses were quietly feeding on the rich pasture of the valley as we passed; and what with clumps of trees on the rising ground, and the stream winding among green meadows, it seemed as if it wanted but the presence of human habitations to give it the appearance of a highly cultivated country." Athabasca River emptying into Athabasca Lake, comes next, and is spoken of as of unrivalled merit, remembering its great northern latitude. Forty miles from its mouth, a Mr. Fond had formed a kitchen garden equal to anything Mr. McKenzie had seen in Canada. Mr. Russell says, "the line of mean summer temperature of Halifax, Nova Scotia, passes through that vicinity." Coal is generally alluded to in this section as existing in seams about eight feet thick.

The Upper Churchill or Beaver River, rises about forty miles from Fort Edmonton, on the north branch of the Saskatchewan, and traverses about five hundred miles of the Central Prairie Land. It has a large body of water, and from its source till it debouches in Hudson's Bay, is almost eleven hundred miles in length. Its course being through the northern half or what is called the prairie section, drains wooded lands in a greater proportion than it does prairie, though it is spoken of as being exceedingly rich in "pasture grasses." Even the upper part of it is said to be very productive, and abounding in the finest fish, with any quantity of game, numberless buffaloes roaming over the patches of prairies. Peace River claims the same character for fertility, &c., &c., though in a somewhat less degree, as it is farther north. The entire length of this river is upwards of one thousand miles, which being added to the length of Lake Athabasca, makes the Mackenzie proper about two thousand four hundred miles.



Mr. Mackenzie speaks of extensive plains which afford pasture to numerous herds of buffaloes; and at date 10th May, at Dunregan,  $56^{\circ} 6'$  north latitude, where the mean temperature during the three summer months is about two degrees warmer than at Halifax, he writes as follows :—"From the place which we quitted this morning, the west side of the river displayed a succession of the most beautiful scenery I had ever beheld. The ground rises at intervals to a considerable height, and stretches upwards to a considerable distance; at every interval or pause in the rise, there is a gently ascending space or lawn, which is alternate with abrupt precipices to the summit of the whole, or at least as far as the eye could distinguish. This magnificent theatre of nature has all the decorations which the trees and animals of the country can afford it; groves of poplars in every shape, enliven the scene; and their intervals are enlivened with vast herds of elk and buffaloes, the former choosing the steep uplands, and the latter preferring the plains. At this time the buffaloes were attended with their young ones, and it appeared that the elks would soon exhibit the same enlivening circumstance. The whole country exhibited an exuberant verdure; the trees that bear a blossom were advancing fast to that delightful appearance."

This is certainly no unfavourable picture, and yet the Bishop of St. Boniface goes far beyond it, in the statement "that the magnificent expanses of Peace River, lying beyond the so-called Fertile Belt, are superior to it both in climate and soil." But as this section, with that of the Mackenzie River country, is very fully described by Bishop Taché, we shall consider it at greater length in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE MACKENZIE AND PEACE RIVER COUNTRY.

When we remember the position that Bishop Taché has for so many years held in the North West—the great portion of it through which he must have passed, and the facilities he has necessarily had of acquiring the most reliable information from others, it will be admitted that there was obvious reason why his work on the North West of America should be looked for with no small degree of interest. Especially so, as he had been accredited with saying that some of the writers on the country had been “extensively imaginative.” But any apprehension regarding the Bishop’s treatment of the subject, if not wholly groundless, was comparatively so, as it now appears that this very able and exhaustive work will greatly accelerate rather than retard the tide of emigration to those regions: the first small wavelet of which has already reached the Saskatchewan. Nor is this feeling the less strong, because every page of the work shows the determination of the author to deal truthfully with the question, though in so doing he may, as he himself says, somewhat “disarrange the symmetry” of that Fertile Belt, which has been called the “Rainbow of the West.” And though this he certainly does, we find an ample equivalent in his assurance, “that more cultivable land will be found in the forest region than has been lost from the prairie.”

Admitting, in general terms, that he regards the prairie region as of less extent than we have been heretofore led to believe, and that even the central portions of those vast plains have not the richness that has been attributed to them; that the scarcity of timber and fuel in many districts is at present a great drawback to colonization; and that the frosts are more severe than have been reported; still, all these, which are the principal objections, sink into insignificance when he so graphically portrays the brilliant and prosperous future of millions of men in the North West. That he has approached the subject with the earnest desire, as he says, “to satisfy the legitimate curiosity of serious men who think of this country,” is at once apparent on perusing his work. And though he has, perhaps, kept his imagination too much in check when treating of the resources or beauty of the different districts, still, the facts and figures which are so copiously given, in all probability will do more for the advance of the provinces through immigration, than any number of “glowing pictures.”

Moreover, when he makes the following admission, that “as we love the people more than the land in which they live, as we prefer the well-being of the former to the splendor of the latter, we now repeat that, for our population, we very much dread some of the

promised changes,"—we may, at least, freely accept every word that he writes in favour of the country, while giving due weight to the disadvantages under which he asserts any large number of immigrants must temporarily suffer.

In his division of the North West, Rupert's Land and Red River Territory, all of which he combines under the general denomination of the Northern Department, he draws a diagonal line from the south-eastern extremity of the country to Mount Traffic, near  $64^{\circ}$  north latitude, and  $128^{\circ}$  west longitude: such a line being, in some measure, parallel to the isothermal, and therefore very accurately dividing the barren from the fertile tracts, the latter of which is termed the Southern Division, and the former, the Northern. To the Northern Division he devotes little space, anticipating for it neither a brilliant future nor even any probable change. Moreover, to the southern half he assigns a much larger portion of desert than many former writers, placing the figures at about equal to those of the Prairie Land. That we have a certain portion of this which has been termed the American Desert, north of the  $49^{\circ}$  latitude, we have before stated, but when we gave it the dimensions of a triangle, each side of which is about 300 miles long, we had consulted the best authority on the point. However, as former writers differ from this last authority as to the degree of sterility in this section, generally, we must, it seems, await further and better information.

In his introduction to the Prairies or Plains, the Bishop says: "Let us leave the desert to enter a more agreeable region,—that of the prairies. These plains, about which I am going to speak, have, in some places, a little of the aridity of the neighbouring desert without its sterility: elsewhere this resembles forest land, without its depth; the whole forming a distinct country, worthy of the greatest interest, without, perhaps, having all the advantages attributed to it. Our prairies rest on the 49th parallel of latitude, and on the desert about which we have just been speaking. To the north they are bounded by the wooded country, in other directions they are also bounded by wooded country on which they yearly encroach, and from which they are at present separated by a curved line that, waving irregularly to the north of the Saskatchewan, crosses it near the mouth of its southern branch, and thence proceeds in a straight line to the foot of Riding Mountains to cross the extremity of Lakes Manitobah and Winnipeg, and stops at the height of land which was formerly the bank of the Lake that has been replaced by Red River Valley."

To the forest region, which stretches northward from the prairies to the confines of the Southern Division, he devotes much attention, and adds a classification of the different trees and plants. He also claims that "more cultivatable land will be found in the forest region, than has been lost from the prairie." This assertion becomes very important, when we find that in referring to the prairies he said, "that at the risk of appearing to be unreasonably retrograde, I dare positively affirm that not more than one-half of the area of the prairie within the limits I have ascribed to it, or within the region usually called the



Fertile Belt, is fit for settlement, and that this half has not all the advantages attributed to it."

An immense number of lakes are also included in the Forest Region limits, which would necessarily warrant a very large deduction from the habitable land, though large portions of it will be reclaimed and rendered salubrious by clearing. Fires in this region are also very frequent and very destructive, "but," he says, "if I had to draw a fertile belt, instead of making a rainbow in heaven or on earth, I would extend the limits of the prairie and stretch them into the forest region, along the banks of the great streams; for the region is traversed by beautiful rivers, and will probably some day see settlements disputing with them the possession of their banks. Rainy River is one of these streams, notwithstanding the swamps which encroach on its lower banks. There are great advantages offered by nearly all the rivers flowing from the Rocky Mountains. Protected by this powerful rampart in one direction; in another, they have not to fear the injurious influence which northerly winds in the east acquire in sweeping over the far encroaching Hudson's Bay. Nor need they dread the injurious influence I ascribed to southerly winds rushing, with unchecked violence, across the desert, that, so to speak, goes as far as the Gulf of Mexico to meet them. Were it not for the distance of the rest of the world, and the difficulty of communication, the plateau that borders these beautiful rivers would ere this have been occupied."

This introduction being so inviting, we would take the liberty of incorporating a few extracts referring to the hydrography of the "Arctic Basin." Most of the rivers have been described in the preceding pages; but beyond the new and varied information contained, the following will show the very valuable nature of the work:—

"Mackenzie River is the great artery of the Arctic Basin, or of the north-western region throughout its length, from Mount Hooker to the Arctic Ocean. This giant river receives the tribute of all the streams in the territory on its left, and on its right it loses only those which flow directly into the Arctic Ocean. I place the source of the river, near Mounts Hooker and Browne, at the head of Athabasca River, close to the sources of Columbia River, for, in a straight line at all events, this is its most distant part from its mouth. This magnificent stream receives, besides a multitude of small tributaries, the waters of Lesser Slave Lake, *Lac la Biche*, Clear-water River, the great Athabasca Lake and Peace River; crosses the south-western part of Great Slave Lake, and further on receives Mountain River, *rivière aux Liards*, and the river of Great Bear Lake.

"At different places along the stream the river is known by different names. It bears the name Athabasca between its source and the little affluent from *Lac la Biche*. It then borrows the name of the later until it is joined by Clear-water River, better known as "*la petite rivière Rabbitasku*." It then becomes Athabasca River up to the lake of that name, or "*Lac des Collines*." Then it is Rock River, of which the continuation is called Slave River until it loses itself in Great Slave Lake. From its escape from this lake to its mouth it is known as Mackenzie River.

"The river is navigable, if not from its source, at least from Jasper House to its mouth, a distance of about 2,000 miles. In this long line, navigation in boats of the country, is interrupted at only two places: by the group of rapids in the *rivière à la Biche* and one in Slave River. The latter rapids, which are about 1200 miles from the Arctic Ocean, present the first obstacle to vessels going up stream. Vessels of less draught could easily navigate from above these rapids to the foot of river *à la Biche* rapids, but not at all seasons of the year, as when the water is low there are numerous sand banks in the way. From the latter rapids to Jasper House the current is exceedingly strong, and the water generally shallow; so that here, navigation is very difficult and possible only in boats of the country when powerfully propelled.

"The breadth of the river—at first only about a quarter of a mile—gradually increases, but irregularly. In some places it is two miles broad; and, in short, as regards its length and its volume of water, is one of the finest rivers in the world.

"From its source to Lake Athabasca the water is muddy, being strongly charged with clay and sand, that form shifting banks difficult to become familiar with and to avoid. The turbidness of the water increases the inconvenience of these obstructions.

"During July this river, like all others rising in the Rocky Mountains, experiences a sudden increase, due to the melting of snow. In its upper part particularly, it then becomes an impetuous torrent, and navigation is very difficult and often dangerous. This happens frequently, when there is intense heat of several days' duration in the snowy region. The phenomenon lasts generally inversely as its intensity.

"The delta of Athabasca River at its entrance into the lake of the same name is remarkable, and all the more so as it is also acted upon by a great stream, Peace River, whose mouth is quite close to it. These two powerful streams carry with them, besides sand and clay, a great quantity of *débris*, and this heaped against the south-western shore of the lake, forms the tongue of land that separates the two great sources of Mackenzie River. The tongue is not yet completed. Rivers *d' Embarras* and *d' Epinettes*, Lake Mamawee, the *Quatre Fourches* and very numerous water courses intersect the tongue of the land, and are still waiting for its completion. The channels of several of the branches of the delta change their direction as the water rises and falls in the Athabasca and Peace Rivers. Some of them cut the tongue of land at right angles to the main streams. When the water is high, a portion of the delta is submerged. The high points covered with hay then form small islands, generally of an oblong shape, that look like the twine of an enormous net, of which the gigantic meshes are represented by small sheets of water separating the islands. Hence the name Athabasca or Ayabaskaw (net of hay) that our "*voyageurs*" often pronounce Rabaska.

"The southern border of Great Slave Lake, from a combination of circumstances similar to that I have just described, is being gradually increased by deposits from the rivers discharging into the lake, and by

the north winds, which are strongest and most common, driving *débris* towards the southern shore, the lowest and easiest to stick to.

"Upper Athabasca River flows through a fertile and well wooded country. After an extremely rapid descent from the great mountains it receives the water of Lesser Slave Lake, a magnificent basin, a kind of enormous fish-pond, 75 miles long and 30 miles broad, whose shores rise like an amphitheatre and are very picturesque. This tributary on the left, has its pendant in the beautiful *Lac la Biche*, a little further down on the right. The latter lake is not so large as the former, but it is quite as deserving of praise, and is surrounded by a very fertile country, very well suited for colonization. From *Lac la Biche* there is a land road to Red River and, therefore, to the United States. Already traffic passes along this road, and *Lac la Biche* may become the centre of the trade which will be carried on along the whole of Athabasca-Mackenzie River.

"The next most important tributary is Clear-water of Little Athabasca River. This delightful little stream, rising to the east of Methy Portage, has, up to the present time, and in spite of the difficulties of navigation, enjoyed almost the exclusive privilege of supplying a route to Athabasca-Mackenzie. On descending from the heights of Methy Portage one takes boat on this little river, which, in order to keep the traveller in the midst of the beauties it presents to his view, places obstructions in the way necessitating the *portages* of White Mud, the Pines, Big Stone, the Nurse, and the Cascades. The river is not navigable by other boats than those of the country, and, even then, the navigation is not easy.

"Descending the great river, one enters Lake Athabasca at its south-western extremity. It is a beautiful expanse of deep, limpid water, measuring over 200 miles in length at an elevation of about 600 feet above sea-level. This lake does not pay tribute to the giant river of the north until it has itself received, as tributé, a share of Lake Wollaston. The latter, like Island Lake from which Clear-water River flows, does not decide on a northerly course until it has given a share of its water to Churchill River, of which it feeds the tributaries.

"I said that Peace River joins the great stream a little below Athabasca Lake. Many consider Peace River to be the source of Mackenzie River. It is of less importance to discuss this opinion than to make known the river itself. Peace River is, unquestionably, one of the most beautiful in the country, perhaps in the world. Its navigation, at any rate in boats of the country, is uninterrupted, except by a small fall and a few rapids. These obstructions might be removed by works of secondary importance, and then the river would be navigable, throughout its length, for boats of considerable size, and this, too, nearly throughout the summer.

"Flowing through a valley as beautiful as it is rich, the stream rises in the Rocky Mountains, quite close to the sources of the celebrated Fraser River, with which, as River Athabasca does with Columbia River, it forms a water channel that almost uninterruptedly connects the Arctic Ocean with the Pacific.

"The route is certainly not without difficulties, but these are much less than would naturally be supposed to be connected with crossing the Rocky Mountains by water. It was discovered by Mackenzie in 1793, and has been used by fur traders. There are those who maintain that it is the natural road to the North-west. The valley watered by Peace River cannot but become peopled, and then many inquisitive and interested individuals will admire this grand stream that is now probably regarded with indifference by the poor family of beavers living on its banks.

"Passing from Peace River to Slave River, let us rapidly descend the latter to its falls, which we shall avoid by way of Chest Portage (*Portage de la Cassette*). This is the beginning of the second group of rapids on Mackenzie River. The first group, in River *la Biche*, is formed by calcareous strata crossing the stream; this one is due to azoic spurs which come here to salute the great river, or to test its power by throwing obstacles in its way, but unable to check the violence of the stream, the furious river bounds over the obstructions, making amends to itself for its exertions by a magnificent display of falls and rapids. The traveller has time to gaze on the scene, for, besides the Chest Portage, he has also to pass Raft Portage (*d'Embarras*), Burnt Portage (*Brulé*), Mountain Portage, and lastly the Portage of the Drowned (*des Noyés*).

"As we cast a last glance at this rugged picture, let us take courage to continue the journey, while we regret that we do not find a fine ship here, which might now take us on, without hindrance, to the whale fisheries of the Arctic Ocean. In default of this means, let us embark in the barge which awaits us. Fifteen miles further on, we shall pass Salt River; and if we have not yet acquired the habit of eating entirely without salt, we can lay in a supply from the crystal-covered sides of the river, which look like banks of snow. Still further on, after passing another delta, we shall have an unbounded view across the Great Slave Lake, another fresh-water sea. Stony Island, a naked mass of granite, tells us that, on the east and north, this great lake, like all its giant brothers, is solidly banked with primitive rock; while, to the south and west, the shore is limestone. The lake is one of the largest in the world. Its depth is equal to that of Lake Superior. Its waters are grand, and maintain an immense number of fish. Unfortunately its navigation is certain only from the beginning of July to the middle of October.

"Having crossed Great Slave Lake the great river takes, definitively, the name of its discoverer. Before descending this part of the stream, let us land, and be more polite than we have yet been, for up to the present time we have visited no one *en route*. Here there are missionaries, a bishop and priests. Sisters of charity also reside on this bank, at Providence, the residence of the Vicar of Mackenzie River.

"Let us proceed again, and stop at the mouth of another large river, that called Mountain River, or *Rivière aux Liards*. Those who would learn how a large river pours down over scarped heights, and how our *voyageurs* are bold enough to trust themselves on roaring



waters which rush with frightful noise between their confining walls, such have only to ascend Mountain River. At first they will have no difficulty, but I promise them excitement as they approach the summit of the mountains. They will go close to the sources of Pelly and Lewis Rivers, which, with Mountain River, form another almost uninterrupted water-connection between the seas on the north and the west.

"In descending Mountain River, one has to firmly grasp the boat, as, at many points, the current is so violent that the steerer lashes himself to the boat to avoid being violently pulled out of his place by the blows which the water gives to the helm he holds in his hand.

"Having returned to Fort Simpson, where Mountain River flows into Mackenzie River, let us continue our course down the latter, to admire the wild beauties it presents to us. Now it is the chain of the Rocky Mountains which the river, in its turn, goes to salute. This powerful wall drives back its swift visitor, which occasionally alters its course to avoid an encounter. Further on, it appears as if the impatient river, rushing against rocks instead of describing numerous curves, had thrown itself across the enormous masses that confine it on either side. Numerous affluents descend to it from the mountains, bringing tribute from lakes.

"Having examined the coal beds, and the lignite basin across which the great river flows here—there is before us a hill over 600 feet high, cut vertically, that invites us to view a large river flowing at its base; it is the Great Bear Lake River. We may ascend it, to visit the enormous lake that gives it its name; but let us not forget that it is covered with ice during eleven months in the year, and that we cannot, therefore, stay long, however great the interest it may excite by its size, or by its historical associations from having been made the winter quarters of Arctic expeditions. An additional reason for our feeling an interest in this lake, is that its exceptionally severe climate has not deterred the missionary who carried the torch of faith there. We shall visit the missionary at Good Hope, the last of our stations. Let us pass over what is called *the rapid*, and which, when the water is low, may occasionally falsify my statement, that the river is navigable for large vessels to the Arctic Ocean, where it flows out across a delta of alluvial land.

"The Arctic Basin includes several other rivers which, although practically useless, are not without interest, and have been rendered celebrated by the names and adventures of the noted travellers who have explored these inhospitable shores. Coppermine River is the first of these which have attracted attention. Its investigation was the object of the first land expedition made in the Arctic regions, that of Samuel Hearne, in 1771. Then Fish or Back River, which, like the preceding, has been the theatre of many stirring scenes, and witnessed the land expedition made by Anderson and Stuart in 1855. It was at the mouth of this river that the discoveries were made which put an end to the uncertainty about the fate of Franklin and his courageous companions."

## CHAPTER VII.

### SOIL, CLIMATE, &c.

WE have already given some information regarding the extent, character, and resources of the different divisions, especially of those that will be first settled. We think it advisable to lean in favour of saying too little, rather than too much, of those sections that as yet, have had comparatively nothing official to stamp their character. The inaccessibility of the country heretofore has, it is true, caused descriptions of these territories to be read with a great deal of doubt and perplexity. However, this difficulty, the want of direct communication, is nearly overcome, and, in a very few years, the nature of its soil and climate will be as well established as that of Europe. It is affected by the same causes precisely, varied in a greater or less degree, in different localities, by circumstances peculiar to each. The west side of the continent of Europe is warmer on the same parallel of latitude, than the east side, the prevailing winds being westerly. The causes and effect are precisely the same on the continent of America, only they operate in a somewhat greater degree, there being a larger and warmer ocean to the windward of it, and a colder sea to chill the coasts of Hudson's Bay and Labrador.

"What then," one writer asks, "is this immense region, equal in area and climate to many of the most powerful kingdoms of the Old World, composed of? Bare rock, snow-clad mountains, and sandy plains, or swamps and morasses, the friends of the Hudson's Bay Company would have us believe. We find, however, that the construction of this part of the globe is very much like the rest of the world, varying from the primitive to the secondary and tertiary formations, with limestone, coal, &c., in abundance: and to assert that a country of such formation, and with such a climate, is unfit for the abode of man, is simply to assert that the laws of nature are reversed in regard to it." However, the evidence on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company was given to establish the false and unfavourable view, though many whose names are associated with the "attempt," now view with deep regret their action in the past. Such being the case, we do not think that there are any now who consider it necessary to disprove the unjust, ungenerous, and unpatriotic evidence given before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1857.

However, as the following extracts dispose of many of the untruthful assertions advanced by the Company; and as some of them are from gentlemen well known in Canada, and others from those well qualified to give "advice to farmers" intending to emigrate to the country, we give them a place.

The Rev. John Scott, at the designation of the Rev. William Fletcher, as missionary to the Red River Settlement, after speaking of it as a field for missionary effort, described it "as a country of very great extent, capable of sustaining a population of 30,000,000." "In considering this country as a mission field," he continued, "it must not be regarded so much on account of what it now is, as on account of what it is evidently destined to become. Lord Selkirk and Lord Milton speak of it in very flattering terms, both as to soil and climate. The face of the country is level, being woodland along the rivers, and prairie in the interior. The soil is rich, producing excellent samples of wheat, oats, barley, and corn. As a wheat country, it is destined to be unrivalled on account of its alluvial deposits. Its mineral wealth is also important. Between the two branches of the Saskatchewan, there is a gold field 400 miles long and 300 broad, while along the Assiniboine there are rich coal beds."

Bishop Machray, long a resident of the North-West, said, at a missionary meeting held in Toronto in September, 1867, when alluding to the scene of his labors, "that the soil was exceedingly good. At the part where he was stopping, the land had been in crop for 30 or 40 years, and unless something extraordinary happened, the crop was still excellent. There were in the neighborhood of the settlement all the advantages necessary for insuring the greatness of the country." He attributes the want of success in gold mining operations at the base of the Rocky Mountains, to the miners "being isolated from the rest of the world."

In a condensation of one of the Rev. George Macdougall's speeches, he says:—"The cattle live out all winter; except once during the last five years there was no need to feed horned animals or horses. This country extends 1,000 miles from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains. As to minerals, he could trace 300 miles of coal in one direction. On one small creek he saw a seam of coal extending for six miles, and four or five feet thick. On the Athabasca River, 100 miles to the north of him, coal could be seen all along the banks; also, on the southern banks of the Saskatchewan. In one place he had seen it, where it had been on fire from time immemorial. There was timber, too, in abundance. Some of the finest rivers in the world ran parallel for hundreds of miles, and on the higher portions of their course, near the Rocky Mountains, there was the finest timber. Gold is there, and it will come in due time. Every river on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains is full of gold. It might be asked, why is not this gold taken out? Men cannot at present find provisions while they try to do it. Flour is there \$1 per pound, working cattle, \$200 each. Miners will not work there under \$10 per day. Men must go in there, else provisions cannot be furnished in sufficient abundance to support the miners. If Dr. Taylor would come out his way, we would show him mountains which were the backbone of this Continent. Let him see one sunrise from the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, with the strawberries at his feet and the eternal snows above him, at the summit of the mountains, and he

would soon acknowledge the Alps, of which he was so fond of talking, to be small. When he came to Red River, he felt cross with the Canadians every hour on account of their indifference to this fine country. Americans are wide awake. An old farmer who wanted me to preach at his house, showed me the wheat he raised. He had raised 300 bushels of wheat weighing 68 lbs. to the bushel. He had seen there the finest specimens of flax, fit for thread of the finest quality for fishing and other purposes. Native hops worth 75 cents a pound in St. Paul's could be gathered by the waggon-load."

Sir George Simpson, who was forty years Governor of the Hudson Bay Territories, in his book, the "Overland Journey Round the World," thus speaks of the valley of the Kaministiquia,—a river which falls into Lake Superior, near Fort William :—

"The river, during the day's march, passed through forests of elm, oak, fir, birch, &c., being studded with hills not less fertile and lovely than its banks; and many a spot reminded us of the rich and quiet scenery of England. The paths of the different portages were spangled with violets, roses, and many other wild flowers, while the currant, the gooseberry, the raspberry, the plum, the cherry, and even the vine were abundant. All this bounty of nature was inspired, as it were, with life, by the cheerful notes of a variety of birds, and by the restless flutter of butterflies of the brightest hues. Compared with the adamantine deserts of Lake Superior, the Kaministiquia presented a perfect paradise. One cannot pass through this fair valley without feeling that it is destined sooner or later to become the happy home of civilized men, with their bleating flocks and their lowing herds, and their full garners. The miners of Lake Superior, besides establishing a continuity of route between the east and west, will find their nearest and cheapest supply of agricultural produce in the valley of the Kaministiquia."

He says of Rainy River, that "it is not interrupted by a single impediment for nearly a hundred miles, while yet the current is not strong enough to retard an ascending traveller." Again, "Nor are the banks less favorable to agriculture than the waters themselves to navigation, resembling in some measure, those of the Thames, near Richmond. From the very brink of the river there rises a gentle slope of green-sward, crowned in many places with a plentiful growth of birch, poplar, beech, elm, and oak." His book fully corroborates our account of the richness of the soil at Red River; and when he comes to the banks of the Saskatchewan, he writes thus :—"Lofty hills, and long valleys full of sylvan lakes, while the bright green of the surface, as far as the eye could reach, assumed a foreign tinge under an uninterrupted profusion of roses and blue-bells. On the summit of one of these hills we commanded one of the few extensive prospects that we had of late enjoyed. One range of heights rose behind another, each becoming fainter as it receded from the eye, till the furthest was blended in almost undistinguished confusion with the clouds, while the softest vales spread a panorama of hanging copses and glittering lakes at our feet."

## CLIMATE.

In concluding this chapter, which completes the descriptive part, we think it advisable—though numerous statements have already been made, to refer briefly to the climate, especially so, as graphic pictures of the storm that raged through those sections in January of last year, were extensively copied; and the impression has gone abroad that the climate is as rigid and severe as it has heretofore been to the interest of some to represent it. In the first place, to dispose of the unfavourable opinion which the descriptions of this “fearful storm” has left: we gather from the reports that the seven persons who lost their lives, were frozen to death in Minnesota, between Forts Abercrombie and Pembina; and necessarily the North West, so far as this fearful storm is concerned, is not responsible for the calamity, though numbers of the prisoners who attempted to escape from Fort Garry, with unsuitable clothing, did get their toes and fingers frozen. Minnesota is certainly south of the Red River Territory, but when we find that it is the highest land in North America, with the exception of the Rocky Mountains, we are in a great measure prepared for the evidence in favor of the Red River Territory as to climate, which may be condensed as follows:—

The isothermal line which passes through Toronto, though not given on the map, also passes through the Red River in the neighborhood of, if not above Fort Garry. This isothermal line, denoting the mean temperature, we infer that, though the thermometer registers a much greater degree of cold in winter, along the Red River than here, still, from the peculiar dryness of the atmosphere in winter, the cold is not felt to the same extent, or we should not find that men could lie out on the plains with their buffalo robes as their only covering, as numerous of the insurgents are said to have done, and as we know that others have done. Horses that are bought for the American market, winter at large about forty miles west of Fort Garry, on the prairies, in the charge of herdsmen, who drive them at evening to the clumps of trees along the banks of small streams. With these for their only shelter, and the long prairie grass their only food, they are in good condition in the spring. Now accepting these two facts as sufficient proof that the settlers on Red River enjoy a climate equal in mildness to that of Ontario, we find, as an additional proof, that the mean temperature of the seven warm months at Fort Garry, is fully one-half a degree warmer than the mean of the corresponding seven months at Toronto. With such data to establish the character of the climate at Fort Garry, proceeding westward, we find that the climate improves so rapidly that at Portage la Prairie, which is only one hundred and fifty miles distant—and almost due westward—the spring generally sets in three weeks earlier than at Red River. Then, again, starting from Fort Garry, and going north-westward, about four hundred miles, to Fort Carlton,) which is about 150 miles north of the latitude of Fort Garry) on the north branch of the Saskatchewan, above the forks, we find, according to Capt. Blackiston, the same temperature to prevail at



the Fort, on the Saskatchewan, as on the Red River. Mr. Russell finds as the "result of this rapid increase of heat westward," as shown by Mr. David Thompson, "that Dunregan, on Peace River, latitude  $56^{\circ}$  north, has a mean annual temperature of  $35^{\circ} 51'$ : equal to that of Fort William, on Lake Superior, latitude  $48^{\circ} 23'$  north; with a mean temperature for four summer months, May to August, inclusive, of  $62^{\circ} 9'$ ; while that of Fort William for the same months, is only  $57^{\circ} 13'$ , or  $59^{\circ} 9'$  for the warmest three of them; yet Dunregan is about five hundred and forty miles further north than Fort William."

Again, Captain Palliser, who explored the Saskatchewan country personally, says "its climate is somewhat similar to that of Red River; but decidedly milder in the southern and western parts." This, in fact, is fully established by following the isothermal or mean temperature as given by Governor Stevens, which, commencing in Green Bay, Wisconsin, passes Little Falls between St. Paul's and Fort Ripley, Minnesota, crosses the Red River near Fort Garry, and, after passing over Lake Manitobah and striking the forks of the Saskatchewan, proceeds north-westward to the sources of Beaver River. From which we gather that the sources of Beaver River have as good a climate as Fort Garry; and Fort Garry as good as Green Bay, Wisconsin, or Little Falls, Minnesota.

From the foregoing, and by following the other and more northerly isothermal line that has been before alluded to; and by noting the north-westwardly tendency of those lines marking the limit of "coniferous trees" and "pasture grasses," we are not prepared—even though we were so disposed—to question the assertion of the Bishop of St. Boniface, as to the climate of the Peace River Country, being as good as, if not better, than, that of Red River.

As to the cause of this northerly divergence of the mean temperature, we will briefly give the accepted theory. The Pacific, flowing up the western coast of North America, is noted for its singularly warm currents; the breezes from which, passing through the gorges of the Rocky Mountains, come eastward till met by the cold Arctic currents of the Hudson's Bay. On the Pacific coast there are no icebergs; but on the Atlantic coast and in Hudson's Bay, they remain in such masses as to block up the passage for nine out of the twelve months. Hence the intense cold in East Main, and, at times, in Lower Canada and South Hudson's Bay Territory, including the Lake Superior Section, as compared with the congenial climate of the North Saskatchewan, receives a clear and adequate explanation.

At the last moment, we have received the official report of Lieut. W. F. Butler of H. M. 69th Regiment. This gallant officer was sent in advance of the expedition by way of Pembina; and although the insurgents gave him some little trouble, he managed to reach Sir Chas. Wolseley and communicate to him the actual state of affairs at Fort Garry. Subsequently this exceedingly able officer was commissioned by Lieut. Governor Archibald to explore the Upper Saskatchewan, with a view of ascertaining the actual state of the country, the condition of the Indians and more particularly to what extent the small-

pox, had afflicted them. Lieut. Butler's entire report is extremely interesting ; it is, however, too late for us to afford our readers even a sketch of his intelligent researches. At the same time, we cannot forbear from adding corroborative evidence to the information already given, regarding the inexhaustible richness of the Upper Saskatchewan district. We quote from the concluding portion of Lieut. Butler's report :—

“People will not build houses, rear stock, or cultivate land in places where their cattle are liable to be killed and their crops stolen. It must also be remembered that the Saskatchewan offers at present not only a magnificent soil and a fine climate, but also a market for all farming produce at rates which are exorbitantly high. For instance—flour sells from £2 10s. to £5 per the 100 lbs. ; potatoes, 5s. to 7s. a bushel ; and other commodities in proportion. No apprehension need be entertained that such settlements would remain isolated establishments. There are at the present time many persons scattered through the Saskatchewan who wish to become farmers and settlers, but hesitate to do so in the absence of protection and security. These persons are old servants of the Hudson's Bay Company who have made money ; or hunters, whose lives have been passed in the Great West, and who now desire to settle down. Nor would another class of settler be absent. Several of the Missionaries in the Saskatchewan have been in correspondence with persons in Canada who desire to seek a home in this Western land, but who have been advised to remain in their present country until matters have become more settled along the Saskatchewan. The advantages of the localities which I have specified—the junction of the branches of the Saskatchewan River, and the neighbourhood of Edmonton—may be stated as follows :—Junction of North and South branch—a place of great future military and commercial importance, commanding navigation of both rivers—enjoys a climate suitable to the production of *all* cereals and roots, and a soil of unsurpassed fertility—is situated about mid-way between Red River and the Rocky Mountains, and possesses abundant and excellent supplies of timber for building and fuel—is *below* the presumed interruption to steam navigation on Saskatchewan River, known as “Coal Falls,” and is situated on direct cart road from Manitoba to Carlton.

“Edmonton, the centre of the Upper Saskatchewan, also the centre of a large population (half-breed)—country lying between it and Victoria very fertile—is within easy reach of Blackfeet, Cree, and Assiniboine country ; summer frosts often injurious to wheat, but all other crops thrive well, and even wheat is frequently a large and productive crop ; timber for fuel plenty, and for building can be obtained in large quantities 10 miles distant ; coal in large quantities on the bank of the river ; and gold, at from three to ten dollars a day, in sand-bars.

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“Such, sir, are the views which I have formed upon the whole question of the existing state of affairs in the Saskatchewan. They

result from the thought and experience of many long days of travel through a large portion of the region to which they have reference. If I were asked from what point of view I have looked upon this question, I would answer: From that point which sees a vast country lying, as it were, silently awaiting the immense wave of human life which rolls unceasingly from Europe to America. Far off as lie the regions of the Saskatchewan from the Atlantic sea-board, on which that wave is thrown—remote as are the fertile glades which fringe the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains—still that wave of human life is destined to reach those beautiful solitudes, and to convert the wild luxuriance of their now useless vegetation into all the requirements of civilized existence. And if it be matter for desire that across this immense continent, resting upon the two greatest oceans of the world, a powerful nation should arise, with the strength and the manhood which race and climate and tradition should assign to it—a nation which would look with no evil eye upon the old mother land from whence it sprang—a nation which, having no bitter memories to recall, would have no idle prejudices to perpetuate—then surely it is worthy of all toil of hand and brain, on the part of those who to-day rule, that this great link in the chain of such a future nationality should no longer remain undeveloped—a prey to the conflicts of savage races—at once the garden and the wilderness of the central continent.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SENATE COMMITTEE.

IN this chapter, by way of addendum to the information regarding soil and climate, contained in former chapters, we propose to give a condensation of the evidence taken by a committee of the Dominion Senate during the session of 1870. At that period, many settlers and others recently from the North-West, were at Ottawa; the Senate, therefore, with a view of extending popular knowledge on the subject, invited these gentlemen to communicate their views, respecting "the condition, climate, soil, population, resources, and natural products of the country," &c. Availing ourselves, to some extent, of an abstract of the evidence given in the "Year Book and Almanac of Canada for 1871," we transcribe such portions as seem likely to be of value and interest to our readers. The conclusions at which the Committee arrived are embodied in the following clauses of their report:—

2nd. The vast extent of country capable of cultivation, the favorable accounts uniformly given of its agricultural qualities, and the salubrity of the climate, leave no room for doubt on the minds of the Committee that the region north of the *United States* Boundary, west of the Watershed of Lake Superior, and extending north of the northern banks of the Saskatchewan River, is a good wheat and vegetable-producing country.

3rd. The principal drawbacks would seem to be distance from navigation and railway communication, absence of markets for agricultural products, occasional visits from grasshoppers, and the cold of winter. But the testimony of all the witnesses examined upon this latter point tends to establish the fact, that although the thermometer indicates a much lower degree of temperature at Red River, in winter months, than in Ontario, yet the cold in its effects upon individuals, produces scarcely, if at all, more inconvenience in the former than in the latter country.

4th. The Committee are satisfied that if measures are taken at an early date to afford facilities for access through British Territory to the Red River, it will be found to be not only a very desirable home for immigrants, but will materially enhance the prosperity and promote the best interests of this Dominion.

Then follows the evidence:—

*John James Setter*—Is a farmer and school teacher living at Portage La Prairie, and was born at Red River. Has resided there ever since, except three years passed in Minnesota. He had travelled about 110 miles west on the Assiniboine in the territory, and between the Assiniboine and the boundary line seventy or eighty

miles. The country is pretty equally divided between wooded and prairie land. The woods are invariably found on the banks of the streams. They consist of oak, ash, elm and poplar; and he would call large timber there, trees a foot and a half in diameter. There is pine, but not the white pine; and there is white cedar, but no red. The streams have generally muddy bottoms; there is very little rock. These are not generally difficult to cross. The bottoms are soft. The alluvial deposit varies in depth. On the Red River it is about a foot deep, whilst up on the Assiniboine and in the neighbourhood of the Portage it is about three feet in depth, and in some places six. White mud underlies the alluvial deposit in the Portage section, and clay in the Red River. Colour of this clay is lightish. Gophir mounds are very common on the Assiniboine. The belts of timber are wide on the south side of the Assiniboine. That river is from 150 to 200 yards broad where it joins the Red River. Red River is navigable from Winnipeg to Fort Abercrombie, for vessels drawing four feet. Average width of belts of timber is about 4 miles, but does not state this of his own knowledge. Prairies are 12 or 14 miles wide on north side of the Assiniboine. He has a farm of 25 acres under cultivation. Soil alluvial. It was a prairie and virgin soil. Light colour. But it is in some places black. The wild grass on it is the ordinary prairie grass. It grows in the bottoms so tall that you can tie it over a horse's back in riding through it; but the ordinary grass is short. Raises wheat. This weighs 64lbs. to a bushel; but he has seen it weigh 68lbs. This is spring wheat; fall wheat is a failure. Barley, oats, peas, potatoes, turnips, and carrots are also raised. A variety of Indian corn is raised. They generally put crops in from middle of April to middle of May, and harvest in August. They have never had the potato disease, nor the weevil in wheat. He does not think there are any farms on the wooded lands, but the soil in the woods appears to be richer than in the prairie. He spoke of fall wheat not answering on prairie lands, but stated that Canadians were of opinion that it would answer if farms were opened on the timber land.

Water can be found on the Assiniboine at 8 or 10 feet. Water is generally hard. There is abundance of limestone in the lower part of Red River, and in places near the Assiniboine. There are hills or bluffs on the south side of Assiniboine, a beautiful country, as well as on the west of Red River. There is no fuel on the prairie, but on one side of the line there is plenty of timber for fuel and building houses for some time to come. Timber has to be brought five or six miles to the prairies of which he is speaking. Coal has been discovered by Indians, about 40 miles from Portage la Prairie, cropping out on the river banks. They have frosts in September, but not sufficient to blanch the prairie grass. There is a kind of grass which remains green at the bottom all winter. Horned cattle are kept in, in winter; but horses may run out all winter. They feed cattle in the winter. One year he bought a new place, and being short of stabling, he left out some of his cattle, and these were the fattest in the spring. They were



sheltered from winds. Snow is generally a foot and a half deep ; but in places there are drifts. Weather in winter is dry, and there are no sleety storms. Temperature at times  $43^{\circ}$  and  $44^{\circ}$  below zero, but very rarely. Some of his neighbours have left 30 or 40 horses running at large all winter for the last 10 years. They live on prairie grass. When he was in Minnesota it was  $41^{\circ}$  below zero. They can move about in the cold weather with comfort. They have no thaws in winter. Snow begins about the middle or latter part of November. Winter is steady. Spring commences at the end of March or first of April. The roads are sufficient for carriages, and all the smaller streams are bridged. From this place to Fort Garry there is a good road. The average height of the prairie grass is not more than a foot. Mowing machines are used. The prairies are subject to fire ; and it is against the law to set fire to them in the settlement. There are very few French farmers in the settlement. The French generally pursue hunting. The principal farmers are English and Scotch. Ten years ago there were buffalo in the immediate neighbourhood of Assiniboine. Now there are none inside of 300 miles. There are some rabbits, and the birds are ducks, geese, cranes, swans, snipe, a small partridge, prairie chickens and pigeons. The heat at midsummer goes as high as  $90^{\circ}$ . Warm weather commences at the middle of May. Nights are generally cool. Oats do well, and yield 33 lbs. to the bushel. Potatoes do very well, as do also carrots and turnips. Witness said he had not eaten a good potato since he came to Canada. The grasshoppers did not make their appearance till 1857, but he had heard they had been there in the early days of the settlement. Their next appearance was in 1864. They did great hurt. For three times within 14 years they have deposited their eggs. He generally described that they were not troubled with other kinds of insects. They don't raise fruit, but they have wild plums, strawberries, choke cherries, cranberries, gooseberries, wild peas, blueberries, sour grapes, currants, and some other varieties.

They get lumber in the settlement. There is a saw mill at Lake Winnipeg. Lumber is generally cut by hand in saw pits. 100 boards 8 inches wide, cost £2 10s. sterling. They have elm but make no use of it. Fencing is made of poplar. Houses are made of frame work and with logs, roofed with thatch. Of fish, they have white fish, sturgeon of a large size—from 100 to 200 lbs—cat-fish, perch, pike, and gold eyes. Population of Portage La Prairie is about 300. "Natives, some Canadians, but no French." They have three Episcopalian churches. Presbyterians have their services in a private house at present. Witness has about 40 pupils in his school. He had 76 before the grasshoppers came. He teaches the ordinary branches. The settlement is entirely Protestant. There is a higher school belonging to the Protestants, Bishop Machray's, at St. John's, where they teach classics, mathematics and theology. There are no Protestants at St. Boniface. Protestants and Catholics do not mix, as a rule. There is a splendid stone cathedral belonging to the Catholics. He considers Red River a finer country than the State of Minnesota. "It is the best country I have ever seen." The only thing to detract

from its agricultural advantages is, that it is so far from the sea board. They are not troubled by the Indians. There is never now any inter-marriage between the Indians and the whites. Women have frequently 14 children.

*Joseph Monkman*—Lives in St. Peter's Parish, Indian Settlement. Speaks English, Chippewa and Cree. His father, an Englishman; his mother, an Indian of the Cree tribe. Has been as far north as Norway House, at the extremity of Lake Winnipeg. Also up the Saskatchewan to Moose Lake; and to Carlton House on the North branch of that river. Has been along the Qu'Appelle River. Knows the neighbourhood of Rainy Lake and the Lake of the Woods. Has been employed by the H. B. Company; but very little hunting and trapping. Was with Mr. Dawson in 1858. Road between Fort Garry and Lake of the Woods is level generally, with some slight ridges; runs through a fair country, except some swamps. Distance, 90 miles. A railway could be easily constructed. About 15 miles are swampy; but a wooded ridge of a fine character runs through it for a long distance; soil generally sand. Good soil for 30 miles from Fort Garry. He agreed with Mr. Setter regarding the capabilities of the country; he has not over-rated its advantages. There are pines 3 feet in diameter. Red River is navigated to Fort Abercrombie, 290 miles into American territory from St. Peter's Parish. Last year, witness had a crop of wheat so heavy that it could not support itself. Sowed on 22nd April, one bushel yields 35. Has seen one grain of wheat make 55 heads. 65 or 66lbs. per bushel is the average. Barley exceeds that in luxuriance. Has seen a crop off the same land for 25 years; the last much the same as the first. The late frosts do not commonly injure the grain; none has been injured where he lives. Potatoes very fine; has grown them 2lbs. each. Keeps 30 cattle and horses; the latter could winter out. snow reckoned deep at 3 feet. Hemp grows high. Water can be obtained anywhere by digging in the plains. Has seen fine wheat 250 miles north of Red River. Fort Pelly country is full of lakes and brackish water; is excellent for cattle. The frost is no injury to farming. Has seen a pumpkin weighing 23 lbs.; they have also melons of all kinds.

*Rev. Mr. Fletcher*—Born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland; went to Portage La Prairie in 1868 from Ontario. Had been in Canada over twenty years, and is a minister of the Canada Presbyterian Church. He has been over a great deal of the Red River country from Portage to the Assiniboine to Fort Garry, and from Fort Garry to Stone Fort on Red River. There are 150 Presbyterian families in his district. He should estimate the population at about 12,000 in the districts with which he is acquainted. From Lake Winnipeg to Fort Garry the people are almost entirely Protestant on both sides of the river. The Protestant churches mix a great deal. There are 10 or 12 of the Church of England, 4 of Presbyterians and 3 other places of meeting in private houses; 5 or 6 Wesleyan Methodist places of meeting. He believed the Catholics

and Protestants in the settlement were about equal in numbers. Many of the Roman Catholic churches are built at considerable cost, of stone, which is obtained in abundance below Fort Garry. He should think the cold averaged 30° below zero. The range is more equal than in Canada, and, owing to the dryness of the climate, persons feel the cold less than they do in Canada. He has known it as cold as 40° below zero. On the Assiniboine, seed time began last year on April 16th, and cattle fed then on the wild grass just outside the fences. The wild grass seemed to be refreshed with the winter's snow, and cattle ate it greedily. They prefer it to hay. They had not ploughed before the 16th of April, and then there was some frost in the ground. There has been no potato disease. He has seen as excellent vegetables as he ever saw in Canada. On an acre of cabbage not a head wanting, and each ten inches. Indian corn might not be a safe crop, but some early varieties, such as the Early Yellow, would ripen. Wheat is harvested fully as early as in Canada West. Usual time of harvest is August. He would say the yield of wheat was 30 to 36 bushels per acre. His opinion was that all the cereals did not give less than 20 returns to the bushel down. Grasshoppers were again feared. The weevil and midge are not in the country. He has seen heads of grain growing 5 inches long without a single grain missing. The club wheat he has seen grown is longer than any he has seen in Canada. There is smut in the grain. They prefer their own flour to American. There is a good deal of drinking. Liquor comes chiefly from the States, although some whiskey is made in the settlement. Indians drink when they can get liquor. Traffic in furs has been virtually free for years. As compared with Canada as a home for immigrants, there are some things which cannot be procured, but the country is favourable for farming, and a living can be got at far less cost of labour. The prairie grass returns where the sod has been broken by the plough. The land is very easily drained. Most of the schools are under the control of the Church of England, but worship is everywhere free. He can travel on wheels anywhere in the country. There is no fever or ague, and those who had it on coming to the country, have found it leave them. There are more French than English half-breeds.

*Mr. Donald Codd*—Is a draughtsman. Was born in England. Resides in Ottawa. Went to Red River in June, 1869. He was employed by Mr. Snow and Colonel Dennis. Country between Oak Point and Fort Garry is excellent land. It is all prairie, with clumps of trees—small oak and poplar chiefly. He found the winters very much like the winters at Ottawa, only there were no decided thaws. In summer he remembers the thermometer 92° and 93° in the shade in August, and that was considered a hot summer. The nights were cool, never sultry. They generally burnt poplar for fuel. The hotel-keeper told him he paid 3s. for a small cart-load.

*James Lynch*—Was born at Niagara, but went to settle at Red River in June last. Is a doctor, but went to Red River with the intention of farming. Went about the country looking for a suitable

place to settle, and finally selected a small settlement up the White Mud River, about 8 miles from the mouth. He settled on the shores of Lake Manitoba, in the vicinity of White Mud River. To get his farm he just staked it out of the prairie and declared it his. He staked out a block of 600 acres, and nobody molested him or complained. It was the custom of the country. There were two clumps of trees on it—oak principally, covering 50 acres of ground. The prairie burns every fall. Indians had not complained of his taking his claim, but they should be settled with by the Government for their rights. Indians had committed no hostile acts, except killing a few cattle. There are capital fish in Manitoba Lake. Climate resembles that of Canada, except that in summer the nights are cool, and weather never sultry. It is a good country for settlement; exceedingly healthy; just such a country as he would like to make his home in. The wheat crop is excellent. He does not know anything about frosts doing any harm in summer. First frost of any severity is in September. They make fences with poplar poles. Fuel question may shortly be a difficulty. From 50 to 100 Canadians settled in the territory last summer. Many took up lots just as he did. Saw a great many ducks in the country, and there are a good many elk by the Assiniboine. There are plenty of prairie hens, which are larger than the Western—a cross between the quail and the partridge. The water of the rivers is wholesome, but that of the lakes contains a good deal of sediment. The horses are poor. The cattle are large and very fine. He sees no obstacles to the settlement of Red River that may not be surmounted. Timber may be grown for fuel. If these troubles are settled, I intend going back, and will invite my friends to accompany me. I went to the Red River Territory with the intention of becoming a settler. From what I saw of it I considered it a desirable place of residence, and favourable to the occupation I designed to follow, that of stock-breeding and farming. I saw the country with the eyes of a practical farmer—of a Canadian who had travelled considerably over this continent, and visited other of the colonies. I saw it during an exceptionally unfavorable summer and autumn, and an unusually severe winter. I had ample opportunities of observing those peculiarities which must strike every stranger visiting the country for the first time, and I unhesitatingly give it as my sincerest conviction that as regards climate, judging from what is prominently noticeable in the general good health and fine physique of the natives, and from my own personal experience, it even possesses many advantages over Canada. The fertility and inexhaustible nature of the soil are superior to that of any other part of the world.

*Arthur Hamilton*—Was born in New Brunswick, but lived the greater part of his life in Hamilton. Went to Red River in June, 1869. Is a land surveyor, and was engaged in making surveys and overseeing works on road between Oak Point and Lake of the Woods. He explored fifty-five miles. That section of the country is all timbered, gravelly, sandy ridges, and some swamps. The soil is much better than it is about Ottawa. There is a good deal of lime in the

earth. It is not, however, to be compared to prairie soil. He found the summer pleasant, the winter, cold and clear. He saw some frost in the woods in September, but he was told that the frosts are earlier in the woods and swamps than in the open prairie. He was favorably impressed with the half-breeds. They are willing, good workers. The climate and country are magnificent.

*Major Boulton*—Is a native of Ontario. Went to Red River in August, 1869. Was engaged in Colonel Dennis' survey. After leaving Pembina they enter a prairie country. As they got near Assiniboine they saw clumps of woods. The principal part of the land, from the boundary line to Assiniboine, is fit for settlement. Distance is about sixty-four miles. About Stinking River the country is really beautiful. Rose trees and strawberries grow in luxuriance on the higher parts of the prairie to which he has referred. The grass is very nutritious, and during winter horses scrape the snow away to get it. He saw the first well to the north on a stock farm. It supplied 250 to 300 head of cattle. This well was twenty-five feet deep. As he went north he found the country more wooded and stony. There are no stones on the prairie. He had not seen fruit trees on the prairie, but one or two gentlemen had lately put out apple trees, and they appeared to be doing well. The production in the harvest fields on the banks of the river was certainly wonderful last summer. But the grasshoppers have done much harm, and the blackbirds are injurious. The crop was large—sufficient to last the settlement for two years. The yield is far superior to that of Upper Canada. The grasshoppers have done damage for the last six or seven years, more or less. The houses are generally made of oak logs. The town of Winnipeg consists of about forty houses. They farm back about twenty acres altogether. They have no rear line. From the parts of the country he has seen it compares favorably with Ontario. Sheep and pigs both flourish in the country. Sometimes there is a superfluity of the latter, and people have had to drown them in the river, for there is only a limited market for surplus production. The Indians expect to make a treaty and get provisions, blankets, etc., for their land. But they don't expect to get anything for the settled parts of Red River. It is necessary to pay attention to the claims of the Indians to prevent disputes arising hereafter. He intends to go back when the troubles are settled. He would not recommend men to go there to settle with insufficient means. If they go in September it will be a year before they get anything off their farms. The best time to leave this country would be the latter part of July. Five men with \$200 each could leave here and buy two horses and a waggon at St. Paul's, and arrive at Fort Garry in a little over three weeks, with their horses and their waggons still their own. There is no necessity for a guide over the prairie.

*Dr. John Schultz*—Is a doctor of medicine, and has resided at Fort Garry for nearly ten years. He was born in Canada, and formerly resided in Essex County. He has practiced medicine, and been engaged in fur trading. He has been all through the country between Red River and Lake of the Woods, and he has been some



70 miles on the Assiniboine. Estimates the population of Red River at 12,000, including Indians and half-breeds living in houses. Four-tenths are French, and the remainder English, Scotch, and a very few Irish. There was a census taken before he went there, giving the population at 8,000. The winter is colder than Ontario, but with the same clothes that he wore in Essex, he suffered less from the cold. The cold and snow are very dry. The average depth of the snow is 18 inches. He has known the thermometer fall as low as  $-45^{\circ}$ . Snow generally begins to fall on the 10th of November. Spring opens about Easter Day. Ploughing is all done in the spring. There is not much seed put in before the 22nd or 23rd of April. The heat of the summer is not extreme. July is the hottest month. They have not much wet weather. He has noticed small patches of alkali deposits on the prairies. They occur in the neighbourhood of Lake Manitobah. The cattle go and lick them up. He has never seen any country superior for settlement, and he has been in Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota and Illinois. The alluvial soil is over a foot in depth. There is below it a sort of clay mixed with sand, called white mud. The White Mud River, so named from the character of the soil, is one of the best districts for agricultural purposes. He has seen coal brought from the upperpart of the Assiniboine, which appeared to burn well. As you go further from the rivers you meet with the buffalo grass, which is not so long, but more nutritious than the ordinary herbage. The average yield of grain in this country is greater than in Canada. Last year the yield of wheat in some parts was 40 bushels to the acre. The average is not much over 30. It weighs over 60 lbs. to the bushel. Oats are 32 lbs. to the bushel. Barley turns out equally well. Vegetables, and especially potatoes, yield very well. In the town the price of five-eighths of an ordinary Canadian cord of wood would be \$1. Hay is 5s. a cart load. Cattle come in about Christmas, and are turned out early. Has two houses of brick, and two of wood. He lives in a wood house. There is white pine near the Lake of the Woods. He found the Indians as he came to Canada *via* Fort Alexander and Lake of the Woods well disposed. He would recommend emigrants to go to this country to settle, in preference to Canada. The country is healthy. There is an absence of fevers and epidemics. The emigrant should take agricultural implements with him. A man with from £50 to £100 stg. would have no difficulty in making a satisfactory living. Fish are very abundant. Lake trout and white fish can be caught in winter. There is a demand for labour in the harvest season, but as a rule every man does his own work. There are mowing and reaping machines in the country. It is his intention to return to the country.

*Charles Garrett*—Has lived for upwards of eleven years at Red River. Previously resided in the neighbourhood of Toronto and Lake Simcoe. Has been living at a place called Sturgeon Creek, on the Assiniboine, seven miles north of the town of Winnipeg, where he has farmed for the last eight years. Receding from the river the soil

is good—a mixture of mould and clay without a boulder. Ploughs that go through it are hard to clean. Has been to Lake Manitobah and seen the salt licks, which are four or five acres as a rule. Timothy grows well, but the dry springs are against the growth of clover. Has seen clover stand for years. The wheat crops are not injured by cold winds or by mildew. Has seen the harvest as early as the first week in August. Frost takes possession of the ground about the 15th of October, and farming commences again on the 15th of April. The grass is very rank, and cattle eat the grass as soon as the snow is off the ground, on April 1st. Has learnt from persons beyond Portage La Prairie and north of the Saskatchewan; that the country west of Portage La Prairie to Fort Ellice, and up to the Qu' Appelle, is admirable for agricultural purposes; in fact it has always been considered the finest portion of the country. Raises wheat; gets 22 to 25 bushels return for one sown. Oats are a safe crop, and yield 55 bushels to the acre. Thinks the country favorable for immigrants. Never knew one more favorable for farming. Has heard it stated that by the Mackenzie River, in the more distant North-West, the spring is a fortnight earlier than with them, and that it is the finest part of the country for settlement. Has seen coal from the upper part of the Assiniboine, three days' journey, or 80 or 90 miles from Portage La Prairie. House building is about twice as dear in Red River as in Canada. Timber is more expensive, and nails are 20 cents a pound. Lumber is \$40 a thousand, lime is 18 cents a bushel, and labor in proportion. Shingles are \$4 per M. Stoves are chiefly imported from Canada and dear. Paid £14 sterling for one which he could have bought for \$50 or \$55 in Ontario. Boots, shoes and woollen goods, come from Canada in bond. Rate of carriage from St. Cloud is 16s. a cwt. to the settlement. At Winnipeg a tax of 4 per cent. is levied on all goods. Tavern keepers' license is £10 sterling per annum. An emigrant should buy a waggon and horses at St. Paul's, to transport himself and family, and his plough and agricultural implements that he must take with him. A light steel plough is the best for the soil. It might be better to take oxen, as they are always worth their price. Best time to go is latter part of May and month of October. It would take a team about twenty days from St. Cloud. By going in May he can build a house and plough the ground ready for spring. They do not plough deep. Carpenters are in demand. They have been getting 10s. a day. Plasterers the same. For stone masons there is no demand. Immigration has been increasing since he went there. The educational facilities are good. He should think the 12,000 population in the Red River country might be divided into one-third French, and two-thirds English speaking.

*Charles Mair*—Is a native of Lanark, Canada. Went to Red River two years ago, as paymaster on the Fort Garry section of the Red River road. Is familiar with the country from a point 60 miles east of Fort Garry to 120 or 130 miles west. Has crossed the Assiniboine at two different points—one 130 miles west from Fort Garry—and knows the country between that river and Pembina and

St. Joseph—half-breed settlements on the frontier. It is a beautiful rolling country and well timbered. Receding from the rivers the country is rich. There is wood enough for ordinary purposes. One-tenth of the land is covered with wood, though it is small. The country is not well watered. There are not many lakes or streams. But they could always get water by travelling for it. Waggons could be taken over every part of it. There are plenty of birds. All the Canadian kinds, beside the magpie, which is very common. There is a species of small hare in the country. There are geese, including the white Arctic goose. Has seen all the aquatic and land birds, except woodcock and quail. There are squirrels, but they are smaller than in Canada. Has been over the country between Manitobah Lake and the Assiniboine. It is a fine country. Has taken up handfuls of vegetable loam at a depth of 6 feet on the prairies. Has seen coal deposits. It is used at Fort Edmonton and Fort Garry in the forges; it appeared friable when I looked at it, from exposure. The deposits have been on fire several times. It is considered good coal. It is brought from the Souris River, 180 miles west. The Assiniboine is navigable as far as Portage La Prairie by steamboat. But it is shallow and its bed is sandy and shifting. It might be dredged. He has known as many as 65 or 70 bushels of wheat grown to the acre; the average yield, I have heard, placed at 40. I may say that a farmer going from Canada to Red River, considers he has found a better country than he has left. On the other hand, a Red River farmer is disappointed with the soil of the Western States; he considers it thinner and poorer. Has known wheat grow on the same soil forty years and succeed. The farmers never use manure. Fish are plentiful. He did not find the cold affect him so much as in Canada. He intends to return to the country. There would be no difficulty in opening a railway from Fort Garry to St. Paul's. The country is admirably adapted for sheep. There is no danger from wolves or other wild animals.

## SECOND PART.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE ROUTE.

From the last Report of Mr. Dawson—that of 1869—on the line of route between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement, we make the following extracts, which give so practical a view of that which has not improperly been termed the “grand difficulty” to our immediate colonization of the North West Territories. As the best introduction to the subject is given in Mr. Dawson’s letter, to the Minister of Public Works, it is here copied in full.

“OTTAWA, 1st May, 1869.

“I have the honour to submit to your notice a report on the subject of opening the communication between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement.

“The country to be traversed is rocky and mountainous on the borders of Lake Superior; but, at a short distance in the interior, a high plateau is attained, where the waters of the St. Lawrence and the Winnipeg have their common source. The lowest pass in this elevated region is 839 feet above the level of Lake Superior, or 1,479 feet higher than the surface of the sea. Proceeding to the westward, the descent, by the water courses, is very gradual, amounting only to 450 feet in a distance of some three hundred miles. The country, nevertheless, continues rocky and mountainous as far as Fort Frances, where the eastern border of the great Silurian belt, which underlies the flat region to the west, is reached, and from thence to the Lake of the Woods, the country is comparatively level and the navigation uninterrupted.

“In the region between the high plateau of the water shed and Fort Frances, the valleys between the mountain ranges are occupied by deep lakes, and those, on one of the routes which have been followed, occur in such close succession, and are otherwise, so advantageously situated in relation to each other, as to afford an easy means of obtaining continuous navigation, at a moderate outlay, and this, too in a region where rock, mountain and water are so commingled as to render it exceedingly difficult to establish lines of land transport.

“The scheme of opening the communication proposed in the following and in previous reports, has for its *ultimate object* a railroad from Lake Superior to the navigable waters of the interior; navigation rendered continuous, by means of lock and dam, from its terminus to

the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods, and a railroad from the latter point to Fort Garry.

"The railroad at Lake Superior would be forty miles in length. The navigation commencing at its terminus, would cover a distance of three hundred and eleven miles, and would be connected at its western extremity by a railroad of ninety miles with Fort Garry.

"Some years must elapse in carrying such extensive works to completion. In the meantime it is proposed to open the communication as speedily as possible, by good waggon roads connecting the navigable waters of the central section with Lake Superior at the one end, and with Fort Garry at the other. And, at the same time, to lessen the number of transshipments, in the region of the Lakes, by such preliminary works as could be rapidly carried out.

"By adopting a progressive system of this sort, a first-class communication would be attained as quickly as by any plan that can be adopted.

"The first preliminary works would attract the trade of the North-West Territories to Lake Superior, and their enlargement and extension might be proceeded with as fast as possible, or as the means of the country would permit, always going on with those which were most wanted, and would in turn produce the greatest effect, until the whole were completed.

"Good waggon roads at either end of the navigable section, combined with a little improvement in the region of the Lakes, would at once give to the people of the Red River Settlement a better means of obtaining their supplies than that which they now possess, and would, at the same time, afford to immigrants the means of reaching the Prairies of the West.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed),

S. J. DAWSON."

Hon. William McDougall, C.B.

The foregoing not only explains the purpose of the preliminary means of communication, now completed, but also leaves the ultimate object sufficiently clear; we may therefore, before giving his arguments in favor of the route by Lake Shebandowan, incorporate, somewhat as a ground work for them, his description of the country between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement:—

"Between Lake Superior and Rainy Lake, the face of the country, as a general rule, is rugged and cut up with Lakes. The summit of the water-shed or dividing ridge, is quite near Lake Superior, being forty-five miles distant at Pigeon River, and measuring in a direct North-East course to the sources of the Kaministiquia, about seventy at the bottom of Thunder Bay. The passes in the dividing region vary in height from 840 feet to 1,100 feet above the level of Lake Superior—that is by following the water courses, but the great elevation of the country is considerably higher. As may be supposed, the streams running down from such a height, in so short a distance, have a very



rapid course, and as a consequence, could only be rendered navigable at an expenditure which, whatever the future may require, is quite out of the question for the present.

"Proceeding from the head of the water-shed to the Westward, the descent is much more gradual, the difference of level between Lac des Mille Lacs, which is close to the summit, and the Western extremity of the Lake of the Woods, being only 450 feet in a distance of 300 miles. Between the height of land and Rainy Lake, the Lakes are so numerous and so large, that it would be difficult to say whether land or water predominates. The Lakes, however, afford the means of making a very good water communication, at a moderate outlay.

"From Fort Frances, at the foot of Rainy Lake, to the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods, the navigation is uninterrupted, save by two large rapids, easily overcome. From the Lake of the Woods westward to Fort Garry, the country is low and level, but although swamp, quite practicable for a road by a line which has been explored and on which a good deal of work has been already done in the western section.

"There is thus, between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement, a country presenting very different characteristics in different sections. First, a rugged and broken region, extending from Lake Superior to the summit of the watershed, in which the rivers are not navigable, and the ground is difficult for roads.

"Next, a country extending westward from the watershed, still very rough and broken, but intersected in every direction by deep lakes which occupy a very considerable portion of its area, and which, on one of the lines explored, can be easily connected so as to render the navigation through it uninterrupted.

"This section ends at Fort Frances, where there is a complete and sudden change in the character of the country, and from this point the navigation becomes continuous to the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods.

"From the latter point to Fort Garry, the distance is 90 miles overground, which the explorations have proved to be practicable for a road.

"The entire distance between Fort William and Fort Garry, by the route which it is proposed to open, is 441 miles, as follows :—

"From Lake Superior to the navigable waters of the Summit region .....	40 miles.
From the terminus of the Lake Superior road to the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods .....	311 miles.
North-west angle to Fort Garry .....	90 miles.

441 miles."

Such being the nature of the tract through which the road must pass, we can, by referring to the map, the more easily understand the arguments of Mr. Dawson in favour of the Lake Shebandowan Route, which are as follows :—

"My report of last year contained a brief description of the

country between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement, with an estimate of the cost of opening the communication in such a manner as I believed would involve the least possible outlay, while it would, at the same time, have the effect of attracting the trade of the North-West Territories to Canada, and serve as a preliminary step to works of a more comprehensive character in the future.

"I have now the honour to report on the operations of last summer, undertaken and carried on under the direction of the Department of Public Works, with the view of ascertaining whether an improvement might not be made in the eastern section of the route, by deviating from the projected Dog Lake road, and adopting the West instead of the North branch of the Kaministiquia, as the basis of a line which should embrace all the navigable water which could be rendered available.

"It was known, from the reports of the Red River expedition, that a series of large lakes existed at the source of this branch, and it appeared probable that the navigable water which they afforded might admit of being utilized as a link in the line of communication; and as their value in this respect depended, in the first place, on their level relative to each other, and to the lakes on the opposite side of the water-shed, and, in the next, on the practicability of rendering them accessible from Lake Superior, the first step taken was to determine the levels, and the next to look for ground practicable for a road through the broken and mountainous region which lies between them and Thunder Bay.

\* \* \* \* \*

"On referring to the map it will be seen that at the head of the Matawin, or west branch of the Kaministiquia, there are two large lakes, named respectively Shebandowan and Kashabowiwe. These are on the eastern slope, and immediately opposite to them, on the west side, is the large basin of Lac des Mille Lacs, which sends its waters to Rainy Lake.

"The distance between Kashabowiwe Lake and Lac des Mille Lacs is one mile and sixty chains, including an intervening lakelet or pond. This pond is distant from Lac des Mille Lacs 50 chains, and on a higher level by 14 13-100 feet. Between the two, runs a gully, the highest point in which is 25 feet over the level of Lac des Mille Lacs and 10 87-100 feet higher than the pond. This is the lowest pass existing between the waters flowing westward to Rainy Lake and those running eastward to Lake Superior,—that is, between the boundary line and Nipigon Bay.

"The pond just referred to is the source of the Matawin, and it sends its waters by a small rivulet, making a descent of 4 90-100 feet in a distance of 9 chains, to Kashabowiwe Lake, which latter is 9 14-100 feet above the level of Lac des Mille Lacs. The stream by which Kashabowiwe Lake discharges its waters is of considerable volume, and descends 29 33-100 feet in its course of 70 chains to Shebandowan Lake, making the latter 20 19-100 feet below the level of Lac des Mille Lacs.

"Forty miles westward of the pass above referred to, that is, by way of the Baril and Windegoostegon Lakes, the water level at the head of the French Portage is 55 feet below that of Lac des Mille Lacs.

"Such differences of level are not very formidable, and might in this case be easily overcome, as will be explained further on. In the meantime, I may remark, that these lakes differ so little in level as to afford the means of obtaining, at a moderate outlay, 70 miles of unbroken navigation, through the high region which separates the two great river systems of the Winnipeg and St. Lawrence, and that, not by narrow and tortuous channels, but through lakes affording ample room for navigation."

"This navigable section might be extended and rendered continuous to the Westward, by means of lock and dam. Its Eastern extremity would be within forty miles of the Depot at Thunder Bay, with which point it can be connected by a land road for the present, and a railroad in the future. The pass, as stated, is the lowest which can exist on the British side, as determined by the explorations, and yet these waters are at an elevation of 839 feet over the level of Lake Superior, or 1,479 feet higher than the surface of the sea.

"It is a matter of no small importance to have such an extent of navigation in the highest part of the route to Red River, and in a region very difficult for roads.

"In regard to the country intervening between these waters and Thunder Bay, it is rough and mountainous; but, with the aid of the Indians, who have their hunting grounds in that region, after a good deal of exploration, a line practicable for a road was discovered."

Now, passing over his evidence regarding the three different routes, we give his decision, which, in itself, embodies all the prominent points. He says:—

"In view, therefore, of all the circumstances the line which has been adopted as the best is that already referred to as leaving the Dog Lake line at the eighth mile, striking from thence to the mouth of the Mattawin and following the valley of that river to the Shebandowan Lake, or rather to the first chute below it, where it is proposed to construct a dam.

"In further reference to the waters of the summit region, Shebandowan Lake on the Eastern side of the water-shed, and Lac des Mille Lacs on the West, are both fed by the drainage of areas sufficiently extensive to afford a supply for a canal, but Kashaboiwe Lake, which intervenes between them, is on a higher level, being 94-100 feet over Lac des Mille Lacs and 2933-100 above Shebandowan Lake, and it is doubtful if it could afford a supply for a canal both ways.

"It is quite practicable, however, to bring either Lac des Mille Lacs or Shebandowan Lake, or both of them, to the level of Kashaboiwe Lake, but there would be an evident advantage in

raising Shebandowan Lake and making it the summit level and source of supply, as a considerable amount of lockage would thereby be saved and the road from Lake Superior would at once strike the highest water level on the whole route. If, on the other hand, Lac des Mille Lacs were raised to the level of Kashaboiwe Lake and made the source of supply, there would be an ascent of 30 feet from Shebandowan Lake, which would have to be overcome by locks. It is possible, as stated, to raise both Shebandowan Lake and Lac des Mille Lacs to the level of Kashaboiwe Lake, and if this were done, and a cut made through the dividing ridge, there would be a canal without locks extending across the summit of the water-shed.

"The raising of Lac des Mille Lacs, however, would not eventually save lockage, and although the level is in its favour, as compared to Shebandowan Lake, it is doubtful if it could be more economically brought to the necessary height. On some parts of its western coast the country is low, and the height and nature of the dividing ground between its waters and the streams running off from its borders, on that side, would require to be ascertained before attempting to raise it beyond the extent of three or four feet, which, in any case, will be necessary, in order to give a sufficiency of water in the direction of Baril Lake and the French Portage, and so small a difference would be unattended with any risk of sending the water in other directions.

"As regards Shebandowan Lake, the country around it is moderately high, and it receives the drainage of a considerable area on either side, so that, in all probability, its surface could be raised to the necessary level by damming its present outlet only.

"It will occur, however, that Kashaboiwe Lake, which is already on the highest level, might be so arranged as to afford a supply of water for a canal both ways. It has a surface area of about eight square miles, and it receives the drainage of a considerable tract on both sides, besides which there are lakes on its tributary streams, which could be converted into reservoirs to afford a supply in periods of extreme drought. But, even if the supply were so ample as to preclude all doubt as to its sufficiency, there would be nothing gained by adopting Kashaboiwe Lake, for both Lac des Mille Lacs and Shebandowan can be raised to its level at less outlay than would be involved in connecting the latter with it by means of locks.

"A dam which should raise the surface level of Shebandowan Lake to the extent of 30 feet over what it is at present, would be equivalent to 30 feet of lockage and would be far less costly.

"In respect to the Summit Pond, it may be regarded, to all practical purposes, as a part of Kashaboiwe Lake, for it can, at small outlay, be reduced to the same level and still have a sufficient depth of water.

"The dividing ridge is, as stated, 50 chains in width and 25 feet over Lac des Mille Lacs at its highest part; through the ridge runs a gully which, apparently, is filled with boulders and fragments of rock, and it could be easily excavated to a sufficient depth.

"Such, in a brief view, is the route by the Matawin or West branch

of the Kaministaquia. As compared to the Dog Lake route its principal advantages are, first, that the navigable waters of the summit plateau can be reached in an unbroken line of road from Lake Superior; whereas, by the Dog Lake line, the land carriage would be in two sections, one of 25 miles from Lake Superior to Dog Lake, and another of ten or twelve miles across the Height of Land.

"In the next place, the navigation of the upper waters of Dog River and the Savanne would be tedious, on account of the narrowness and tortuosity of the channels, whereas, by the Western route, once the Lakes were attained, there would be ample room for navigation; and, lastly, by adopting the Shebandowan line, a saving in distance of about twenty miles will be effected, as will at once appear on reference to the plan.

"Both routes are practicable, and the Dog Lake line would be attended with the least outlay in the first instance, but would be more expensive to keep in operation, on account of the difficulties of navigation, the additional transshipment, and the long land carriage, in such an isolated situation as the height of land on that route.

"By adopting the west, instead of the north branch of the Kaministaquia, there will be no change in the starting point, and as the divergence occurs beyond the point to which the work on Dog Lake road has, as yet, reached, the outlays so far made, on that line will not be lost, and some timber prepared for a dam at Dog Lake can be floated down and used in the construction of a bridge over the Kaministaquia.

"Apart from the deviation proposed in the Eastern section, as above set forth, I believe the scheme suggested in my report of last year, embodies the principle which should be adopted in opening the communication, as a first step towards works of a more extensive character, in the future. I would remark, however, that the information which has been obtained since that report was written, as to the traffic likely to arise, would seem to warrant additional expenditure over what was then proposed, so as to diminish the number of transshipments, and this can be done without greatly increasing the outlay.

Without incorporating the very lengthy and able description of the work to be done, and the manner of doing it on the "preliminary line of communication," we may give a brief summary of the estimated outlay. The amount required on the three sections is as follows:—Lake Superior Section, \$80,000; Lake Region Section, \$79,900; Fort Garry Section, \$87,000; in all, \$247,000, or say, in round numbers, \$250,000. These preliminary works, which are now almost completed, are to be of a permanent and substantial character, and will form a strip in the general plan. Their only object is, of course, to render accessible the tract of navigable water which "is cut off from Lake Superior on one side by a formidable barrier of mountain and rock, and from Red River Settlement by a region of quagmire and swamp." This provisional undertaking need only be mentioned now, because it is the basis of the combined system of railroad and canal

which Mr. Dawson proposes as an ultimate result. We cannot afford space for the lengthy discussion regarding the water communication ; but the results will be found below. There would be two railroads,

“One of about 40 miles between Lake Superior and Shebandowan Lake, and one of 90 miles between the North-west angle of the Lake of the Woods and Fort Garry. The former will be over very rough ground, with difficult grades, and its least average cost may be set at that of the general cost of railroads in this country, say \$40,000 per miles, making its entire probable cost \$1,600,000. In regard to the line between the Lake of the Woods and Fort Garry, it will pass over very level ground, and its cost may be safely set at \$30,000 per mile, equal to \$2,700,000 for the entire distance of ninety miles. The two Railways at either end of the navigation would thus involve an outlay of \$4,300,000.

#### TOTAL COST.

40 miles Railroad, Lake Superior to navigable water of interior.....	\$1,600,000
311 miles of continuous navigation, improved by locks and dams.....	1,500,000
90 miles Railroad, North-West angle Lake of the Woods to Fort Garry.....	2,700,000
Total.....	\$5,800,000

#### COST OF TRANSPORT.

Supposing a scheme of railroad and canal, as above indicated, to be carried out between Lake Superior and Red River Settlement, the transport of heavy freight, according to McAlpine's scale, which is generally adopted, would be nearly as follows, from Toronto to Fort Garry ;—

94 miles railroad, Toronto to Collingwood, at $12\frac{1}{2}$ mills a ton per mile.....	\$1 18
534 miles by lakes, from Collingwood to Fort William, at 2 mills per ton a mile.....	1 07
40 miles by rail from Fort William to navigable waters of interior section, at 14 mills per ton a mile.....	0 68
311 miles lake and river navigation, from terminus of Lake Superior Railroad to north-west angle Lake of the Woods, at 4 mills per ton a mile.....	1 25
90 miles rail, north-west angle to Fort Garry, at 12 mills per ton a mile.....	1 35
1069 miles.	Total cost..... \$5 53

“The distance from Toronto to Fort Garry, by way of Detroit, Chicago and St. Paul, is 1572 miles, and supposing the railway communication to be complete, the cost per ton, reckoned at  $12\frac{1}{2}$  mills



per mile, would be \$19 65. Nothing could show more clearly the vast superiority of the Canadian line in point of natural advantages."

In the foregoing extracts there will be found sufficient, from the very full and explicit arguments of Mr. Dawson in favor of the route proposed between Thunder Bay and Red River, to convince our readers of its advantages over that through the State of Minnesota, which has latterly received so much attention. In the report, every question that could arise appears to have been anticipated, and this in so clear and lucid a manner, as to render almost unnecessary the slightest comment. For not only the best means of opening communication, both for the present and the future, are given, but the cost of doing so is as reasonably stated as figures can be, when comparisons are the basis of the calculation. And lastly, we have the presumable advantages so moderately estimated, and still so greatly in favor of the Canadian route, that it appears more than strange how the opinion has been entertained that the North-West traffic must reach the market through the United States. That this wrong impression—and that it is a wrong one the following report of Mr. Dawson will still more conclusively prove—has gained a very decided hold upon some who deem themselves authorities on this subject there is no doubt; and this in direct opposition to facts which are indisputable. That the American Press, and more especially the western portion of it, should labor to establish such an impression, we are not surprised, when we consider the magnitude of the trade anticipated; but when we see that editors in the Eastern Provinces of the Dominion both publicly and privately advance similar views, a different reason must be found. Nor is it only in those places, but even in England the same opinion appears to have become, in a measure, established, when we read in such a high authority as the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "that the Red River is practically inaccessible from Canada;" and "that—ignoring speculative patriotism—the natural lines must prevail; Minnesota will always be close to Red River, Canada far from it." True to the letter this writer is, for Minnesota bounds the Red River Territory, and Canada is some several hundreds of miles from it; but it is not true in the way in which he wishes it to be understood, though he does claim that his is "practical speculation" as opposed to the "enthusiasm that will see no difficulty."

Now, as to this gentleman, we will suggest on the strength of several quotations contained in the very able article referred to, that the writer had been lately consulting some work published in favor of the H. B. Company's former policy; and necessarily while we must excuse him for his assertion on the ground of "authority," we, at the same time, earnestly desire that before he attempts to write on Red River affairs, he will (if he wishes his opinion respected), consult some authority opposed to the former policy of the H. B. Company. For by doing so he will in the first place see, that the presumption heretofore existing, "that the North West or Red River Country was somewhere beyond the United States, within latitude and longitude both uncertain, and that the only means of communication with it

"was through the United States or Hudson Bay," was an impression established at some considerable cost and trouble by the H. B. Company, for the express purpose of keeping both Canada and Great Britain ignorant of the richness and vastness of their domain. In the second place, by consulting some truthful authority, he would also ascertain the fact that prior to the amalgamation of the North-West and H. B. Companies, some fifty years ago, the journey was made between Fort William and Fort Garry, a distance by the old route of about five hundred miles in about ten days, and this with the boats heavily laden. Taking these facts together with the statements of Mr. Dawson, it is presumable that even he, though not at all "enthusiastic," would admit that what could be done in that primitive manner when a road was unknown in ten days, could be done now in half the time at the very least. Is it necessary, when we consider the continuous water communications to within ninety miles of Fort Garry, (direct from England, if you please), to inquire whether these means of transit will not be cheaper for the products of the North-West, than about eight hundred miles of railway freight through Minnesota? Always remembering in making this calculation, that land transport will never compete with water carriage, there being at least one third reduction in favour of the latter.

As to the sectional opposition of some members of the Eastern Provinces, we find its cause in their fear of Ontario claiming the principal portion of the trade, to the detriment of the older Provinces generally, and the city of Montreal in particular. This, they think, would become a certainty so soon as cheap and quick communication between the two Forts is established. Arguing from the same sectional basis, they urge that, in the Lower Provinces, Ontario and around the shores of Lake Superior, we have still a great amount of unoccupied land fit for cultivation, without at once in "hot haste" going to the Red River. In zeal for their own particular section, they lose sight entirely of the fact that, if the Fertile Belt is not occupied by the British and Canadians, it will be by the Americans. As such thinkers, however, are in a slight minority, their futile opposition is only alluded to to show its cause, which, once known, will render unnecessary any argument to dispose of it.

Though we have not here alluded to the proposed railway from Ottawa to Fort Garry along the height of land north of Lake Superior, neither its importance nor political necessity has been lost sight of or attempted to be ignored; but, as a complete survey of it has not as yet been made, in comparison with the Fort William road, it may be looked upon as rather of the "great future" than the "requiring present."

That such a railway, however, will be built, there appears little doubt, but with it we are not so particularly interested at the present as with that from Thunder Bay, which, even after the railway to the north or the south of it is finished, must always remain the best and cheapest route for commercial purposes. Railways never can supersede water communication, as the St. Lawrence sufficiently proves, as it bears, to tide water in the spring, what has accumulated at its hundreds of inland ports during the winter.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE BRITISH PACIFIC RAILWAY.

The stipulations insisted upon by British Columbia, as a basis of union with the Dominion, have definitively settled the question of an inter-oceanic Railway through British territory. It has been agreed that this vast undertaking shall be commenced, at both ends, within two years; and be completed within ten years after the admission of the Pacific Province. The scheme, as originally laid before the House of Commons by Sir G. E. Cartier, pledged the Dominion to construct the road, upon its own responsibility. It is evident, however, that this would involve an outlay far beyond the resources of the Dominion. Hon. D. L. Macpherson, viewing the enterprise as, to a large extent, Imperial in its character, expressed every confidence that the Home Government would, at least, afford us the advantage of its guarantee. Obviously, it would be rash to pledge the honour and credit of the Dominion, on an expectation which might prove baseless; and it would certainly be dangerous to proceed without some assurance of English aid. It is probable, as the Minister of Militia remarked, that if the undertaking proved beyond our strength, British Columbia would not insist upon the literal execution of the compact; still, it is always unwise to enter upon an agreement with a tacit understanding that it may, and probably will, be broken. Wisely, therefore, we think, the discussion resulted in a withdrawal of the original scheme and the substitution for it, of a proposal to assist any company or companies that may be formed to carry out the work in two ways:—first, by a grant of land along the line of route; and secondly, by a subsidy of a fixed sum per mile, payable gradually as the railway is constructed. Meanwhile the Ottawa Government have instructed Mr. Sandford Fleming to proceed at once in the exploration of a route, and when that is done, there is not the slightest doubt that European capitalists will speedily come forward to construct the work. We may here remark, in passing, that the line marked upon our map is one that has been explored; it has, therefore, been indicated, although it is open to serious objections. In the first place, like the American lines, it would pass through the American desert—an objection which is already proving injurious to the North Pacific; and secondly it would retard the opening up of the Upper Saskatchewan Country, which abounds in riches, both agricultural and mineral. The line ultimately fixed upon, will doubtless, be about a hundred miles further north, at least in the western portion.

The advantages of a British Pacific Railway have so often been stated that we shall only summarize them here. Economically:—1.

The route through British territory is shorter, by at least five hundred miles. 2. Along the greater portion of our road, and especially at its Pacific terminus, we have coal in abundance, which the Americans have not. 3. The road would traverse so rich a country, that the local traffic, in the course of time, would go far to sustain the road; whereas, both the American lines pass for 500 miles over the dreary expanse of the American desert. 4. The Rocky Mountains in British territory are much more easily penetrated, and the passes are available for railway construction at far less expense than in the United States. 5. We have our choice between a railway and a combined system of railway and canal, which the Americans have not. Add to these considerations, one of incalculable promise in the future, which we give in Mr. Russell's words:—

“Our route through British Columbia would have the advantage of being shorter to China and Japan; the distance from any port in these countries to Bute Inlet being upwards of 550 miles less than to San Francisco. This is best seen by measurement on a terrestrial globe; for the ordinary projections of the hemispheres in charts and atlases give rise to a very erroneous idea as to distances between the continents.

“Taking this 550 miles into account, the distance from any port in China or Japan to Liverpool would be 751 miles shorter by our route, through British Columbia, than by the American Pacific Railroad.”

Thus, with all the advantages we possess in shortness of route, facility of construction, and diminished cost of working, there can be no doubt that Canadians will eventually become, as an English reviewer phrases it, “the common carriers between Europe and the East,”

We now proceed to lay before our readers, Mr. Dawson's views regarding inter-oceanic communication, both by land and water, that an intelligent judgment may be formed regarding the advantages of the route as well as the difficulties to be surmounted. The following rather copious extracts are given, because it is almost certain that the line indicated by Mr. Dawson, or something very near it, will ultimately be adopted. That gentleman is discussing a “Route to the Pacific”:—

“It must in course of time, become a matter of great importance to open a line of communication completely across the continent within British territory, but whether this should be effected solely by railroads, or partly by rail and partly by taking advantage of the navigable water which is so plentifully distributed, at least to the east of the Rocky Mountains, is a question for the future.

#### RAILROADS.

“The country is well adapted for railroads between the Red River Settlements and the Saskatchewan and Athabasca Rivers. Practicable passes have been found too in the Rocky Mountains, and in these the ascent is generally easy from the east. It is only when the summit

has been crossed that serious difficulties present themselves. Between the Fraser River and the forty-ninth parallel, British Columbia is one sea of mountains, but through these, the persevering efforts of explorers have led to the discovery of lines said to be practicable for railroads. In regard to the passes in the Rocky Mountains, Captain Palliser, who was sent out by the Imperial Government, speaks favourably of the British Kootamie Pass, near the boundary line, where explorers from Montana are now said to be mining for silver and gold. Dr. Hector, a gentleman whose researches are of great practical value, was favourably impressed with the Kicking Horse Pass, somewhat further to the north, but probably the best of all would be the Athabasca Pass, which has been the longest used, and is the best known. Mr. Waddington gives the latitude of this pass as  $52^{\circ} 54'$  North, and its height as 3,660 feet above the sea level, and describes several routes by which it may be reached from the Pacific. He says also that the upper Fraser is navigable for 280 miles of its course.

"The same authority maintains that by adopting the Athabasca and *Tete Jaune* Pass, or, as it is sometimes called, the Leather Head Pass, a railroad from Edmonton House, on the Saskatchewan, to Bute Inlet on the Pacific, would only be 654 miles in length.

"Until the country becomes better known, all that can be done is to indicate the probable position of an inter-oceanic railroad, and, if one should ever be built, as it doubtless will, in British territory, the following will likely be its general course.

"The valley of the Ottawa, and its tributary the Montreal River, might be followed to the meridian of  $82$  degs. west longitude, from thence the direction will be north-west to the outlet of Lake Nipigon, where it would join the line above suggested, for a railroad from Lake Superior to the Red River Settlement, passing by Lac Seul and the north end of the Lake of the Woods. From the Red River Settlement the ground would be very favourable to Edmonton House, on the Saskatchewan, and from thence the route indicated by Mr. Waddington might be followed to the Pacific.

"By this route the distance from Montreal to the Pacific, as computed by Mr. Russell, would be as follows :—

Montreal to Fort Garry .....	1,367
Fort Garry to Edmonton House, over the prairies.....	825
Edmonton House to Bute Inlet .....	654
Total .....	2,846

"If this line—the practicability of which has yet to be ascertained—were carried out, it might be tapped by an extension of the projected Toronto and Nipissing Railroad, and it would thus be in connection with the railway system of the Dominion at its most important points.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### RAILWAY AND WATER COMMUNICATION COMBINED.

"Thunder Bay, Lake Superior, is already accessible to any class

of vessels which can navigate the great lakes. From thence westward to Red River, the route is, as already described, forty miles of land road, succeeded by three hundred and eleven miles of navigation now broken, but susceptible of being rendered continuous, and which, again, is followed by ninety miles of land road, ending at Fort Garry.

"Commencing at Fort Garry, the navigation might be rendered continuous, at small outlay, by way of Lake Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan to Edmonton House, a distance of 1060 miles. Edmonton House is within 500 miles of the Pacific Ocean, and the distance might be surmounted, according to the best information which can be obtained, by a railroad of 654 miles, or by taking advantage of the navigable waters of the Upper Fraser and following a more tortuous route, the distance would be 841 miles, of which 309 would be by water and 532 by rail. So small an amount of navigation would not compensate for such an increase in distance, and in this instance the continuous railway would be the best.

"By this route the total distance from Thunder Bay to the Pacific would be as follows :—

	MILES.	
	Land.	Water.
Thunder Bay to the inland water at Shebandowan Lake	40	
From terminus Lake Superior road to North-west angle		
Lake of the Woods .....		311
North-West angle to Fort Garry .....	90	
Fort Garry to Edmonton House .....		1060
Edmonton House to Gulf of Georgia .....	654	—
	—	1371
	784	784
		—
		2155

"It is quite practicable to make the navigation continuous from a point within 40 miles of Lake Superior to Lake Winnipeg; and, if this were done and the few impediments in the Saskatchewan removed, there would be continuous navigation from the base of the Rocky Mountains to the ocean, with one break of only 40 miles at Lake Superior, and this break might in time be overcome by lockage.

"So great an extent of navigable water, or water susceptible of being made navigable, running through British America, traversing the vast prairies of the West and ending at the seaports of the Atlantic, is a feature in connection with the Western Territories the importance of which it would be difficult to overrate.

"It is well known that railroads cannot compete with water in the transport of bulky and heavy freight, and if ever a line of communication should be established across the continent in British territory, and, providing it combined with the necessary amount of railway, all the navigable water which could be rendered available, I believe that no other trans-continental line which can be put in operation, north of the Gulf of Mexico, would be in a position to compete with it.

"Everything in this regard, however, must be the merest conjecture until the country is opened up and becomes better known. The first grand step is to open the communication between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement in the manner in which it can be most rapidly done, to be at the same time effective; and if the barrier is thus broken through, even in a moderate way at first, many additional influences will be brought into play and improvements urged on until a first-class line of communication has been obtained. Before concluding this subject, I may state what is known of the Saskatchewan in regard to its capacity for navigation.

#### THE SASKATCHEWAN

is not a river of such great volume as might be supposed from the immense area which it drains. It gathers its waters from a country larger than Canada, and yet it is not equal in size to the St. Lawrence. The precipitation is less in the prairies of the West than in Canada—less snow in winter and less rain in summer, but yet enough of both to make the Saskatchewan a very large river.

"There is a fine harbour on Lake Winnipeg, just at the mouth of the Saskatchewan. Ascending from thence for a mile or so, the first and greatest impediment presents itself. This is called the "Grand Rapid," and here the river makes a descent of about 43 feet, rushing with great impetuosity over flat ledges of limestone rock. Between the Grand Rapid and Lac Bourbon there are several little rapids, having an aggregate fall of about 20 feet.

"Lac Bourbon is distant from Lake Winnipeg about twenty miles, and from thence westward to the Rocky Mountains, or at least to a distance of eighty miles beyond Edmonton House, the navigation is reported to be uninterrupted except at two points, where there are impediments, it is said, easily overcome.

"The first is at a rapid called Tobern's Falls, about 140 miles above Lac Bourbon, where, from all that can be learned, a lock of moderate lift might be required. The next is at Coles' Rapids, on the North Branch, just above its junction with the South Branch. Here a series of swift runs and little rapids, extending over a distance of eighteen miles, would require in some places to be cleared of boulders, and probably a few glance dams might be necessary.

"These impediments cannot be considered serious in a navigation of eight hundred miles, otherwise uninterrupted."

Having now given all the information yet collected regarding both the railway and the combined system, the question still remains, whether private capitalists are likely to come forward to secure the completion of one or both? It has been stated that an English company will apply for incorporation, with a view of undertaking the railway, on the terms agreed upon by Parliament. We may add that the question is, at the present time, being fully explained to the British public by Mr. Waddington. He is thoroughly conversant with every feature of the great undertaking, and has ventured to re-



quire, as a primary stipulation, that the whole of the amount shall be furnished by English capitalists. Mr. George Laidlaw, lately in England, also discussed the question very ably there, and has so far succeeded, we are told, as to have made it an "interesting topic among the great English capitalists." The expenditure he estimates at \$70,000,000, exclusive of the Government money grant, on the principle which he thus briefly states:—

"The cost of the line would most likely be limited to \$25,000 per mile. The Governments would guarantee in proportion to their interests the bonds of the company to the extent of \$15,000 per mile. The Government would give a bonus of 20,000 acres per mile in alternate sections along the route, against which the railway company would issue second preference bonds to the extent of \$15,000 per mile, enough to make up for the discounts on all the issues, and to net \$25,000 a mile. The company would take 10,000 or 20,000 able-bodied laborers from the emigration societies, or private sources, subject to approval, and on the following terms:—To work for the company 200 consecutive days, at 2s. per day and bush fare, and then to receive 100 acres of the company's land and a free grant of 100 acres from the Government, on condition of having fulfilled their contract. The cost of the emigrants' passage at a low fixed rate—say \$12—would be deducted out of the amount paid during the 200 days' labor."

The prominence given to Mr. Laidlaw's views by the English Press, and the practical shape in which he has laid them before the public, may induce them to give it more earnest consideration than they have heretofore done. Altogether there appears no reason to doubt, that within a reasonable time, private capital and enterprise will make good the connection between the Atlantic and Pacific through British Territory. Whether, however, the time be long or short, Canadians ought never to lose sight of the fact that inter-oceanic communication is an imperative necessity, if we desire to consolidate and preserve our autonomy as a Dominion. The people of British Columbia are so convinced of this, that, as we have seen, they make its completion a *sine qua non*, if they are to cast in their lot with us. The Americans, on the other hand, who have long since cast longing eyes upon the fertile basin, never cease to discourage an enterprise which would prove fatal to their schemes of annexation. They never seek, like the recreant politicians and schemers at home, to depreciate the resources of the great North-West; on the contrary, they are fully alive to the dazzling prospect of its future, and do not hesitate to express the most flattering opinions regarding it. Their present aim is to lull the ears of our people against any call to make it *practically* a Canadian possession. The North Pacific Railway is to run at a distance of between one and two hundred miles from the boundary line through the barren desert; and yet the Americans are urging every argument to prove that that line will supersede the necessity of any railway which, both in war and peace, we could call our own. The sooner the people of Canada realize the the momentous issues involved in this question of com-

munication the better. We have surely had experience enough of what we may expect from the tender mercies of the Americans, when any popular breeze sets in against Britain and Canada. The abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, the closing of the Sault St. Marie Canal, and the threat which President Grant was not ashamed to make, that the bonding system should terminate, ought to convince our people that, at any cost and by every sacrifice, they ought to secure themselves against the petty spite and vindictiveness of the Butlers, the Sumners, and the Grants of the great Republic. To do this effectually, we must have uninterrupted communication through all our vast territory. Setting aside, however, the political contingencies which may, at any moment of caprice or whim, sever our great Dominion in two, it is evident that the North Pacific Railway could do little or nothing to develop the resources of the North-West. It is too far from the country; it is open to all the objections we have urged against any line through American Territory; it would enrich a not always friendly neighbour at our expense; and it would seriously impede the complete settlement of the country. With these facts established, who will question the propriety of the step taken by the Dominion Government in at once setting before them, as a matter of serious duty, the encouragement of an enterprise, with which is closely connected our very existence as an independent people?

## CHAPTER III.

### INTERIOR COMMUNICATION.

As regards the opening up of communication in the interior, the chief question at present appears to be:—How can Fort Garry be most easily connected by navigation with the Saskatchewan River? Mr. Hind, in his report of 1859, anticipated the importance of this means of communication. He says:—"public attention in the North-Western States of the Union, and in Canada, has been directed to the Valley of the Saskatchewan, and the feasibility of employing it as a link in a great chain of communication between the Mississippi and St. Lawrence on the one hand, and the western slope of the Rocky Mountains on the other."

Passing by, however, the national character of the enterprise, the desire to secure the commerce which will very shortly teem from the valleys of this magnificent river is arousing the serious attention not only of the residents, but of all those who are either intending emigrants, or are in any way interested in ascertaining the future position of the grand centre of trade and commerce.

The third requisite to the quick filling up of a new country, after climate and soil have been pronounced favorable, being a cheap means of conveyance, the advocates of the North-West, as a field for emigration, have only to point to its broad rivers, navigable for large steamboats for hundreds of miles, to prove conclusively that in this respect we have nothing to fear from competition. As an instance of this, which is, in a general sense, applicable to the whole extent of the "central prairie country," we will refer to the present discussion as to the quickest means of connecting Red River with the Saskatchewan. Here their several advocates have given us the choice of three different routes, each of which could be rendered navigable at a comparatively trifling expense, when we take into consideration the immense stretch of country which the latter river drains, and the fact that the proportionate cost of railroad travelling or traffic compared with that by boat, is in the ratio of three to one.

Mr. Hind, in his report of 1859, suggests that a dam of 85 feet high across the South Saskatchewan at the Great Bend, would turn its waters into the Qu'Appelle and thus give continuous navigation from Red River Settlement up the Assiniboine to the mouth of the Qu'Appelle; then up the Qu'Appelle Valley to the South branch of the Saskatchewan; then up the South Branch to Bow River," which taking its rise in Bow River Pass "one of the best in the Rocky Mountains," makes the aggregate length of about six hundred miles.

As against this project, after the damming has been accomplished, the reader must have seen that the country beyond the Great Bend

on the South Branch, though in part good, is not one which, by its richness, commends itself to the emigrant. On the North Branch, we shall find the first Settlement, and therefore it is with it, which, strictly speaking, drains the Fertile Belt, that communication should be first opened. Even now the traffic, is considerable through the present route by Lake Winnipeg, Cedar Lake, and by portage round the Rapids. This, however, being very circuitous, and Lake Winnipeg somewhat dangerous, especially to the boats now employed on its waters, it is desirable to find a shorter and safer means of connecting the North Branch with Red River or Fort Garry. This, Mr. Mair, in one of his letters to the *Globe*, enters into quite fully, urging, that instead of damming the South Saskatchewan and turning its waters through the Qu' Appelle, the present outlet of Lake Manitoba be dammed, and its waters caused to flow from the southern portion of the Lake along one of the small creeks, the Deep Creek he prefers, into the Assiniboine at Portage La Prairie—thereby opening a direct route from the Assiniboine through Lake Manitoba, Winnepegosis and Cedar Lake, to the Saskatchewan. This last would be reached above the Grand Rapids which have heretofore proved the great obstacle in navigating this river. As a proof of the ease with which this could be effected, as regards the water course between La Portage and the Lake, he alludes to the singular underground current which apparently connects the two as evidenced by the wells of the settlers on the Assiniboine, rising and subsiding with the waters in the Lake. This, together with the opinions of Mr. Hind and Mr. Dawson, in a great measure corroborative, is sufficient to leave on this point no consideration worthy of being noticed in opposition to the plan. But in reference to the dam across the outlet of Lake Manitoba he is not so clear, and this is the more singular as it is on a similar point in Mr. Hind's scheme, the dam at the Great Bend, that he makes the greatest objection. However the omission will hardly be pressed as a point against the project, since the cost can be nothing compared to the advantages which he claims in brief as follows:—

“This general scheme of a steamboat route to the Saskatchewan has, in all respects, an incomparable advantage over any other. It is vastly shorter, will open up the finest wood lands in the lake country, inexhaustible fisheries, salt springs of great value, and the Swan River and other fur districts which will be a source of considerable profit for years to come.

“As before stated, by damming the outlet of Lake Manitoba, its waters would be ejected into the Assiniboine without any artificial excavation, and they would soon form a wide channel for themselves. Some excavation, however, would doubtless be required to make the route practicable for steamers. To connect Lakes Manitoba and Winnepegosis directly, a short cutting would have to be made across Meadow Portage, and another across Mossy Portage, to connect the latter water with Cedar Lake, an expansion of the main Saskatchewan. But these improvements having been effected and there remains one of the most magnificent water courses in America.”

By referring to the map, the chain of communication is readily followed, and the great advantages to be obtained, being easily made apparent, cannot fail to recommend themselves when the trifling cost is placed in comparison with the facilities of secure and cheap navigation. Especially so when we know the dangers, the toils, and the cost of a rapidly increasing navigation, which even twelve years since was of sufficient importance to warrant the following paragraph in Mr. Hind's report. He says :—

“In reply as to whether there would be sufficient business to warrant the placing of steam vessels on these north-western waters, (irrespective of the establishment of a continental route to the Pacific through British territory); I was informed that there would be plenty of freight to carry for the present requirements and traffic of Rupert's Land ; as during the year (1858) no fewer than 167 freight boats of the largest class, belonging to private traders and merchants, as well as the Hudson Bay Company, (many of them loaded with valuable furs), had passed Norway House, at the northern outlet of Lake Winnipeg, *en route* to York Factory, and returned with heavy cargoes of merchandise, brought by sea to York, consisting chiefly of the usual supplies for Selkirk settlement, ammunition and a great variety of goods for the prosecution of the Indian trade, both by the Company and ‘Freemen.’ The aggregate quantity of freight transported by this fleet of boats from the seaboard to Lake Winnipeg, and from thence distributed along its principal feeders, would be upwards of 800 tons. It is well known that there are large quantities of goods imported by other lines of communication, chiefly through the United States Territory at present ; and as the York Factory route is to be partially abandoned, a large portion of the importations of Rupert's Land will have henceforth to enter the Winnipeg Basin from the south, so that there will doubtless be sufficient commerce in view of the great water facilities afforded by the country to encourage the initiation of steam navigation.”

## THIRD PART.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE HUDSON BAY COMPANY.

Having in the preceding pages given a condensation of (in some cases conflicting) authorities, both as to the vast resources of the North-West, and also as to the manner of opening communication with and through it, we will now glance at the singular history of the Hudson's Bay Company, which, at the time of the acceptance of the "compromise" of Earl Granville, had existed about two centuries.

Let it not be thought for a moment that such a sketch of the Company's career is rendered unnecessary by the late settlement. The territory, it is true, has been annexed to the Dominion; the rights of the monopoly have been ostensibly bought and paid for; and the entire question has apparently been set at rest for ever. We say *apparently*, for, in fact, it is far otherwise. The monopoly still lies like a night-mare upon that vast domain; their proprietary rights, instead of being extinguished, have been settled upon a firmer basis; and even now, when its political power ought to be at an end, it contrives to rear its head, as powerful, as selfish, and as unscrupulous as ever. Its employees, leagued, as they are, with the recalcitrant portion of the French population, still misrepresent the resources of the country, obstruct its settlement, and retard its inevitable destiny.

Still, it is not our intention to devote much space in replying to the advocates of the Company; for the "monstrous imposition" which the monopoly has always been, is easily proven from the writings of their own officials, and by missionaries in the Indian Territories, without drawing at all upon the works of travellers and still later correspondence. At the same time, as we do not, in this brief sketch, attempt to make out a case against the Company, but simply to leave a fair impression of their past record, and their present position, we will proceed to give an account of the ancient *régime* of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The first two paragraphs of the renowned Charter are short, and give the purport of the Deed as follows;—

"His Majesty's Royal Charter to the Governor and Company of Hudson's Bay:—

"CHARLES THE SECOND, by the grace of God, King of England, &c., to all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting: Whereas our dearly beloved cousin, Prince Rupert (and seventeen others, whose

names and titles follow) have, at their own great cost and charges, undertaken an expedition for Hudson Bay, in the North West parts of America, for the discovery of a new passage into the South Sea, and for the finding of some trade for furs, minerals, and other considerable commodities; and by such their undertaking have already made such discoveries as do encourage them to proceed farther in performance of their said design, by means whereof there may probably arise great advantage to us and our kingdoms; and whereas the said undertakers, for their encouragement in the said design, have humbly besought us to incorporate them, and to grant unto them and their successors the whole trade and commerce of all those seas, straits and bays, rivers, lakes, creeks and sounds, aforesaid, which are not now actually possessed by any of our subjects, or by the subjects of any other Christian prince or state.

"Now, know ye, that we, being desirous to promote all endeavours that may tend to the public good of our people, and to encourage the said undertaking, have, of our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, given, granted, ratified and confirmed, and, by the presents for us and our successors, do give, grant, ratify, and confirm, unto our said cousin, Prince Rupert, &c., that they and such others as shall be admitted into the said society as is hereafter expressed, shall be one body corporate and politic, in deed and in name, by the name of The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson Bay, \* \* \* and at all times hereafter, shall be personable, and capable in law to have, purchase, receive, possess, enjoy, and retain lands, rents, privileges, liberties, jurisdiction, franchises, and hereditaments, of what kind, nature, or quality soever they be, to them and their successors."

By the foregoing paragraphs of the Charter, the reader will perceive:—First, its ambiguity in defining the extent of territory granted; and secondly, the considerations stipulated for in it: both points being of great importance when disposing of the title assumed by the successors of Prince Rupert and those seventeen other "adventurers." Clearly from the correspondence which has taken place during the last ten years, closing with Earl Granville's proposition, the title which the Hudson Bay Company endeavored to set up, vested in them through the Charter of Charles, and therefore the question as to their legal rights under it may be briefly considered. First, we find that there are very grave doubts whether, when King Charles signed it, the right to grant belonged to the Crown of England at all, it being asserted and proven that at the date of the Charter (1669), and for many years after, the territories claimed under it by the Hudson Bay Company belonged to France, or at any rate, most undoubtedly quite as much to France as to England. This doubt appears to have been prevalent in England at the time, as the document itself excludes from the grant "*all the lands, territories, etc., at that time possessed by any other Christian Prince or State*" For the proof. As early as the year 1598, letters-patent were granted by Henry IV. of France to Sieur de la Roche, appointing him Lieutenant-Governor over the



countries of Canada, other territories and rivers, and Labrador; the latter being part of the territory claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company.

There are numerous documents of the same kind; but passing over these, we come to a Charter granted by Louis XIII., in 1626, which defines the country under Charter to LA COMPAGNIE DE LA NOUVELLE FRANCE in almost the same words as those used by Sir J. H. Pelly, long afterwards, in describing the Hudson's Bay Territories; and from this fact it might be inferred that the prior Charter gave rise to the Charter of Charles. The Charter to *La Compagnie de la Nouvelle France* may be referred to in *Les Edits et Ordonnances de la Nouvelle France*, in the library at Ottawa.

Nor was it only granted and claimed, but it was actually occupied by the French. Numbers of the French Fur Company of Quebec, established forty years before the Hudson Bay Company's Charter was granted, traversed the whole of the country since claimed by the monopoly; but from which they, (the Hudson's Bay Company), were excluded by that clause in their Charter respecting the rights of "any other Christian Prince or State." This fact is established by the Paris Documents, for in them we find that "in 1663 the Indians of Hudson's Bay returned, and the Governor, M. le Baron d'Avangour, sent to Hudson's Bay Sieur de la Contoure with a party, who proceeded from Quebec overland, and took possession of the Bay in the King's name; noted the latitude, planted a cross, and deposited, at the foot of a large tree, His Majesty's arms engraved upon copper, and laid between two sheets of lead, the whole being enclosed in the bark of trees."

This, then, gives us two valid objections to the rights claimed by the Company. First, that the Country, at the time the grant was made, did not belong to England, and therefore could not become the subject of a grant, even admitting that the Crown had constitutional power to make such a grant as claimed, which is very questionable. And secondly, that it was for the most part, prior to the date of the charter possessed by the subjects of another Christian Prince, and therefore is excluded by the very terms of the Charter possessed by the Charter itself. But even for the moment forgetting this, we find that in 1690 the H. B. Company, knowing that the Charter of Charles required Legislative confirmation to invest them with legal rights, applied to Parliament for a confirmation of the Charter; and the Parliament, by Act of 1st and 2nd William and Mary did confirm the Chartered rights for *seven years and no longer*—the words of the Act, so that in 1697, all rights under the Charter became extinct; for the Act was never renewed, the Company preferring to continue their trade on the quick-sand of Royal prerogative for a century and a half, rather than accept the decision of the House of Commons on their Charter.

Again, the Treaty of Ryswick 1697, made over to France a very large portion, if not the whole of the Territory now claimed by the obsolete Charter; and therefore, as no reservation in favour of the Com-

pany was made, their rights, supposing them to have been valid before, were thus effectually extinguished. The results of this Treaty, Mr. Bancroft, in his History of the United States, thus records :—"In America, France retained all Hudson's Bay, and all the places of which she was in possession at the beginning of the war ; in other words, with the exception of the Eastern moiety of Newfoundland, France retained the whole coast and adjacent islands from Maine to beyond Labrador and Hudson's Bay, besides Canada and the Valley of the Mississippi," which latter included what is now known as the Red River Territory. During the time which elapsed between the Treaty of Ryswick and the Treaty of Utrecht in 1714, almost the whole of the Hudson's Bay and adjacent Territories remained in possession of the French. The H. B. Company appear to have had only one single Fort—Albany on the shores of the Hudson's Bay. By the last named Treaty, however, all of the Territories around Hudson's Bay were made over to England which has ever since possessed them. There was also a stipulation that the Quebec Company be allowed to retire from the Bay and all its lands with munitions and property. While by the Treaty of Ryswick, when the territories were surrendered to France, no such stipulation was deemed necessary or proper in favour of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Again we find that the Monopoly had been brought into collision, not only with the French, but also with the United States, and not even then was compensation allowed them for one of their very best tracts of land. When the boundary was settled in 1818 the Crown deliberately made over to the Americans, not only some of the finest portions claimed by the H. B. Company, but also that which was part of Lord Selkirk's Settlement, and yet no compensation was given. This was certainly strange ; if, as was advanced before the Canadian delegates, they could prove a title, dating one hundred and fifty years prior to the settlement of the boundary, why thus surrender their property without a murmur ? Another instance among many, of this non-assertion of rights, is shown in the peculiar conduct of the H. B. Company, during the memorable dispute between them and the Nor'West Company, when the Hudson's Bay Company had ample grounds, if their assumed rights were legal, to have brought the question to a satisfactory issue. But the North-West Company came, armed with the opinions of Sir Arthur Pigott, Serjeant Spankie and Lord Brougham which disposes of the boundary thus ; "such a boundary must be implied as is consistent with the views, and with the professed objects of a trading company intended not to found kingdoms and states, but to carry on fisheries in those waters, and to traffic for the acquisition of furs and other articles mentioned in the Charter," so the Hudson's Bay Company chose a surer and easier way ; "they bribed rivals whom they could not defeat, and the Companies united and agreed to carry on the fur trade together to the exclusion of all others." On the other hand, the North-West Company had denied the validity of the Hudson's Bay Company Charter, had taken advice from the leading counsel of the day upon it, had tried every lawful and unlawful means

to withdraw it ; and then we see them, when the License of Trade was granted, ranging themselves under its protection, asserting what they had before denied, and proclaiming its validity as soon as they were admitted to share its profits.

Reverting for a moment to the history of the Earl of Selkirk's settlement on the Red River, we find that, in 1803, when his Lordship first visited Canada, the H.B. Company carried on a very limited trade, which was confined solely to Hudson's Bay and London." Between his Lordship and the North-West Company a feeling of rivalry eventually sprung up ; and the former, in order to check the trade of the latter, after the failure of his "tract scheme" in Canada, returned to England and obtained a deed from the H.B. Company of a very large portion of land—74,000,000 acres—now known as the Red River Settlement. It may be stated, in reference to the application for this title, that when Lord Selkirk applied for it to the Company, they endeavoured to argue him out of his project, by showing him that they had no power to make such a grant. As, however, he proposed to take all responsibility, the deed was made, no consideration being required, it having simply been given and accepted as an experiment, the success of which was very uncertain.

Without following, in detail, the events of the intervening years between this date and 1821,—although they have afforded material for many histories,—we will simply mass together the more prominent points. Lord Selkirk delegated his authority, under the deed, to one Miles Macdonell, who, in 1814, notified the several parties in charge of North-West Company posts, that they were to quit such "posts and premises" within six months after date. In endeavouring to enforce the pretensions set forth in this notice, the appointee of Lord Selkirk raised amongst the Indians, as well as amongst the members of the North-West Company, such a strong feeling of hostility against the Hudson Bay Company, that, in 1815, Fort Douglass, in which Miles Macdonell was domiciled, was utterly destroyed and himself and secretary taken prisoners to Montreal by the North-West Company. The settlement established under Lord Selkirk's grant was broken up ; the colonists were dispersed ; and articles of capitulation entered into by the H.B. Company and the Indians. These articles are remarkable, as being the first evidence of any right on the part of the H.B. Company to enter into the country ; and also because, amongst other restrictions, they were bound to enter the river with only from three to four of their former trading boats, and from four to five men per boat as usual." Even this concession, being "for the purposes of trade," is in itself sufficient evidence that the monopolists had not theretofore held sovereign sway. In the autumn of the same year (1815), while Miles Macdonell was still in prison, Mr. Semple, Governor of H.B. Company, re-established a fort, which was almost immediately destroyed, after a struggle in which the Governor and twenty-two others lost their lives. The colonists were again dispersed, with the exception of those who joined the rival North-West Company. Intelligence of this loss of life having come under

the notice of the Imperial authorities, the Hudson Bay Company, fearing that their "charter" was in danger of being submitted to legal investigation, amalgamated with the North-West Company, and thereby procured the "License of Trade" hereafter alluded to. "From which period," says a writer in the *North British Review*, who displays intimate acquaintance with the subject, "dates the extraordinary claims made by the Hudson Bay Company to an exclusive right to trade in, and to absolute possession of, the territories which are unwatered by the rivers flowing into the bay."

As regards the extent of country traded in by the monopolists, the reviewer adds that, in 1749, when the first legislative inquiry instituted into the Company's affairs took place, the witnesses proved that the Company's servants never went farther than a hundred miles into the interior.

As the foregoing facts dispose of the principal claims advanced under the "monstrous grant," as it is termed, of the monarch

"Who never said a foolish thing,  
And never did a wise one,"

we shall conclude this chapter with the words of a late writer, who has sometimes been regarded as an advocate of the Hudson's Bay Company:—"This," he says, speaking of the grant, "has been styled an indefinite charter; we might call it one which, if not illegal, was null and void. If the lands in question were under the Dominion of the English crown, the grant cannot be defended on constitutional grounds. The right of the Crown to alienate territory without the assent of the Parliament, is a right of which the existence is very questionable. There is no evidence, however, to support any claim on the part of the Crown to the lands of which, in 1670, it made so liberal a gift. Consequently, such a grant is as truly void as the donation of the New World, which the Pope awarded to the Portuguese. Moreover, Hudson's Bay and the surrounding territories were then (at the time of the grant), in the actual possession of another Christian Prince."

#### LICENSE OF TRADE.

Of the numerous Canadian Companies that traded westward of Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains, and even on the Pacific slope, before and upwards of one hundred years after the giving of the Charter to the Hudson Bay Company, we need only mention the Nor'-West Company of Montreal, which requires some notice, as it was it which, rising superior to all others, and even the Hudson Bay Company, amalgamated with the latter, and procured, in 1821, the License of Trade.

This license was on several occasions renewed; but even in the transformation, as it was called, of 1863, the power of the Imperial Parliament to reserve the privilege of establishing "any colony or colonies, province or provinces, or for annexing any part of the afore-

said territories to any existing colony or colonies, etc.," is clearly asserted. At the same time the obligations incumbent upon the company, in reference to their dealings with the savage, are as clearly defined. The paragraphs are as follows:—

"And we do also hereby require that the said Governor and Company, and their successors, shall, as soon as the same can conveniently be done, make and submit for our approval, such rules and regulations for the management and carrying on said fur trade with the Indians, and the conduct of the persons employed by them therein, as may appear to us to be effectual for diminishing or preventing the sale or distribution of spirituous liquors to the Indians, and for promoting their moral and religious improvement. But we do hereby declare that nothing in this our grant contained shall be deemed or construed to authorize the said Governor and Company, or their successors, or any persons in their employ, to claim or exercise any trade with the Indians on the north-west coast of America, to the westward of the Stony Mountains, to the prejudice or exclusion of any of the subjects of any foreign states, who, under or by force of any convention for the time being, between us and such foreign states respectively, may be entitled to, and shall be engaged in, the said trade: Provided, nevertheless, and we do hereby declare our pleasure to be that nothing herein contained shall extend or be construed to prevent the establishment by us, our heirs or successors, within the territories aforesaid, or any of them, of any colony or colonies, province or provinces, or for annexing any part of the aforesaid territories to any existing colony or colonies, to us in right of our imperial crown belonging, or for constituting any such form of civil government, as to us may seem meet, within any such colony or colonies, or provinces.

"And we do hereby reserve to us, our heirs and successors, full power and authority to revoke these presents, or any part thereof, in so far as the same may embrace or extend to any of the territories aforesaid, which may hereafter be comprised within any colony or colonies, province or provinces, as aforesaid.

"It being, nevertheless, hereby declared that no British subjects, other than and except the said Governor and Company, and their successors, and the persons authorized to carry on exclusive trade by them, shall trade with the Indians during the period of this our grant, within the limits aforesaid, or within that part thereof which shall not be comprised within any such colony or province aforesaid."

Now, to enter upon any further discussion of the claims under either the Charter or the License, is not our intention. It having been shown that the Charter itself, remembering who at the time possessed the country, we think that it disposes of itself; and when we have got rid of this document, signed by a "Stuart, ignorant of geography, granting a title to whatever territory is accessible from the Hudson's Bay, either by land or sea—in other words, with the fee simple of the whole habitable globe;" we pass to the License, and find that the principal consideration on which it is held, is the "moral

and religious improvement of the savage." On this point volumes could be written; and that they would be found interesting, may be gathered from the single fact that, so late as 1868, the Hudson's Bay Company officials entered the Indian territories with their barter—rum—strapped upon the backs of the voyageurs, and this, too, when the trappers and Indians were verging on a state of starvation. Of the proviso in the License regarding the prospective stipulation for the annexation of any part or parts to Canada, and the reason why it has not heretofore been acted upon by the Imperial Parliament, the discussion on Earl Granville's proposals, as reviewed in the following chapter, will afford ample information.

Before closing this chapter, however, we would refer such readers as desire further proof on these points to two authorities—one for, and the other against, the Company, and both of 1869. The latter will be found in the *North British Review*, of March, entitled, "The Hudson Bay Company." The former, written by Mr. Forsyth, Q. C., appeared in two successive numbers of *Good Words*, and is especially noticeable, from the fact that it was about the only defence published in England on the side of the Company during the time of the "compromise" discussions. That he had a difficult task must be admitted, but having once undertaken it, he should have endeavoured not to make so many mis-statements, when he must have been supplied with the very latest information. These, however, cannot be disposed of now; the more especially so as it is rather the great number of the errors, than their magnitude, which strikes the reader. This is attributable, no doubt, to the fact of Mr. Forsyth's realizing that, in spite of his able advocacy, it was impossible to make out a case for the Company. The next best thing, therefore, that could be done, was to secure the "extenuating circumstances," by enumerating every possible circumstance that could, by any means, be claimed as in favor of the monopolists. In opposition to his view of the question, we turn to the other article named, and, as a proof of its fairness, we may state that the upholders of the "compromise" quoted largely from it, in favor of the proposed arrangement. It shows how hard they were put to it for an authority at that time, when we find the writer, after glancing at the scheme proposed by Mr. Disraeli's Administration, viz.—that of a tax upon the land, than which the reservations are infinitely worse, observing—"It is improbable that Earl Granville will approve of, or Mr. Gladstone will sanction, any such arrangement." That Mr. Gladstone had modified his opinions on the Hudson's Bay question, was admitted by him in the House of Commons; but as he gave no reason for the change, the public have assumed that his feelings were too thoroughly honest in 1857, or better perhaps, "too romantically enthusiastic in the cause of right." Although he thinks he was "too hard" upon the monopolists when he submitted that notable amendment which proposed to open for civilisation those immense tracts of prairie land, and to leave in the hands of the fur traders the fur trapping regions, the people in this country do not agree with him. Even his staunchest admirer will hardly concede that

the soil of America can prove congenial to the worst species of absentee landlordism—that which is carried on by a joint stock company whose only ambition is gain. That this is the temper—the intention of the “renewed monopoly,” none will dispute, having once read the debates which the “proposals” of Earl Granville originated in the Hudson Bay Company’s House in England. From them it may easily be assumed, that though the revived company cannot, as heretofore, assert and retain its position solely through the false representations of its members, it will, nevertheless, still continue to exercise its injurious influence by bribery, and increase its profits by extortion.

However, to refer to the opposing opinions of influential personages and prominent writers is not our intention,—even if space would admit—no more than it is our desire to follow the “wondrous evidence of design” in the conduct of the Company, which, ever tending to its own aggrandizement, might be discussed under some such heading as the following: first, the singular diplomacy of the Company, which was always inimical to the welfare of British North America; secondly, their false representation and bribery, which are notorious; thirdly, their iniquitous dealings with the ignorant and dependent savages; and lastly, the proofs of its tyranny and oppression. The task would, however, be fruitless; the acceptance of the proposals of Earl Granville by both parties disposes of the past, and makes it perhaps preferable to forget a great deal rather than revive it. More especially so, as we are to “become as brothers in the great work of colonization.” Nor is it to be supposed that any considerable portion of intending emigrants would be extremely anxious to follow the dark history which Thomas Simpson alludes to as follows:—“Viewing the service generally, I must candidly confess, judging from the actions of others, that its promises of happiness are hollow, whilst an awful fatality seems to overhang its retiring members—a punishment for the unprincipled and licentious lives they have led.” We will not even revert to a “tithe of the grievances” which made the condition of settlers “deplorable and heartrending,” well knowing that the reader, when he once realizes that a letter could not be sent to England without exciting the direst enmity of the Company, unless they had first read it and were satisfied with its contents; that letters coming to the settlers were opened by the Company; and that all traffic with other places was forbidden, as contrary to “the fundamental laws of Rupert’s Land,” will at once understand the effect of a power, which, claiming to be paramount over the third of a continent, was exercised without regard to loyalty, morality, and religion.”



## CHAPTER II.

### THE COMPROMISE.

Before referring to the pamphlet issued to the members of the Hudson Bay Company, and embracing the principal correspondence on the subject, from the year 1864 to 1869, with the final proposal of Earl Granville to the Company and to the Canadian delegates, it may be advisable to give a slight sketch of the action of Canada during the fifteen years of discussion. It is evident that any attempt to do so, with accuracy and impartiality, must necessarily fail. We are too near the events we are endeavouring to chronicle to mete out an equal measure of justice to every public man who has taken an active part in the conduct of this great question. It must be left for history, at its own time, to return an unimpeachable verdict. It will then be clearly seen who "have deserved well of their country" by contending for its best interests; who have disgraced themselves, in the hour of duty, by "masterly inactivity," and who have deceitfully and maliciously betrayed the cause which, by every consideration of honour and patriotism, they were bound to subserve. Some material to aid in forming a judgment may nevertheless be found as we proceed.

The closing letter of Messrs. Cartier and McDougall, our delegates, was, as one paper put it, "clearly unanswerable;" but as it was simply the *last denial* of the Company's claim, reference to the main body of it may be dispensed with. The additional matter, however, which was gleaned during the last six months that they were "spectators" of the proceedings, requires to be briefly noticed.

"What it was worth to have the obstruction quietly removed," appears to have been the real question—the point on which they joined issue, after the failure of our repeated attempts to have the validity of the Charter itself tested.

The following short extracts contain the substance, which many may not have waded through a voluminous correspondence to find:—

"The first attempt of the Imperial Government to estimate, and express in pounds sterling, the compensation which it would be reasonable to offer to the Company, was made by the Duke of Newcastle in 1864. The greatest sum which, after "very grave consideration," his Grace felt himself able to propose for the surrender of the country west of Lake Winnipeg was £250,000. But the payment was subject to the following conditions:—

"1. £150,000 was to be derived from the sale of lands by the Government within the territory. The payment was to be made at the rate of 1s. per acre sold, but to be entirely dependent on the Government receipts.

"2. Payments were to cease whenever they reached £150,000; and absolutely, at the end of fifty years.

"The Company was to be paid one-fourth of the sum received by Government for export duty on gold or for mining licences or leases for gold-mining in the territory for fifty years, or until the aggregate amounted to £100,000.

"4. The payment of any part of the £250,000 was contingent on the ability of the Company to place Her Majesty's Government in possession of an "indisputable title" to the territory ceded by them as against the claims of Canada.

"The last condition was objected to by the Company on the ground that they could only give such title as they had, which they contended "must be taken for better or worse." The Duke of Newcastle renewed his offer, modifying the last condition into a stipulation that, in case it should be found advisable, the territory eastward of a line passing through Lake Winnipeg and Lake of the Woods, might be ceded or annexed to Canada, in which case nothing would be payable to the Company in respect of *that* territory.

After reviewing the proposed conditions, regarding the manner of holding and the time of sale, the delegates continue:—

"But in order to arrive at some result that can be expressed in figures, let us assume that the sum ascertained by the Duke of Newcastle to be sufficient "compensation" would, under his proposition, have been paid within 50 years, and at an average rate per annum. We thus give the Company the benefit of all the doubts in the case, and reduce the question to a simple problem in arithmetic: What is the present value of an annuity of £5,000 for fifty years?

"That value, we submit, is the highest amount in cash which can be claimed as an equivalent for the offer made to the Company in 1864, by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle.

"The next offer of the Imperial Government which mentions a specific sum, is that made by his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, on the 1st of December last. It differs from the previous offer in several important particulars:

"1. It embraces the *whole* of the territory claimed by the Company.

"2. It proposes to allow the Company to retain their "posts" and certain allotments of land in their vicinity, with a small reservation in each township as it is surveyed.

"3. It proposes to allow the Company one-quarter of the receipts from land (free grants being treated as sales at one shilling per acre) one-quarter of the sum received by Government as an export duty for gold and silver, or for licenses for mining for gold or silver.

"4. It limits the amount to be received under these heads conjointly, at £1,000,000 sterling.

"The other stipulations are unimportant for the purpose of ascertaining the cash equivalent of the proposition."

Now, by again resorting to the annuity tables, we have the following question, viz.: What is the present value of an annuity of £3,575 per annum for 280 years? The Government mining receipts are omitted from the last term for two reasons: 1st, Because it has not been shown that there are mines in the Territory that would pay

working. 2nd, Because Canada is tending strongly to a "free mining policy."

The third proposition from the Imperial Government which bears on compensation was submitted by Mr. Cardwell, and is alluded to as follows, the conclusion of the letter being added :

"The basis of the calculation which seems to have been made, or agreed upon, is very simple. The old Hudson Bay Company had recently sold all the rights and property of the Company, of every description, for the sum of £1,500,000. An inventory, agreed to by both sellers and purchasers, set down the assets, exclusive of "Territorial rights," as follows—

1—The assets (exclusive of Nos. 2 and 3) of the Hudson's Bay Company, recently and specially valued by competent valuers, at.....	£1,023,569
2—The 'landed territory' (not valued).....	
3—A cash balance of.....	370,000

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£1,393,569

"On the face of their own statement, £1,500,000, less the above sum, or £106,431, was the amount which the new purchasers actually paid for the 'Landed Territory.' Under the agreement of 1865, this seems to be the highest sum which Mr. Cardwell and the representatives of the Canadian Government, thought could, in any event, be demanded by the Company, as indemnity or compensation for the surrender of the rights they 'would be able to establish.'

"We have thus attempted to convert into their equivalents in cash the two offers made to the Company since 1857 by the Imperial Government, and to ascertain the amount of the indemnity contemplated by Mr. Cardwell and the Canadian delegates in the arrangements of 1865. To arrive at any result, we have had to assume figures which, according to our experience, the facts of a new country will be more likely to reduce than to increase. We have also omitted conditions either implied or expressed in the proposals of 1864 and 1868, which we believe would have imposed considerable expense upon the Company.

"There is another mode of estimating the amount to be paid, on the principle of compensating for actual loss only, which remains to be considered.

"The stock of the Company has for sometime been quoted at an average of 13½. The capital is nominally £2,000,000, and the shares £20—the value of the stock, therefore, in cash, assuming that the whole of it could be sold at the market rate, is £1,350,000, or £43,569 less than the value, according to their own estimate, in 1863, of the Company's assets, *exclusive* of the 'landed territory.' The money obtained from the public for shares, beyond the £1,500,000 paid to the old shareholders, will no doubt be amply sufficient to make good any deficiency in the valuation of 1863.

"From a consideration of these data we submit, that, if the validity of the Charter is not now to be questioned ; if the territorial

extent of the country affected by it is not to be defined ; if the claim of Canada to include within her boundaries a large portion, if not the whole, of the country occupied by the French at the time of the session in 1763, is not to be investigated and finally determined—if the admitted incapacity and the notorious neglect of the Company to perform the duties of government (which were part of the consideration for the *rights* conceded by the Charter), are not to be taken as sufficient on public grounds to justify cancellation and re-entry by the Crown—then the very highest indemnity which ought to be paid, in cash, for a surrender of the territorial claims of the Company, with the reservations and other privileges offered by His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, is the sum indicated by the foregoing computations.

“ We must, in conclusion, express to Earl Granville our strong conviction that no *money* offer, which either the Imperial or the Canadian Government would deem reasonable, will be accepted by the Company, and that, to delay the organization of Constitutional Government in the North-West Territory until the Hudson’s Bay Company consent to reasonable terms of surrender, is to hinder the success of Confederation in British America and to imperil the interests and authority of the British Crown in the territories now occupied by the Company.

“ We therefore respectfully submit for Earl Granville’s consideration, whether it is not expedient that the Address of the Canadian Parliament be at once acted upon, under the authority of the Imperial Act of 1867.

“ But, if his Lordship should see any sufficient legal or other objection to that course, then we ask, on behalf of the Dominion Government, for the immediate transfer to that Government, of the ‘North-West Territory,’ or all that part of British North America, from Canada on the east, to British Columbia, Alaska, and the Arctic Ocean on the west and north, not heretofore validly granted to, and now held by, ‘The Government and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson’s Bay,’ by virtue of a Charter of King Charles II., issued about the year 1670.

We have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servants,

GEO. ET. CARTIER.

WM. MACDOUGALL.

Sir FREDERICK ROGERS, Bart., etc.,  
Colonial Office.”

A copy of this final letter, on the part of our delegates to the Colonial Secretary, having been transmitted to Sir Stafford Northcote, it received from him a reply quite characteristic of the monopolists. There is nothing new in it ; nothing that we have not had before in various forms, and therefore we may the more quickly dispose of it.

In answer to that part of the letter which refers to a “proper adjustment of difficulties,” he said :—

"But as Earl Granville, who has had personal communication with the delegates, is of opinion that their letter, taken in connection with previous correspondence, leaves little present hope of bringing matters to a settlement by way of compensation, the committee are forced to adopt the conclusion that it is intended as a virtual refusal on the part of the delegates to entertain the question in a serious spirit."

Again, after speaking, in a patronizing strain, as to the difficulties we should encounter in endeavouring to govern the Territory, and kindly doubting whether we could accomplish the task successfully, he closes the paragraph with these stereotyped sentences:—

"Should, however, Her Majesty's Government decide on this measure, the Committee will do all in their power to arrive at a good understanding with the Dominion Government as to the details of the arrangements which should be made in the two portions of the now united territory, and to facilitate the establishment of a strong administrative system in both."

Then, near the conclusion, he adds what we have never seen omitted in a letter from the Governor of the monopoly, though there may be a slight variation of the phraseology, the following:—

"Of course," he says, "if Her Majesty's Government should be of opinion that the great objects in view could be equally well attained by the exercise of the powers actually possessed by, or which might be granted to, the Company, and should consider that it would be preferable to adopt this method of government rather than to erect the Territory into a Crown Colony, the Committee would at once fall in with such a suggestion, and would request Earl Granville to state to them what establishment would, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, be sufficient to meet the necessities of the case."

"It can hardly be necessary for me to add that, in the event of such an arrangement being made, the Company would rely on the cordial co-operation of the Government in submitting any needed measure to Parliament, and in protecting the Settlement from any trespass or interference on the part of Canada."

So much for Sir Stafford Northcote, whom we will take, as the Duke of Newcastle advised us to take the title, "for better for worse," and pass on to the "only compromise that would be attempted by the present Government." Our delegates were given to understand that, should this proposal fail to find acceptance at the hands of either party, it would be necessary to refer the question to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

The following were the terms proposed by the Colonial Secretary:—

"1. The Hudson's Bay Company to surrender to Her Majesty, all the rights of government, property, &c., in Rupert's Land, which are specified in 31 and 32 Vict., c. 105, sec. 4; and also all similar rights in any other part of British North America, not comprised in Rupert's Land, Canada, or British America.

"2. Canada is to pay to the Company £300,000 when Rupert's Land is transferred to the Dominion of Canada.

"3. The Company may, within twelve months of the surrender, select a block of land adjoining each of its stations within the limits specified in article 1.

"4. The size of the blocks is not to exceed ——— acres in the Red River territory, nor 3,000 acres beyond that territory, and the aggregate extent of the blocks is not to exceed 50,000 acres.

"5. So far as the configuration of the country admits, the blocks are to be in the shape of parallelograms, of which the length is not more than double the breadth.

"6. The Hudson's Bay Company may, for fifty years after the surrender, claim in any township or district within the Fertile Belt, in which land is set out for settlement, grants of land not exceeding one-twentieth part of the land so set out. The blocks so granted to be determined by lot, and the Hudson's Bay Company to pay a rateable share of the survey expenses, not exceeding ——— an acre.

"7. For the purpose of the present agreement, the Fertile Belt is to be bounded as follows: On the south by the United States boundary; on the west by the Rocky Mountains, on the north by the northern branch of the Saskatchewan; on the east by Lake Winnipeg, the Lake of the Woods, and the waters connecting them.

"8. All titles to land up to the 8th March, 1869, conferred by the Company, are to be confirmed.

"9. The Company is to be at liberty to carry on its trade without hindrance, in its corporate capacity, and no exceptional tax is to be placed on the Company's land, trade, or servants, nor any import on goods introduced by them previous to the surrender.

"10. Canada is to take over the materials of the electric telegraph at cost price, such price including transport, but not including interest for money, and subject to a deduction for ascertained deterioration.

"11. The Company's claim to land under agreement of Messrs. Vankoughnet and Hopkins to be withdrawn.

"12. The details of this arrangement, including the filling-up the blanks in articles 4 and 6, to be settled at once by mutual agreement."

Such is the proposal which we were called upon peremptorily either to accept or reject as a "basis of further negotiation." We are told that it caused the Company's shares to decline from 14½ to 13¾.

"Why this should have been the case we cannot determine, unless that, year after year, they considered their claims on us enhanced in value, proportionately, to the amount of injury they entailed upon British North America. They must undoubtedly have had a process of calculation of which we know nothing; for, first comparing the terms with those that were previously offered by other Colonial Secretaries, it must be admitted by all parties that the worst for us, and the best for them, came last.

Without attempting to compare it with former propositions, it will be sufficient to note that the terms offered by the Duke of Newcastle to the Company were equal to granting them an annuity of £5000 for

fifty years : in comparison with this, the Duke of Buckingham's was considered large ; and yet the payments, which he stipulated the Company should receive, were not to exceed in the aggregate £1,000,000. What Mr. Adderley proposed, our delegates were confident the Canadian Parliament would have accepted, so that the obstruction might be quietly removed.

Now, for the moment forgetting Mr. Cardwell's proposal, which was still more in favor of the Dominion, we will see how Lord Granville's ultimatum compared with these. Taking figures, we find that, in the Fertile Belt alone, there are believed to be 200,000,000 acres ; it follows that the Company's share will be 10,000,000 acres. Now supposing—and it is not such an extravagant supposition, when we remember how rapidly the Western States have been populated, that this immense tract is surveyed and partially settled before the expiration of the term, what does the monopolists' claim amount to, the land being sold at an average of \$5 per acre ? Just \$50,000,000.

The average price is too high, some may say ; but what have we in substantiation ? The price of farms—that is the pre-emption or squatter's rights in the settled portions are now disposed of—and this when there are neither roads nor commerce—for between \$4 and \$8 per acre ; and in Minnesota the price ranges from \$4 to \$7 per acre. Moreover we have never as yet been led to suppose that the Hudson Bay Company are lacking in tactics equal to those which the Canada Company employed so successfully to the filling of their coffers. The Canada monopolists did not sell their land to the first settlers ; they waited till its value had become increased many fold by the arduous toil of those who were neither too well fed nor too comfortably clad ; and can we, judging from the past of the Hudson Bay Company, imagine that they will be less exacting or less mercenary ?

Then follows the second specialty,—the reservation around each of their forts, of "*thousands of acres*" which will, of course, in the very nature of things, become the sites of future towns and cities, and therefore externally valuable. Besides this, their fur trade is not to be interfered with, and lastly, we pay them £300,000 down, as it were, to bind the bargain ; for that is, after all, only a drop in the bucket. All these payments, rights, privileges and reservations we give them for that which cost them, according to their own computation, just £106,431.

Now we find it as an ever recurring assertion on the part of the monopolists, that all they desired was that the shareholders shall lose nothing by the transfer ; that, in fact, they felt the justice of the Dominion's claims, and being also well aware of the necessity for the immediate establishment of a responsible Government, would place no obstacle in the way. Yet the Colonial Secretary, after having such assurances brought prominently to his notice by our delegates, was forced to tempt them with what are better terms than they themselves proposed to the Duke of Newcastle.

Clearly, if Lord Granville believed that the Company was speaking the truth, when it asserted the desirability of Canada's getting

possession of the North-West, coupled with the assurance of their willingness to assist us in so doing, it seems somewhat difficult to imagine why he thought his final proposal would not be acceptable to them. From his perfect knowledge of the affairs of the Company, he was well aware that they would be enabled to follow the fur trade almost without competition for many years. He may, perhaps, have been cognizant of the fact that "the number of the finer and more costly skins was increasing—even rapidly increasing, as the larger and more ferocious animals were killed off." He may also have heard that in the Fertile Belt the Company had lost caste to such an extent that even a show of respect was denied its officers; that men laughed at the selfish formula of paying the three tributary "pepper-corns" to the high official. He must have known that it was years since they had tested a claim by law, and that the Company was then simply tolerated as a species of tenant-at-will. It therefore appears extraordinary that his Lordship should have feared that the "proposal" would not be acceptable to them. As the last and greatest reason of all, the Colonial Secretary must have seen that the counter proposal to that of the Duke of Newcastle, made by the Hudson Bay Company themselves to the Imperial Government, only stipulated that in consideration of "right and title, the sum of £1,000,000 should accrue to them within a certain period." This Sir Stafford Northcote, in his speech on the "compromise" before the "board," admitted; alluding to the death of the Duke in such a manner as to lead the reader to suppose that, had it not been that a new Minister was taking office, the Imperial Government would have made the stipulation, accepted the Territory, and handed it over to Canada. Such having been the intention of the parties interested at that time, when we compare it with the last proposed and accepted compromise, we are compelled to agree with those who will neither accept the witticisms of his Lordship as reasoning, nor his arbitrament as just.

Now believing the intention of these provinces, in relation to the North-West, to be a desire to build up a nation, in other words, make the British American Confederation lasting and secure, it may be a subject for enquiry whether we have made a sure advance towards the attainment of our object by accepting the compromise. When, however, we find that no alternative was open, save that of working our way cautiously through the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which would have taken some, it may be many, years, it appears there was no choice, in view of the necessity of immediate action, but to secure the Hudson's Bay Company in their "reservations and privileges," so far, at least, as could be done at that time. Mr. McDougall asserted that the compact would never be willingly assented to by the Dominion, and whilst he was right as to the feeling in Canada, he (unfortunately for himself), appears to have forgotten that the residents of the country itself might desire to be heard on the "transfer." As this alleged oversight, however, in not consulting them prior to sending the delegation to England, is one of the "underlying grievances" that caused the Rebellion, it will be alluded to in the succeeding chapter.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE RED RIVER REBELLION—CAUSES.

Having, in the last chapter, given a brief *resumé* of the discussion on the transfer or compromise, we now proceed to lay before the reader, as succinctly as possible, the more prominent features of what is known as the Red River Rebellion. In our endeavour to do this briefly, and at the same time minutely, we are met by the somewhat singular difficulty of a “profusion of authorities.” To some, no doubt, this may appear an advantage rather than otherwise; but, having examined the bulky literature the newspapers accumulated upon the subject during those eventful months, we are inclined to dissent from that opinion. Divested of exaggeration, the facts are few and simple enough. The Dominion Government, by the compromise, effected under the auspices of Earl Granville, obtained the right to confederate with the other British American Provinces, those portions of British North America known as Rupert’s Land and the North West Territories, or any of them.

The deed of transfer had not been given by the Company, nor had we paid the purchase money; but, in the expectation that the bargain would be ratified at the appointed time, and in the absence of any popular demonstration by the people of the Red River against the union with Canada, the Canadian Government decided on sending out the Hon. William McDougall as Lieutenant Governor, with all “convenient speed, to report and take the necessary measures for incorporating it with the Dominion, and to ascertain the requirements of the country.” In pursuance of this policy, the Lieutenant Governor was dispatched—himself “in haste to go,” it is said—and attended by a numerous retinue, among whom were the proposed Councillors for Red River, and other gentlemen, military and civil. Thus accompanied, and having stowed somewhere among the sixty waggons which carried him and “his fortunes,” a “magnificent throne and paraphernalia of office,” the Lieutenant Governor left St. Paul, Minnesota, and after a weary journey, on the 2nd of November crossed the boundary line between the United States and British Territory; reposed that night in a Hudson Bay fort, two miles from the boundary, and was next morning expelled from that part of the Queen’s Dominions over which he was appointed to govern. At the date of his expulsion, the country was under the control of the French half breeds, or *Bois Brûlé*, of whose temporary rule we shall therefore endeavour to give a connected, though somewhat abbreviated account, from its inauguration to its extinction; first, however, having disposed of Mr. McDougall’s claim upon our attention.

Proceeding, then, to separate the few grains of fact from the immense amount of fiction, we are first compelled to take some notice of the warnings which the Ottawa Cabinet received that the entrance of Mr. McDougall as Lieutenant Governor would be opposed. For, although at no time till Mr. McDougall had left St. Paul, *en route* for Fort Garry, did the ill feeling become what may be termed a "popular demonstration," still there appears to have been sufficient intelligence brought under the notice of the Government to have caused it to adopt an explanatory, if not a conciliatory, tone. So far back as August, 1869, private information of the most reliable character was laid before Government that the Lieutenant Governor's authority would be disputed. Mr. Cyrille Graham is reported to have called their attention to the existing "state of discontent;" and, from the correspondence of the American Consul then resident at Fort Garry, it may be gathered that, as far back as September, a hostile feeling was evidenced sufficiently strong to have made the Government at Ottawa pause before determining to carry out a policy which, in fact, jeopardized the very existence of British institutions in that portion of Her Majesty's dominions. As a member of the Cabinet, the late Minister of Public Works becomes responsible, along with his colleagues, that this information failed of its intended effect. The Government have made a plausible effort to lay the entire blame at the door of the ex-Governor. It is charged against him that he withheld from the Privy Council "the very alarming information communicated to him by Colonel Dennis" (Review, p. 9). On the 28th of August, the Colonel, then engaged in conducting the surveys, wrote that "the uneasy feeling" had become so marked, that he anticipated having to "cease operations and await further orders." If this accusation were well founded, no censure can be too severe for this culpable suppression of the truth. Unfortunately, however, the matter has now resolved itself into a question of veracity. Mr. McDougall, in his published defence which has recently appeared, distinctly denies the charge. He claims that, so far from urging the survey at all risks, he managed to reduce the *twenty* townships, which the Premier proposed to survey, to *one*; that he urged the greatest caution in conducting the operations; that he instructed Colonel Dennis to consult both Governor McTavish and the people of the country; that the danger apprehended was from the Indians, and that so far were the Government from being ignorant of the state of affairs, that he was authorized to take with him "350 breech-loading rifles, with 30,000 rounds of ammunition." Finally, Mr. McDougall asserts that "when the letters of Colonel Dennis arrived," he "was absent from Ottawa on official duty." (Eight Letters, &c., p. 39.) On the whole, we are inclined to think that the *onus* of blame must be equally borne by every member of the Cabinet; by Mr. McDougall, neither more nor less than by the others. It cannot now be doubted that the survey was a grave mistake. In the minds of the ignorant inhabitants, it was immediately associated with the confiscation of their property and a complete disregard of their rights; it formed a plausible pretext for the insur-

rection, if even we deny that it was the cause of it. The scheme was a gigantic blunder—would that we could call it the only one in this chapter of disasters.

The appointment of Mr. McDougall himself, was another. We are not about to re-open the story of that gentleman's "unusual proceedings" at Manitoulin. It may be, as he asserts, that his conduct has been misrepresented, and that instead of being solely answerable for those proceedings, he only shares the responsibility with the members of three successive administrations (Letters, p. 44), the fact will still remain, and it should have been an insuperable objection to his appointment, that whether rightly or wrongly, arbitrary and inequitable dealings with the Indian tribes were attributed to him, and had made him personally distasteful, if not odious, to the nations of the North West. The Indian does not easily forget; and we may well suppose that Mr. McDougall's "unusual," if not unjustifiable, acts did not fail to receive material addition, with darker colouring, before it reached the hunters between the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. The subject may, perhaps, have passed entirely from the honorable gentleman's mind, but it still rankled in theirs. We can fancy his feelings, as he looked across the boundary at his rebellious subjects, and learned that one of the causes of his ludicrous situation at Pembina, dated back to the time when, as Crown Land Commissioner, he took an "unusual" course with the Indians of Manitoulin Island.

In tracing the honorable gentleman's course in the North West, we find that he was on several occasions cautioned in a purely friendly spirit, to assume the virtue of reconciliation, "if he had it not;" but he treated such well-meant advice as "fancies to be laughed at." The spirit in which he acted may be easily conjectured when we find it reported, "that shortly after his arrival at Pembina, two French half-breeds waited on him, and presented him with a letter they were commissioned to carry to him. He took the letter, looked at it, said it was dirty; read it, asked who it came from, tore it in pieces, and threw the fragments in the faces of the messengers; turned on his heel and walked off."

This may be what Mr. McDougall calls "conciliation;" it was nevertheless very injudicious, as one of those messengers commanded the Fort at Pembina. This is only one of many stories, all tending to prove that, by his cold and haughty bearing, he had become so obnoxious that it is questionable had he even obtained a welcome at Fort Garry, whether his reign would have been sufficiently long to have established the Government on a firm basis. In view of this grave question, perhaps it is better for the future of British North America, that Mr. McDougall has once more taken his seat in the Dominion Parliament, as the representative of North Lanark.

Let us now turn from Mr. McDougall to the Government of which he was a member. To their reticent policy, the Canadian public may attribute,—in the first instance at least, the failure in the North West. It appears impossible to deny, that their action was characterized by great want of consideration, even if they were not "wholly guided by

motives of temporary, political expediency." Without reverting to any of the numerous grievances, this country has suffered at the hands of the Hudson Bay Company, and in a certain measure, at the hands of the British Government from the tardiness of its action, we believe we may assume, that the people of these Provinces accepted the "compromise" with no particular feeling of gratitude to any of the parties concerned. It was acquiesced in merely as a measure of expediency, wherein the disagreeable and costly part of the arrangement were merged in the greatness of the brilliant future opening before them. On these grounds they tacitly assented to the necessity of the contract, and to the payment of the £300,000, not for one moment thinking that anything further in the way of a "dispute" could arise, or that a second drain would be made upon the public chest, in enforcing the agreement. With such feelings predominating, the people of the Dominion had no objection to have bonfires lighted, and champagne dinners given in honor of the delegates who had, in some way or other, terminated the tedious controversy; never anticipating any objection from the half-breeds who had petitioned for it as far back as 1857. Matters being thus left in the hands of our government, their first mistake consisted in not plainly announcing and expounding their policy, unless, indeed, they had no scheme sufficiently well-defined to admit of enunciation. The people of these Provinces have so long enjoyed the blessings of representative government, that it appears never to have entered their heads that their rulers had determined to adopt an irresponsible system in the North West. It may be that the Government were ashamed of the plan they had adopted; it would certainly appear so, when we remember the studied concealment and reserve with which they contrived to enshroud the whole subject. If, as has been frequently reported, the appointment of a non-elective Council was merely a temporary expedient, the precursor of free institutions at no distant day, they were, in duty, bound to reassure the minds of those who were already murmuring at the prospect of a government copied exactly from the galling rule from which they were just being emancipated. A frank and honest exposition of their policy would, perhaps, have saved the Dominion all the trouble, vexation and expense that followed. It is not at all clear that any such Council as the Government attempted, and failed to establish, was necessary or even judicious; that, however, is beside the point at issue—the culpable reticence and reserve of the Cabinet, after direct information had been received of the prevailing and increasing disaffection. Thus stood matters: the Cabinet aware of the growing dissatisfaction, and the public ignorant of it, at the time when Mr. Howe's "journey of discovery" was about to be undertaken. Previous to that time, however, and about six weeks before Mr. McDougall's departure, numerous criticisms appeared in the press on the Government policy of sending a Canadian Council with the Lieut.-Governor to legislate for the people of the Red River Settlement. To this version or perversion of their intentions, the Government did not take the trouble to give a direct denial, although as it turned out,

they either altered their programme and decided to take only a minority of the proposed council from Canada, or such was their original intention. It was announced that although hundreds applied for the situation only sufficient to form a minority in the council were to be accepted. Knowing the ease with which a denial of the charge could have been made by the government then, it seems lamentable in the extreme, that they did not condescend to give it, if only to silence the murmurs of opposition. It now appears certain, that the bitter controversy that then arose, unfortunately added fuel to the flame that had already been lighted in the Nor'-West. That it did not originate the ill-feeling appears certain; but that it gave form and substance to it,—that it acted as a basis of the rebel Bill of Rights, appears certain.

Nor could such a result have been un-anticipated by any one at all conversant with the history of those 15,000 settlers. It has been under a species of "family compact" government that they have lived for the last fifty years, and therefore their determination not to be "bought like sheep," or "made Irishmen of," is nothing more than might have been looked for under the circumstances. Admitted, that they took an extreme view of the opposition charge against the Ottawa Cabinet, or perhaps more properly that they accepted what was written against the government without the usual and necessary allowance; still the relative position of the parties is not altered; the submission of their intended policy to the half-breeds, and a plain and thorough explanation of it, were clearly incumbent upon the government. This, however, was not done till the evil effect of their reticence had become so marked, that when they proclaimed that a majority of the council should be residents of the settlement, it was simply laughed at by the half-breeds, who by this time appear to have thought that any such majority would consist of those who had contrived to make themselves particularly obnoxious to them and their interests. The settlers appear to have expected that some such conciliatory and explanatory measures would have been adopted. Being disappointed in this, they the more readily listened to American sympathizers, and to the more ambitious amongst themselves, who readily perceived the power placed in their hands by the ill-advised and contemptuous silence of Sir John A. McDonald and his Cabinet. They at once availed themselves, therefore, of every means to instil the most seditious doctrines into the timorous and ignorant minds of the half-breeds: calling upon them to resist the encroachments of an enemy bent upon despoiling them of their homes, their heritage, and their freedom itself, or, as one of the clergy put it, of their "faith and farms together." In such a community barely acquainted with civilization, but retaining a lively recollection of a power whose history was to them little else than a record of avarice, rapine and bloodshed, we cannot wonder when there was no truthful representation of Canada's intentions: first, at their easy yielding, and then at their firm determination to resist every attempt of their purchaser—as they termed Canada—to take possession.

Nor should we at this point forget, that though many of the

grievances of which the half-breeds complained, were imaginary ; still, it must be admitted that they have had some causes of complaint, and those not so trivial as some have endeavored to make out.

In the first place, we will allude to that feeling which we find referred to in the London press, as follows :—"That the information of the transfer or compromise having been effected, was the signal for disaffection and armed revolt." At the time such declarations were first made, Canada does not appear to have given them adequate weight ; for, though it seems to have been lost sight of at the time, we find afterwards that Louis Riel's most determined movement, during which he ventured upon the arrest of the late Governor McTavish, was made on the ground that the half-breeds not being a party to the transfer, it was null and void, "and the territory held to be the property solely of its present inhabitants." That this view of the question was first disseminated by the Hudson Bay Company's officials in the country, there appears little doubt, though it is not likely that, when sowing the "wind," they anticipated the "whirlwind." The half-breeds themselves at length appear to have realized the extreme character of the revolt, the point being decided against Riel by a large majority. They thus appear to have consented to pass over their personal feeling at not being consulted, prior to the transfer, in return for the practical benefits about to be obtained.

In the second place, they accuse the government of having sent road-makers "under the cloak of charity," who swindled the settlers, and necessarily produced a certain amount of dissatisfaction. This, it is asserted, was another Hudson Bay Company operation ; but nevertheless, it produced an effect. Again, we have it "that the primary difficulties were rather of a personal than a political character, and that it was the personal odiousness and unpopularity of some of those who put themselves forward as the especial representatives and exponents of Canadian interests that sowed the seeds of the whole trouble. This feeling, we are told, was aggravated by the airs and insolence towards the half-breeds of a few Canadian snobs sent there by the Government on official business."

In substantiation of this, we have one correspondent naming a Government official who should have known better, who, "after having received the hospitalities of many families in the Settlement, saw fit to ridicule in a public print, those who had entertained him—to speak and write disparagingly of the settlers as a body, and the ladies in particular." Then again, we find that a Canadian was horse-whipped in Fort Garry, for "ungentlemanly conduct ;" and in fact when we know the class of persons who were sent up by the Government, and who assumed to be representatives of Canadian manners and morals, and who withal took upon themselves to intimate that there was not a man in the whole North West qualified to sit in the council of Mr. McDougall : we are not surprised that gentlemen of Fort Garry, and there are such in every sense of the word, should have experienced something stronger than a distaste for things Canadian, judging from the articles,—exquisites though they thought

themselves—that were sent up in the character of pioneers. Trifling as this latter objection to Canada may appear, in the older Provinces, where constant contact with the snob has made him rather a source of amusement than otherwise, it nevertheless appears to have caused an injurious impression, which “taken in connection with the blundering of the Government, produced a deep feeling of hostility and resentment.” In this way we find that public feeling was already aroused before Colonel Dennis’ surveying operations commenced; and though it has been asserted by many of the half-breeds themselves, that his conduct on the whole was rather conciliatory than otherwise; still, it seems more than strange that, being so well aware of the increasing disaffection that he gave prominence to it in his communications to Mr. McDougall, he should order Mr. Webb to commence operations by running a base line through the very midst of the most bitter of the French half-breeds. The consequence of this step was that Mr. Webb’s men were stopped by a small party of half-breeds, headed by Louis Riel, who, on coming before the magistrate, refused not only to give any excuse, but any promise to allow the survey to proceed. After some deliberation, it was decided to withdraw Mr. Webb from that district. It was, whilst celebrating this triumph over Colonel Dennis at Brousse’s house, that the greater achievement—that of preventing at all hazards, the approaching of Governor McDougall—was resolved upon.

Another oversight of the Ottawa Government was shown in the matter of the “Indian Claim.” According to all precedent of the Imperial Parliament, and by express injunction in the Royal Proclamation still in force, it was required that the Indian lands should be purchased or acquired by treaty, before occupation. This, it appears, was thought unworthy of consideration—at any rate it was not acted upon; for we find one tribe of Indians contesting the right of immigrants to settle on the lands a short distance above Portage La Prairie, and another party notifying Mr. McDougall of their rights. Whilst on this point, no matter how we may disagree with Louis Riel and his party in other respects, we find that they systematically avoided enlisting the fierce passions of the Indians in the strife, which though only one of words,—with one lamentable exception—might not long have continued so, had the Indian been allowed free license. For this, however, so far as the reports go, we have wholly to thank the residents of the settlement, and more especially the half-breeds. In consequence of the Canadian Government’s disregard of the injunction contained in the Proclamation, the settlers who went in the fall were nothing but despoilers, though they themselves can hardly be expected to have known it. The Indian title to the great portion of the Territory (if not all, as some assert,) still remains perfect; and before the Government were justified in sending emigrants, or making surveys, this should have been disposed of. If necessity required that such steps should be taken before a treaty could be made, then a communication stating the fact was due to the savage, who, on such points, is as determined as his civilized brother.

Hitherto, British rule in America has been distinguished by a scrupulous regard for the rights of the Indian. Whatever wrongs the native may have suffered at the hands of the Government and officers of the United States, we have secured an enviable character in this respect, by an unvarying policy, equitable, considerate, and straightforward. Our success has been attested by an American Consul, who in an able report, directs the attention of his Government to the splendid results of our administration of Indian affairs. The Indian of the North West is loyal to the Imperial Government, and would, with proper treatment, transfer his allegiance to the Dominion. Nor when we remember their antipathy to the "long knife," can we suppose a more effectual reserve for years to come, either to repel foreign invaders, or to keep in check that notorious clique of sympathizers who look upon everything British as deserving nothing short of utter annihilation. Of course the "dark brother" may be an expensive part of the bargain, but that ought to have been considered in the compromise; for the Hudson Bay Company did not, and could not, extinguish the Indian claim, and therefore, Canada must meet it. Nor will this be such a trifling matter either, when we note the price of a similar claim in Minnesota, which was nearly \$3,000,000. When we consider that the Indian of the North West is as intelligent as his southern neighbour, we must admit that he had a direct interest in not allowing Mr. McDougall, through his agents, to act in an "unusual manner."

To these causes of discontent were added, "misapprehensions" of the circumstances under which Canada sought to make it a part of the Dominion." When we remember what a fine opportunity the Ottawa Cabinet, by their reticence, had given to the Opposition press, it cannot be wondered at that the insurgent party found sufficient arguments in the Reform papers, when somewhat distorted, to make out a very fair case.

The Government organs may now assert that their policy *was* stated, and this cannot be denied; but when was it stated? Not until the insurgents had organized to oppose what they understood to be the Government policy—a policy which the Government would not, or, at least, did not condescend to repudiate at the proper time.

In looking back over the terrible mismanagement, this appears to have been the worst blunder of all; nor does it lessen it, in any degree, to know that this "strange silence" was not occasioned by there being anything in their intentions savoring of a "family compact," or anything which must necessarily have been kept dark. Their policy may not have been so advanced as that of the Imperial Government in 1792—they may not have wished to grant representative government at once, as Colonel Simcoe, the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, proposed when the population in this Province was less than that of the Red River Settlement at the present time, and more sparsely settled. Still, any fair explanation of their intended procedure, had they chosen to make it, would have sufficed to ensure a firm support to the Council, serving avowedly as a preparative for



representative government. That such was then the intended policy, there appears but little doubt; but how was the press of Canada, how were the people of Red River to divine that intention? Even granting that all parties were fully aware of it—is the intention alone of the people at Ottawa a sufficient guarantee of fulfilment? England does not conduct her diplomacy in this way, and the residents at Red River, while still loyal to the Queen, and desiring connection with Canada, had a right to know more than the supposed intention of the Ottawa Cabinet, before submitting to its decrees. The evil, however, did not end here. One devious step leads to another. The ball had been started, and who was to stop it? Enquiry had been made, and who was to answer it?

The Hon. J. Howe, Provincial Secretary, was travelling through the country in a semi-official character, but he would not say what the policy of the Dominion Government was to be. That was the Hon. Mr. McDougall's duty, and he (Mr. Howe) was not paid for conducting the business of two departments. This being the situation of affairs, it does not appear at all extraordinary that the settlers should come to the conclusion that the Canadian Government, in plain language, desired possession, and would just send up Mr. McDougall, with "something in his pocket," to arrange matters, and stay, without as much as saying "by your leave." Such, it was asserted, was the sum and substance of the Canadian policy; and when we remember how the half breeds have been schooled of late years, not only by their suffering under the Hudson Bay Company, but by the insinuations of designing Americans and ambitious residents, it becomes quite easy to understand that they were not at all satisfied with an assumed intention, more especially so, as by acts of officials, acting under the Government, they were not led to judge favorably of the superior who was to come.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RED RIVER REBELLION—PROGRESS.

Having thus endeavoured, in no spirit of hostility to the Government, to indicate what appears to us to be its chief mistakes in dealing with the people of the North-West, we may at once enter upon a narrative of the events in their order. It is to be regretted that we are not yet in a position to give a definitive verdict regarding the mission of Mr. Howe. The honourable gentleman's visit was undertaken with a view of acquiring some knowledge of the wants and wishes of the public, "so that the business in his office might be more judiciously carried on." The purpose was certainly a laudable one; but how was it executed? It is obvious "that Mr. Howe," to use Mr. McDougall's words, "might very easily, under the circumstances, have paved the way for the entry of the Canadian Government;" did he endeavor to do so? We are sorry to say, with all accessible evidence before us, that we cannot answer this important question in the affirmative. The honourable gentleman admits that even "the English part of the population were uneasy and dissatisfied, and were discussing the matter among themselves." What steps did he take to disabuse the minds of the people of their erroneous impressions? Instead of addressing the inhabitants, as such a boasted master of rhetoric might have done, he appears, according to his own statement, to have deliberately abstained from doing so. "He conversed," he tells us, "freely with all classes and orders of people:" and when his remarks are quoted against him, characterizes them as "absurd chaff," "witticisms," or "general observations." Surely, if ever there was an occasion when a sworn adviser of the Crown should have given expression to nought but serious and carefully considered opinions, this was the one. That Mr. Howe was unequal to the grave emergency, we are compelled to believe, for we have it on his own admission. But a much graver charge remains behind. It is alleged, on the authority of several Winnipeg officials, that, so far from indulging in mere ill-timed *badinage*, the Secretary threw the entire weight of his influence, and that of his Government, on the side of discontent and disaffection. He is represented as saying that "he entirely approved of the course the half-breeds were taking, and if they held out, they would get all they wished. That Nova Scotia held out and succeeded on no better plea. \* \* \* That he would do his best for the half-breeds in Parliament, \* \* \* and that the settlement would prosper, if left to govern itself." These statements, if true, look very like treason to Queen and country, with a darker fringe of unfaithfulness to the sworn obligations of a Privy Councillor. There was only

needed, in addition, unsuspected treachery toward a colleague, and the picture is complete. We have it in the further report, that "Mr. Howe also told Mr. Bannatyne that Mr. McDougall was unpopular in Canada; and hinted at the probability that he would make himself so *if allowed to govern Red River.*" The words in italics, if really employed by Mr. Howe, were probably suggested by that gentleman's recollections of Macbeth, where the worthy Thane, being asked by his still worthier spouse, at what time Duncan was to leave the castle, replied, with a similar hint,—"*To-morrow, as he purposes.*" Both in Scotland and in Canada, the words fell on no unwilling ears, and were followed in each case by murder and usurpation.

As we have already stated, however, these reports involve too serious an imputation upon the Secretary to be accepted without the strongest proof; at the same time, its very gravity is the best of all reasons for a most searching investigation. That Mr. Howe was not incapable of prejudicing the people against the incoming Governor, by means of inuendo, appears from his own version of words used by him at Fort Garry. On being asked by Mr. Blake "if he" (Mr. H.), "had counselled them not to resist, but to obtain their rights by constitutional means?" he simply replied by making an observation which may have served as "counsel" in the wrong direction,—"*that if Mr. McDougall was a sensible man*" (mark the insinuation) "he would learn the views of the country, and govern himself accordingly." These, be it remembered, were the terms in which Mr. Howe chose to speak of a public officer of the Queen; the Government representative for whose appointment he was jointly responsible with his colleagues. Is it any wonder that the people, of whose discontent this model peace-maker was fully aware—and who were, in fact, on the eve of armed revolt—should interpret his words as actually meaning,—"*You are quite right, gentlemen, go-a-head?*"

Having thus accomplished nothing, unless it was mischief, by his mission to Fort Garry, what do we find next? Mr. Howe met Mr. McDougall "on the plains;" did he give the latter the slightest information regarding the actual state of affairs, or offer him any advice regarding the course he ought to adopt on assuming the reins of government? Mr. McDougall was surely entitled to this much as a matter of courtesy, leaving the question of duty entirely out of view. Forsooth, Mr. Howe could not think of "keeping the Governor and family in the cold" to inform him of the "dangerous state of affairs," though it appears there was considerable time occupied by the Secretary in proving that the soil was "excellent," and the climate "excecrable." Nor could he, it seems, prevail upon himself to part with his friend and ex-colleague, even though the storm was blowing in the face of the Governor's party, till he had indulged them with a story about "floating across a river through the ice." There was, however, another and shorter story about some iced-champagne, the slightest allusion to which would have been of much greater importance to Mr. McDougall at the time; that Mr. Howe did not think fit to communicate. Mr. Howe does not appear to have alluded to the disaffection,

either facetiously or otherwise, though he could have given invaluable information, which, as Mr. McDougall says, he would "willingly have turned back to receive." That Mr. Howe failed to do this, we have his own admission, with an excuse so trivial, that it does not deserve a moment's consideration in view of the impending calamity, which, from first to last, he appears to have treated as a fit theme for jesting.

So much, then, for Mr. Howe's share in this history of blunders. Visiting the territory ostensibly as the *avant courier* of the new government, he systematically abstained from preparing the way for it. Advised of the misapprehensions which prevailed, he made no effort to remove them. Aware of the disaffection which had already, on the 4th of October, proved an obstacle to the survey, he deliberately concealed from the Governor the alarming state of affairs. The Secretary admits that he did nothing; his enemies allege that he did mischief. An old saw tells us—"it is better to do nothing than to do mischief;" but there was a third course—the best of all—which Canada had a right to expect at the hands of Mr. Howe—to do his duty. That most assuredly he did *not* do; and the consequence was, that the country broke out into open rebellion almost immediately after he had left it.

Another feature in the insurrection was the attitude of the H. B. Company and its officials. It would have been perhaps too much to expect any cordial assistance from them. Men do not like to surrender power; and never look with favouring eyes upon those who supplant them. The utmost that could be asked of the out-going *régime* was, that it should place no obstacle in the way of a peaceable transfer; and as far as possible ensure it, by firmly maintaining law and order until it had taken place. Governor McTavish and his associates have been charged with instigating the revolt. This may or may not be true; one thing, however, seems clear—that they made no vigorous effort to discourage or check it. They evidently disliked the Canadian Governor, and perhaps the Canadian Government; and the best that can be said of them is, that they let things take their course, utterly heedless of results. They said "no" so gently, that the half-breeds construed it as "yes." Now it must be admitted that this undignified neutrality may have been partly caused by the gratuitously insulting manner in which the Company's officers were treated during the negotiations. We cannot help thinking that the appointment of Mr. McDougall was an unfortunate one. He was the most active member of the delegation to England, and unquestionably deserves credit for the earnest zeal with which he pressed the claims of Canada. At the same time, the bitter attacks he appears to have made upon the Company and its agents would have sufficed to make him their personal enemy—even if they had not been galled by the premature exultation with which he boasted that he was to be the first Lieut.-Governor. Moreover, after the appointment had been made, Mr. McDougall treated Governor McTavish with coldness until he found himself expelled the territory, and hoped to re-enter it by the aid of the man he had despised.

That there was no love lost between the two potentates is evident from the report of Mr. Bannatyne, that, "when in the Council of Assiniboia, he heard the Governor of the Company *swear* heavily at Mr. McDougall" after reading a letter from him urging the issue of a "law and order" proclamation. The indifference and *quasi* hostility of the Hudson Bay Company thus resulted, in great measure, from a pure feeling of personal enmity. Be that as it may, this "masterly inactivity" of theirs has cost the Dominion over \$1,800,000, besides that portion of the expense which devolves upon the Imperial Government. It appears, therefore, that something like the hardened impudence of conscious guilt must have prompted the Company to demand pecuniary compensation for damage done and goods appropriated by the insurgents, as well as interest at 5 per cent. on the £300,000 from December 1st, 1869, to the date of actual payment.

The arguments of the delegates when in London, conclusively prove that the Hudson Bay Company had virtually no right or title to the soil. They had simply a "claim," or more properly an "interest," which interest the Canadian Government were willing to purchase for £300,000, in addition to the land reservations—clearly on the understanding that the Company were to ensure our peaceable possession of their claim or interest. Now they were either in possession, or they were not. If the former, the transference was a direct necessity to their fulfilment of the contract; if the latter, then their acceptance of the £300,000 was illegal, and their title to the reservations lapsed to the people of the North West Territories. Nor does this view of the case appear to have escaped the notice of Sir Stafford Northcote, Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, who, in apparent trepidation,—the danger of a collision being imminent—wrote to Earl Granville, that, "it is most undesirable to leave matters in their present undefined position,"—which undefined position he almost immediately defines as follows :—"That the committee cannot recognize, in the circumstances which have occurred, any reason for the Dominion Government delaying the performance of the engagement \* \* \* and causing the stipulated price of the land to be handed over to the Company," and thereby he might have added relieve them from the responsibility. But to this view, Earl Granville demurred, stating in substance that the Canadian Government urge a temporary delay in proceeding with the transfer, from a conviction of the present situation, and not from any desire to repudiate or postpone the performance of any of their engagements; adding, "that it would be impolitic to put an end to the only existing authority in the country, and compel Canada to assert its title by force;" he also believing, "that a short delay in the completion of the contract, thowever in itself inconvenient may be more than compensated by ensuring that the surrender is finally effected with full consent and agreement of both parties interested."

From what has been already stated, the reader will observe that, even during the initiation of the movement, elements of disorder were at work, eminently unfavourable to what the malcontents termed

"Canadian domination." Even amongst the better class of the half-breeds of both sections, there was a feeling of jealousy at being passed over to "played-out Canadian politicians" as they were pleased to characterize the members of the Privy Council. The Company's officials who could have removed any false impression, held grandly aloof until it was too late, preserving that contagious silence which unaccountably seized the Hon. Prov. Secretary also, as soon as he had crossed the boundary. Such being the relative situation of the parties at the commencement of the *émeute*, we shall find little difficulty in tracing briefly its rise and progress; for although contemporary reports were somewhat confused and conflicting, the main facts of the case may be readily gleaned. To many, a sketch of the insurrection may seem trite and uninteresting, still, a history of those eventful months is necessary for our purpose, and we believe, will be acceptable to those who have not yet seen it in a collected form.

"Ever since the commencement of the last negotiations for the transfer of the Territory to the Dominion of Canada," we are told, "a few individuals disloyal to the Queen, and claiming relationship south of the boundary, had been exceedingly busy in their efforts to create a spirit of opposition to the proposed transfer among the people." With the English-speaking part of the population, these persons appear to have been generally unsuccessful. To the comparatively favorable reception their arguments met with from the French half-breeds, we were in a great measure indebted for the incipient rebellion at Red River. To the latter, the arguments of the sympathizers appealed more forcibly. They were told that, by the entrance of the immigrants, the free and roving life to which they have become passionately attached, would at first be restricted, and eventually stopped. The English-speaking people, on the other hand, were less moved by such a prospect, as they had of late years been turning their attention to farming in preference to the chase; still, we find that they, from jealousy at being passed over in forming the Council, "were only desirous of preserving the tranquillity of the colony, and destitute of any enthusiasm in the matter." Such being the prevailing tone, we find that "throughout the autumn, reports were in circulation of movements among the French half-breeds, and Sunday public meetings were held by that section of the people, which ended apparently in no practical purpose." Still, the ball was kept rolling; week by week the malcontents became less reserved; and the interest taken by the people more marked." The loyal portion of the community, though they well knew that such meetings were being held, seem to have been totally unable to counteract their influence, and contented themselves with preparing quietly for whatever emergency might arise, so soon as Mr. McDougall, who was shortly expected, should enter the Territory. Prior to this event, however, the insurgents represented themselves as being constituted into a corporate body, called the "Republic of the Half-breeds," of which John Brousse was President, and Louis Riel, Secretary. On the 21st of October, they took possession of the highway at St. Norbert's, nine miles south of Fort Garry, and subjected all

outgoers and incomers to a rigid search. On the 25th of October, a meeting of the Governor and Council of Assiniboine was convened, at which these people attended; but all the attempts of the Council to dissuade them from their course were unavailing. They defiantly asserted that they would not become "the colony of a colony." "Further attempts to move the half-breeds from their resolution, were persevered in through the agency of the members of the Council belonging to their own class, but still without effect. The Roman Catholic priesthood as a body, refused to interfere; but the parish priest of St. Norbert's openly countenanced the insurgents."

On the 2nd of November, Mr. McDougall crossed the boundary into the British Possessions, and next morning was forced to return to United States Territory. From this date up to the 16th, there appears to have been a great amount of talking and writing, without much action, on the part of the people of the Settlement. In fact, they appear to have been as much astonished at their own temerity as the rest of the world. At the latter date, however, they once more commenced operations by holding another meeting; at which there appears to have been a certain desire manifested for an amicable adjustment of the difficulties, not only regarding the grievances of the half-breeds, but also as to the course they should pursue touching the expelled Governor. The delegates, who had written instructions from the inhabitants of their respective parishes, attended in force. The names of those acting were as follows:—French side: François Dauphinie, Pierre Poitras, Patrice Breland, Pierre Laviellier, William O'Donohue, Andre Bucheman, Pierre Paranteau, senr., Louis La Certe, Baptiste Touron, Charles Nolan, Jean Baptiste Perrault, John Brousse, President; Louis Riel, Secretary. English side: Henry McKenney, H. F. O'Lone, James Ross, Maurice Lowman, Dr. Bird, Donald Gunn, Thomas Bunn, Henry Prince (Chief of Saulteaux Indians), Robert Tait, John William Tait, George Bunn, John Garrioch.

A discussion took place as to the propriety of keeping Mr. McDougall out and of resorting to arms. It was carried on for several hours; when, not having decided on any course, the meeting adjourned till the next day. In the mean time, Governor McTavish's proclamation, calling upon the disaffected to lay down their arms and submit to the Queen's authority, appeared; and at the meeting on the 17th it was, after some opposition, permitted to be read, when after a very short discussion, the Council again adjourned till the 22nd, no course having yet been decided upon. At the third meeting the question arose as to Mr. McDougall being allowed to enter the Territory. The proposition advanced by the English section was, that he should be allowed to enter, on condition that he would not assume the governorship "until the rights of the people were respected and granted." To this the Louis Riel party demurred, and waxing warm, "declared as a body that Mr. McDougall should not enter the Settlement unless over their dead bodies." After which outburst of passion, we are told the meeting adjourned till the next day. Before

the hour of assembling, however, news was brought that the French, having seen that "war" could not be conducted without "munitions," had seized the cash and books of the Government of Assiniboia, and had taken forcible possession of the Fort. This intelligence, as may be expected, rather disconcerted the English delegates, who, however, at length decided "to go and see what the new aspect of affairs meant." At this, the meeting of the 23rd, on the strength of the seizure, it may be presumed, the question as to Mr. McDougall's entrance was laid aside, and "the advantages and disadvantages of confederation with Canada" came up for discussion. Now, at this stage of the revolutionary proceedings, it may be well to note that the great majority were satisfied that their best and only course was to go into the Dominion with the rights of British subjects, and the tariff and other regulations of Canada modified to meet the peculiar circumstances of their case." Then arose the question—what form of government should be established until arrangements were completed? Here the great difficulty appears to have occurred; for, on the French announcing their intention of forming a "Provisional Government" to upset the Hudson Bay Company's rule, the English made some strong protests, and the meeting broke up in confusion, after making an arrangement to meet again on the 1st of December. Before the time arrived, however, it appeared that a serious disturbance was apprehended from false rumours of a counter revolution circulated by designing persons; and, for the sake of humanity and peace, an effort was made to unite the two parties. Accordingly it was agreed that the rule of the Hudson Bay Company be permitted to continue as usual, until the Queen's Proclamation had been issued; further, that, in the meantime, an "Executive Committee" should be formed of representatives from all parts of the Settlement, whose duty it should be to treat with Canada for the rights claimed by the people. This proposition, though at first agreed to by the French, was at last rejected in favour of the pet idea of a "Provisional Government," which had at least the virtue of a comparatively high sounding title.



## CHAPTER V.

### THE RED RIVER REBELLION—SUPPRESSION.

On the 1st of December, Mr. McDougall decided to assume the offensive. Accordingly, on that day he issued a proclamation announcing the transfer of Rupert's Land and his own appointment of Lieutenant-Governor; and, at the same time, gave to Colonel Dennis a commission "empowering him to attack, arrest, disarm, and disperse armed men disturbing the public peace; and to assault, fire upon, or break into houses in which these armed men were to be found." Before inquiring into the motive or justification of these acts, it seems as well to note in the first place their immediate effect in the settlement. At no period, since the outbreak, do the people appear to have been more favorably inclined to submit to the Queen's authority through her representative. The great bulk of the settlers were dissatisfied with the uncertainty that pervaded every relation of life; and minor jealousies and rivalries were beginning to manifest themselves amongst the staunchest supporters of the Provisional Government; still though these circumstances were concurring to heal the breach, it must not be forgotten that the opposing influences were yet at work, and that, by thorough organization, they had so far succeeded in frustrating every attempt of the unorganized majority to proclaim their intentions. As an instance of the better feeling which prevailed, we find that at the meeting on the 1st of December—the one which so speedily broke up on the report of Mr. McDougall's Proclamation—the English half-breeds refused to accept the Provisional Government, and were waiting patiently in the anticipation that the French would quarrel amongst themselves, and thereby strengthen the position of the loyalists. That the body dispersed immediately on receipt of the news was to be anticipated, and it is stated that the "majority decided to obey the call of Mr. McDougall," while even the French "were for the time disconcerted." That this favorable turn in affairs continued for some little time seems certain, as it appears that the "loyal whites and half-breeds began rapidly to rally, having occupied the Stone Fort; while, on the other hand, the insurgents were beginning to disperse, and had withdrawn their forces from the printing office and other places in the town of Winnipeg." A still better authority we have in Mr. McDougall's triumphant despatch to the Secretary of State, dated the 6th December, with the vaunt that the "enemy now melts away before a proclamation and a conservator of the peace." That Mr. McDougall continued to labor under the delusion of his success for a few days longer, was perhaps fortunate for all concerned, as about the 10th of the month it appears to have been admitted by all, no doubt by the

Governor himself, that "only evil" was "to be apprehended from the action of Colonel Dennis under his commission." Perhaps, to the very fact of defeat following so quickly upon the heels of his boasted success, the Governor's "accepting the situation" so resignedly, is greatly attributable. In fact there was hardly sufficient time for the realization of his good fortune before he was too well assured that the half-breeds had re-assembled to the number of 400. What the effect of the Proclamation might have been had Mr. McDougall entered the Territory with the Colonel, we need not stop to enquire. It certainly was the height of indiscretion to commission that gentleman, who had acquired such objectionable prominence through his surveying operations. The few facts in connection with the Colonel's incursion are easily told. After issuing what was termed his "war" proclamation, he occupied the Stone Fort with about 50 Cree Indians, and, in its neighbourhood, organized and drilled the loyal English and Scotch half-breeds. This warlike attitude, however, lasted but for a few days. Then disbanding his force, and issuing his "peace" proclamation, the Colonel returned to his chief, after having accomplished more injury to the cause of Canada, by the Stone Fort warfare, than had been accomplished since the commencement of the *émeute*.

As has been seen, Riel's party during this time had not been idle. The brief period of confusion on their part, in the beginning of December, soon gave place to action. The Proclamation was denounced as "premature and illegal," and accordingly the "daubs of bad writing"—the French, it seems, are always critical—though duly avouched, were looked upon as so much waste paper. The most bitter feelings were cherished against Mr. McDougall by the French, for attempting to delude the people, while even the English and the Scotch were rendered lukewarm by what appeared to them an undeniable piece of assumption, both impolitic and illegal. In point of fact, they considered it to be virtually a declaration of war in an Indian country.

Having thus indicated the original causes of discontent, let us now inquire how far the Hon. William McDougall was responsible for the overt acts of rebellion afterwards committed. Something very like fatality appears to hang about the questions here involved. During the session of 1870, Mr. McDougall himself was stricken down by disease, at the very time when he was naturally anxious to make the necessary explanations. This year, not to speak of the absence of the Premier in Washington and the hasty manner in which the business of the session was dispatched, the hand of sickness was laid upon the Hon. Mr. Howe, and thus again the promised explanations were deferred. Meanwhile, two pamphlets have appeared, which we presume may be taken to contain the case on each side respectively. The first (from the press of John Lovell, Montreal,) is attributed to Sir Francis Hincks; indeed, to those who know the Finance Minister's style, it can hardly be said to be a matter of doubt. It is entitled the "Hon. William McDougall's Conduct Reviewed," and puts the case against the unfortunate ex-Lieutenant Governor as strongly as it can be put—rather too strongly, even for a thorough-faced casuist. The other

is a reply from the pen of Mr. McDougall himself. It is, on the whole, a satisfactory vindication of the hon. gentleman's acts and motives, although we must say we felt some disappointment at not meeting an explanation of one or two facts prominently put forth in the Government pamphlet.

Let us endeavour to state the case fairly on both sides. We have referred to the matter of the survey in a previous chapter ; there is no necessity, therefore, of recurring to it here, further than to record our conviction that Sir Francis Hincks, if, indeed, he was the anonymous pamphleteer, has made a most disingenuous use of the documents at his command. In fact, throughout this *brochure*, there is constantly displayed so glaring a perversion of dates and documents that the reader never feels safe so long as he treads upon the treacherous ground. For example, the Hon. Mr. Howe arrived at Fort Garry on the 9th of October, and, on his return, met Mr. McDougall going thither. Sir Francis Hincks claims that "on a reference to dispatches and dates, it will appear that Mr. Howe must be exonerated from all blame:" that is regarding his alleged "sympathy with the disaffected," and "concealment of information" from Mr. McDougall. Will it be believed, that the very documents quoted by the pamphleteer, themselves convict the Provincial Secretary? "There has been *during the autumn*," wrote Governor McTavish to the Hudson Bay Company, a few days after the departure of Mr. Howe, "considerable agitation among the Canadian half-breed population, &c. They seem to have been fully, if not correctly, informed of how the Government was to be composed ; and they seemed to think their interests would be overlooked, and their religion interfered with." Mr. Howe must have ascertained these facts from Governor McTavish ; did he venture to explain matters to the malcontents, or did he inform Mr. McDougall of the danger? He did not. "On the 4th of October," (we quote the pamphlet), "several days before Mr. Howe's arrival," Colonel Dennis' surveying party were stopped ; of that Mr. Howe must have been aware ; what effort at pacification did he make? None ; he did not even take the trouble to speak with Mr. McDougall on the subject, three weeks after. About the time of Mr. Howe's arrival, "application was made to Father Superior Lestanc, the Vicar-General of the Diocese," to interfere in the cause of law and order. He declined, alleging as a reason—that "an idea possessed the half-breeds, that the Company was in collusion with the Canadian Government, and that if they got the idea that the Church was also in sympathy with that Government, the clergy would lose their influence over the people in a religious point of view." Now it seems hardly credible, nevertheless, it is the fact, that this extract, which indicates clearly that if Father Lestanc had any sympathies at all they were with the insurgents, is quoted "to exonerate Mr. Howe from all blame." A more feeble defence could hardly have been made.

We have now to inquire how far Mr. McDougall was justified in issuing the Proclamation and Commission of December 1st. It is unfortunately the case, that the despatches of Mr. Howe to the Gov-

error were always written about a week after they could have been of service. That of the 19th November tells Mr. McDougall, "you can claim or assert no authority in the Hudson's Bay Territory until the Queen's Proclamation, annexing the country to Canada, reaches you through this office. It will probably be issued on the 2nd December, and will be forwarded by a safe hand as soon as received." This despatch reached Mr. McDougall on the 6th December—five days too late. So with regard to that of the 29th November, set out in the Government pamphlet, which has really no bearing upon the matter at all.

The clearest evidence against Mr. McDougall is furnished by his own pen. Thus, in writing to Governor McTavish, November 7th, he says: "I shall remain here till I hear officially of the transfer of authority, and shall then be guided by circumstances as to what I may say or do." Moreover, in a despatch to Government, 13th November, Mr. McDougall says: "The recommendation that I should issue a Proclamation at once is not made for the first time; but I have uniformly replied that, until the transfer of the Territory has taken place, and I am notified of the fact, I shall not assume any of the responsibilities of government." So again:—"I expected to hear by this time that the transfer had been agreed to, and the Imperial order in Council passed. If I do not receive notice of this order in a few days, I shall be much embarrassed." Clearly, then, Mr. McDougall's original intention was to await intelligence from Ottawa of the actual transfer. It, therefore, seems almost inexplicable why he changed his mind, and issued his Proclamation of December 1st. The pleas put forth in his pamphlet are not wanting in plausibility, but they have too much the air of having been manufactured after the event. The Hon. gentleman urges that the date of transfer was agreed upon before he left Ottawa; that Sir Curtis Lampson, Deputy Governor, informed him that the date originally fixed, was finally resolved upon; that Earl Granville, in his latest despatch, had settled upon the same date; and that Governor McTavish had been duly notified. All this is doubtless true; but it does not explain why Mr. McDougall, after protesting so strongly, in the middle of November, that he would not issue a Proclamation until advised of the transfer, actually did issue one on 1st December. The evidence that he adduces in justification of his actual course, would undoubtedly have been more convincing had he not so frequently asserted his belief that the issuing of the Proclamation would be indefensible. On the whole, we venture to record our conviction, that, as a reply to the Government *brochure*, Mr. McDougall's pamphlet is satisfactory, but as a defence of his own consistency, by no means clear.

Returning again to the half-breeds, we find that after the proclamation and commission had proven failures; after the English and Scotch loyalists had disarmed, and the Canadian loyalists were in prison; after the *Nor'-Wester* had been stopped, and the first bill-of-rights had been issued, there arrived at Fort Garry as commissioners Vicar Thiebault and Colonel De Salaberry. That these gentlemen did

not succeed in effecting more than the Secretary of State in his "voyage of discovery," appears quite clear; unless we credit them with preparing the people for the entrance of Mr. Donald A. Smith, who, holding a prominent position in the Hudson Bay Company, was chosen by the Ottawa Cabinet as their commissioner; and judging from the reception of this gentleman by the settlers, we seem to see the "beginning of the ending," though Louis Riel still raised his objections. At the mass meetings held on the 19th and 20th of January, we are told that the interest was so great, even on the first day, as to what Mr. Smith's propositions would be, and what his powers were: that the discussion took place in the open air—the number of people being so great—and lasted five hours. The documents produced were the "instructions" to Mr. McDougall from the Secretary of State; and the letters brought from Canada by Vicar Thiebault and addressed to the Bishop of Rupert's Land and Governor McTavish.

The meeting of the second day was even larger than the first, the proceedings being marked throughout by a "friendly spirit," and a strong desire for a peaceable adjustment of the difficulties, though the actual business accomplished may be said to be shown in the following motion: "That twenty representatives be elected by the English settlers to meet twenty French representatives, on Tuesday, the 25th, at noon, at the Court House, to consider the Commission and decide what would be best for the welfare of the country."

At the convention of the 25th, which was carried on with closed doors, except to the clergy, Judge Black was elected chairman, William Coldwell and Lewis Schmidt, secretaries; Messrs Ross and Riel, translators. On the motion of Riel, it was agreed to translate Mr. Smith's papers. Other preliminaries having occupied most of the second day, on the third, the convention was addressed by Riel, who called attention to the importance of Mr. Smith's commission, saying, "There were ample grounds in that document for the belief that Canada was disposed to do us justice." Mr. Ross followed, taking the same grounds, and strongly advocating a reconciliation with the Canadian Government. At this point in the proceedings the Chairman and Mr. Ross urged the reading of the "Government of Canada's Proclamation as to their duty as British subjects;" but this for the time was objected to, though when Mr. Smith, on the motion of Louis Riel, came before the convention, he was loudly cheered, receiving, in fact, quite an ovation.

Mr. Smith having suggested that the "desires of the Convention" should be as definitely placed before him as possible, that he might the more fully reply, the proceedings terminated, after some discussion as to whether the old Bill of Rights or a new one should be submitted as a basis, the following motion by Riel having first been passed. It was moved, "that a committee composed of three English and three French meet at the Court House on the 28th, to draw up a Bill in accordance with the wishes of the people, ample time being allowed the Committee to frame such a Bill well." Carried. The

following Committee were then appointed :—Thomas Bunn, James Ross, Dr. Bird, Louis Riel, Louis Schmidt, and Charles Nolan. The following is the Bill of Rights, as submitted to the Convention :—

“ In the event of the country, entering the Dominion as a *Territory*, the people demand—

“ 1. Present 4 per cent. Customs' duty to continue till uninterrupted communication shall have been secured with Saint Paul.

“ 2. During this time no direct taxation shall be levied except by Local Legislature for municipal or other local purposes.

“ 3. All military, civil and other public expenses connected with the General Government to be defrayed by the Dominion.

“ 4. Territory to be governed by Canadian Lieutenant-Governor and Legislature of 15 Local representatives and 5 Canadian officials.

“ 5. When the Territory becomes a Province, it shall be governed by a popular Legislature and responsible Ministry under a Lieutenant-Governor appointed by Governor-General.

“ 6. Dominion Parliament not to interfere in Winnipeg more than in other Provinces.

“ 7. Governor's veto to be overborne by two-thirds vote.

“ 8. A Homestead and Pre-Emption Law.

“ 9. \$15,000 per annum appropriation for schools, roads and bridges, while the country is a territory.

“ 10. All public buildings to be at the cost of the Dominion Treasury.

“ 11. Railroad to be guaranteed to Lake Superior or Pembina within five years after Confederation is effected.

“ 12. Local military force to consist of natives only, for four years.

“ 13. English and French to be used in Courts and Legislature.

“ 14. Judge of the Supreme Courts to speak both languages.

“ 15. Indian treaties to be made.

“ 16. One member in Senate and three in Lower House, Dominion Parliament.

“ 17. All existing rights and privileges to be confirmed.

“ 18. Between two miles and four miles back from the river, instead of being held by settlers as hay-growing ground, to be held in fee simple.

“ 19. Civilized British subjects, over 21 years, and foreigners, householders of three years' residence, to vote.

“ 20. North-West Territory not liable for the Hudson's Bay Company's £300,000.

The Convention having debated on these, at length decided to modify Nos. 1, 4, 9, 11, 16 and 18, and withdraw No. 12. Upon submitting them to the Commissioner, Mr. Smith, as to the amended bill thus presented to him, intimated his belief that all, or nearly all, of the items would be granted by the Dominion Government. The Convention then proceeded to elect a Provisional Government, which, it was announced, was not only to rule in the North-West till the Ottawa Cabinet, first having agreed to the Bill of Rights, should

establish its authority ; but there also appear to have been certain powers assumed, sufficient for the purpose of legalising a general election of the Council, when every male resident, over twenty-one years, was to have the privilege of voting for a Republican Government, *pro tem*. The officers chosen by—or more properly in the case of Riel, forced upon the Convention—as constituting the Provisional Government, were Louis Riel, President ; James Ross, Chief Justice ; Thomas Bunn, Secretary of State ; Louis Schmidt, Assistant Treasurer, and O'Donoghue, Secretary of the Treasury. The delegates to proceed to Ottawa in company with Vicar Thiebault, Colonel De Salaberry, and Commissioner Donald A. Smith, were Father Richot, Mr. Scott, and Judge Black.

These arrangements being completed, and the delegates being guaranteed their expenses to Ottawa, Messrs. McTavish, Cowan and Bannatyne, who had been arrested, were released, and the settlers looked forward to a peaceable settlement of the difficulty. Such anticipation, however, appears to have been of brief duration ; for, on the 11th of February, a few days after the adjournment of the Convention, a party of French attempted to arrest one William Dease ; he, however, escaped, but eight persons who were in the house were taken prisoners. This act, from the prominent position of Dease among his neighbours, revived all the former fears, and spread a general gloom over the settlement. However, fourteen of the prisoners confined in the Fort being released the following day, the excitement again so quieted down that Monsieur Le President Riel's furnishing Dr. Cowan's house as a "royal residence," with Dr. Schultz' furniture, was treated as a huge joke. But such feeling of security was almost immediately dispelled, and this time by the loyalists of *Portage la Prairie*, St. Andrews, and lower down the settlement. They, it seems, had arisen with the avowed object of releasing the remainder of the prisoners, though the ulterior object was the deposing of Riel and those delegates of the late Convention who had submitted to him. That the loyalists had decided on this step after due consideration, appears from the fact of the large number of men that they had at one time together. Of course the figures, as then given, cannot be relied on ; but it was stated that in the vicinity of the Stone Fort, or on the march to it, there were 700 to 1,000 loyalists. This may be exaggerated, but we find from the same authority that the French only numbered about 600 ; however, it must not be forgotten that the insurgents were not only in fortifications, but, as Louis Riel said, "they would wait to be attacked." The imminent danger of an encounter caused the President to liberate the prisoners, they having been prevailed upon to agree with the conditions required by the Provisional Government. This news being communicated to Major Boulton's party, they, after some bitter discussion among themselves, decided to disperse. And it was in returning to their homes that the *Portage la Prairie* party, having to pass Fort Garry, were taken prisoners.

Among those thus unfairly taken, through breach of faith, was

Thomas Scott, afterwards shot by command of Riel, on the miserable subterfuge of having broken his parole, but in reality because the outspoken bravery of his nature made him vehemently assert, on all occasions, his detestation of Riel and his party. That this was a "mistake" on the part of Riel—which, according to some, is "worse than a crime," the sequel clearly shows. The act was as illegal as it was inhuman, and created a feeling of abhorrence in the Red River Settlement only exceeded by that so universally expressed in Canada. He undoubtedly thought, that by compromising his party by this overt act of bloodshed, they would necessarily (to ensure their own safety), follow him to any extreme, even to that of attacking the British and Canadian troops. But if such was his reasoning, he greatly erred, as with the murder of Scott, his own power received its death-blow. True, he for some considerable time afterwards continued to hold high revel at Fort Garry, but those who had joined with him to secure their rights, remained not to assume the responsibilities of his atrocious act. Such intention was so manifest that even the arrest of the delegates, Messrs. Richot and Scott, on the arrival at Ottawa, on the charge of being accessories to the murder of Thomas Scott, caused but little excitement in the Settlement. This, however, may be in a measure attributable to their release following so quickly their arrest, and in part to the intimation that the provisions of the Manitoba Bill "would be all that even they could desire." Nor, judging by the manner in which the Bill was received by the former supporters of Riel, does such assurance appear to have been anything but too well founded.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE PROVINCE OF MANITOBA.

The provisions of the Act constituting the Province of Manitoba may be briefly stated as follows:—In this we have the Province as shown on the map, extending to the 99th meridian, that is to say, three degrees or 180 miles from east to west, and one and a half degree or 90 miles from north to south. In common with the other Provinces of the Dominion, Manitoba—except in so far as affected by this Act—is subject to the provisions of the British North American Act. In the first instance, the new Province is to be represented in the Dominion Senate by two members, but when it shall have a population of 50,000 it will be entitled to three senators, and four when the population increases to 75,000. In the House of Commons it is to be represented until 1881 by four members, and on the completion of the decennial census in that year and afterwards its representation will be adjusted according to the terms of the British North American Act. The four districts, each of which is to elect one of the aforesaid members, will be defined in a proclamation of the Governor-General. The Executive of Manitoba is to consist of a Lieutenant-Governor and five Councillors, and the seat of Government is to be at or within a mile of Fort Garry. The Local Legislature of the new Province will be formed by two Chambers; a Legislative Council—for the first four years of seven, and after that of twelve members appointed for life—and a Legislative Assembly of twenty-four members, representing as many districts, are to be specified by the Lieutenant-Governor. Such Legislature to sit for four years, unless in the meantime dissolved by the Lieutenant-Governor. The electoral body will comprise all male persons who are twenty-one years of age, and not subject to legal incapacity, they being *bona fide* householders and British subjects, either by birth or naturalization, and having resided in the Territory for one year previous to the issuing of the writ of election. But these enactments only apply to the first election, future ones having to be provided for by the Local Legislature. The records and journals of the two Houses, the Acts of the Legislature, and the pleadings of the Courts of Law are to be printed in both the French and English languages. The New Province, not being in debt, will be entitled to interest at the rate of five per cent. on \$472,000. Thirty thousand dollars will be paid by Canada for the support of the Government and Legislature; and a further sum of 80 cents per head, on a population estimated at 17,000, to be augmented after the decennial census of 1881, and subsequent decennial periods, in proportion to the increase of the population,

until it reaches 400,000 souls. The Dominion, in addition, pays the Lieutenant-Governor. Judges of the Superior and County Courts, Customs Department, Postal Arrangements, Protection of Fisheries, Militia, Geological Survey, Penitentiary, and such other charges as may pertain to the General Government. The present Customs duties are to continue in force for three years. All ungranted or waste lands, except those reserved by the Hudson Bay Company in accordance with the terms of the Act by which they surrendered the Territory, are to be administered by the Government of Canada; and the lands, amounting to one million, four hundred thousand acres, set apart for the extinction of the Indian Title, or in other words for the benefit of the families of half-breeds, are also to be controlled by the Governor-General in Council. All grants of land in freehold made by the Hudson Bay Company, prior to March 8, 1869, will be confirmed. The same rule will apply to grants of estates less than freehold, as well as to all titles by occupancy under the license or authority of the Company, in that part of the Province where the Indian Title has been extinguished. Further than this, all persons in peaceable occupation of tracts of land where the Indian Title has not been extinguished are to have the right of pre-emption. Under regulations to be made by the Governor-General, the Lieutenant-Governor is also to adjust, on fair and equitable terms, all rights of common and cutting hay hitherto enjoyed, or for the commutation thereof by grants from the Crown. It is specially enacted that no law shall be passed by the Provincial Legislature, injuriously affecting, in any way, denominational schools, either Catholic or Protestant. An appeal against any Educational Act that infringes upon this proviso, will lie to the Governor-General in Council; and, if powers are required to enforce his decisions, the Parliament of Canada may be invoked to compel due compliance by an Act for the purpose. The other territories, lying beyond the narrow confines of the Province, will be governed by the Lieut.-Governor of Manitoba, acting under a further and distinct commission from the Governor-General.

Such, devoid of mere technicalities and formal clauses, being the provisions of "the Act to establish and provide for the Government of the Province of Manitoba," we were led to anticipate the general satisfaction with which it was received; nor at all astonished that a tacit understanding should have been adopted, that agitation of any kind was not only unnecessary but unadvisable, until after the arrival of the Lieutenant Governor. Still there remained the echoes, as it were, of the many rumours that had so materially assisted to keep the country in its former state of dread expectancy; but these in general did little harm, while the report that Colonel Wolseley was the bearer of an amnesty for Louis Riel and his principal supporters, appears to have been beneficial rather than otherwise, as no action was taken by these former usurpers of authority, probably in the belief that such was the case. On the morning of the 24th of August, however, when his ex-Excellency heard the bugles of the fastly-approaching regulars, he appears to have thought that his pardon was not forthcoming, and

that to be simply Louis Riel beyond Fort Garry, was better than to remain an imprisoned President within it. As to his movements since that time, we have numerous though varying reports; none of which, however, contain anything of further importance than that he was in hiding near the boundary line, having for companions a few of his old followers.

Adverting briefly to the opinions and actions of the Imperial Government during this period of making "not very agreeable history," we find that during the first stages of the revolt, the belief of Her Majesty's Ministers was that the difficulties had mainly arisen through the precipitancy and ill-advised measures of the Canadian Government and its appointee. Nor does it indeed seem that such opinion is yet changed, at least as to the statesmanship prior to the revolt; for, though Earl Granville has alluded on several occasions, in very flattering terms, to the action of the Dominion Government since the time of the revolt; still, there appears to be nothing that can be so construed as to give them a "character" prior to that time. Even in one of the latest of these laudatory despatches to Sir John Young, that of the 18th of May, Earl Granville only says, in giving an account of what has passed to the House of Lords, "I had much pleasure in acknowledging publicly the singular judgment, decision, and conciliation with which your Government has acted since this unfortunate outbreak." All of which praise seems to be merited by the Ottawa Cabinet, as to what was done *after* the unfortunate outbreak, for there are few but agree with His Lordship that the Canadian Government did exhaust *every* means—some of which were very questionable—of "explanation and conciliation before having recourse to force." Moreover, the tone of such despatches being so marked from that of those which had preceded them; and this, too, before all the facts could have been before Her Majesty's Ministers, we may perhaps be right in accepting their being made "publicly," as much with the view of ensuring future amity between ourselves and the former insurgents, as of compliment to the Canadian Government. But be this as it may, we find this was of much more import to the future of these Provinces, at the time, that the Imperial Government were willing to endorse such Imperial countenance by material assistance and support, sufficient to establish the authority of the Dominion in the North-West. The negotiations regarding the sending of the troops, having continued for some time, on the 23rd of April, the following ultimatum as to Imperial co-operation was received by Sir John Young, from Earl Granville.

"On the following conditions troops to advance. 1. Rose to be authorised to pay £300,000 at once, and Her Majesty's Government to be at liberty to make transfer before the end of June. 2. Her Majesty's Government to pay expense of British troops only, not exceeding 250, and Canadian Government the rest, sending at least 500 trained men. 3. Canadian Government to accept decision of Her Majesty's Government on all points of the Settlers' Bill of Rights. 4. Military arrangements to be to the satisfaction of General Lindsay."

On the 28th of April, Sir John Young asked for 390 of Her Majesty's troops, instead of 250, as proposed by Earl Granville; he, on the part of the Canadian Ministry, engaging that three-quarters of the whole cost of the expedition should be paid by Canada. On the 30th Earl Granville accepted this proposal, provided the Canadian Government, in other respects, accepts his of the 23rd, which does not appear to have been directly answered.

Of the expedition itself, nothing need be said but that it was a success. And when we remember the difficulties that were overcome and the dangers that were encountered, both of which have been so minutely and graphically portrayed by the correspondents who accompanied the troops, we think that the greatest praise, both to Colonel Wolseley and those under him, is found in the simple fact that they were successful. For a time, even after the arrival of the expedition, the same general apathy before alluded to, appears to have continued; but this, at length, gave place to a certain animation, when the question of an address to the Lieutenant Governor began to be discussed. Archdeacon McLean first submitted one to his parishioners, drawn principally on the basis that the future prosperity of the Province would be best secured "by forgetting the past." In this view, however, Drs. Schultz, Lynch, and some of their friends did not at once coincide. To the more moderate we were indebted for the very able and considerate addresses that were presented, through the majority of which, the extreme opinions of one party are greatly modified by the language of the other. In the replies to these, the Lieutenant Governor adopts the same moderate and conciliatory tone; he, on every occasion, evincing his unmistakable desire "for the people," as he said, "to turn your eyes rather forward than backward, making it your first duty to aid in the organization of the country and the establishment of peace and good order."

In his several Proclamations the same spirit ever predominates, he going so far as, in his appointment of Justices, to confer the honor upon some who had sat in the Council of Louis Riel. True, there was some considerable objection to this act of extreme conciliation, as it was called; but the prevailing principle being that of "compromise," the somewhat violent protests found only a very moderate support. Of course different people take different views of this "zeal for conciliation;" but, in the main, Governor Archibald has the support of the great majority in the older Provinces, and when we find that the same may be said of the settlers themselves, we are led to believe that in his onerous and responsible position he has adopted a wise and prudent course. Such a course will eventually make the North-West Territories—rich in all the requisites of wealth and prosperity—the fairest portion of the British American Confederation.

The Canadian Government has at length explained its policy regarding the lands "vested in the Crown and administered by the Government of Canada for the purposes of the Dominion;" these regulations will be found in the Appendix. This policy appears to have met with general approbation from all parties, amended as it has

been at the suggestion of Mr. McDougall and the Manitoba representatives. We cannot conclude this part more appropriately than with the words of Lieutenant Governor Archibald :—

“The fate of this country—the North West—is in the hands of its own people. Let wise counsels prevail ; let the people devote themselves to the task of developing their great resources in a spirit and with an energy worthy of the mighty heritage which has fallen to them ; and then may we fairly hope for that blessing which a kind Providence seldom withholds from efforts well intended and well directed.”

## APPENDIX A.

### MANITOBA LAND REGULATIONS.

On the 2nd of March last, the Government issued a set of regulations regarding the lands in Manitoba. These rules were afterwards amended, upon the 29th of April, in several important points:—First, The period of occupation is shortened from five to three years; secondly, naturalized citizens are made equally eligible with native-born subjects to receive patents; thirdly, no condition of settlement is requisite for volunteers; fourthly, the road allowance is widened from a chain to a chain and a half; and lastly, the option is given to settlers on prairie lands, to acquire sufficient wood-land to supply them with building material and firing. The scheme, as thus amended, may be shortly stated as follows:

1. System of Survey:—The system of survey shall be rectangular; the townships shall consist of 36 sections of one mile square each, and road allowances; the international boundary shall form the base for townships; the meridian line run in the autumn of 1869, for some 90 miles north from the international boundary line, and known as the Winnipeg meridian, shall be adopted and continued as the meridian from which the ranges of townships shall number, east and west, in the Province.

2. Lands for the Half-Breeds:—The distribution of the 1,400,000 of acres, appropriated under the Manitoba Act, for the benefit of the families of the half-breeds. Every half-breed resident of the Province of Manitoba at the time of the transfer thereof to Canada (the 15th day of July, A. D. 1870), and every child of every such half-breed, shall be entitled to participation in the 1,400,000 acres—the most liberal construction being put upon the word “resident.”

No conditions of settlement shall be imposed on grants made to half-breeds in pursuance of the provisions of the Act referred to; and there shall be no other restrictions, as to their power of dealing with their lands when granted, than those which the laws of Manitoba may prescribe.

The Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Manitoba shall designate the townships or parts of townships in which allotments to the half-breeds shall be made, and the mode of allotting those lands shall be as follows: If not already obtained, an accurate census shall be taken to determine the number of persons who may be entitled to participate upon such class; the number of acres to which each may be entitled shall be ascertained; the number and area of individual grants having been ascertained, the land selected by the Lieutenant Governor for the purpose shall be

divided up accordingly ; tickets shall be prepared, each to contain thereon a description of the lands intended to satisfy the particular claim, for which a book of record shall be prepared ; then, everything being prepared, the tickets may be put into a box, and the Lieutenant Governor shall draw them at random. Claimants of the age of 18, and over, shall receive their patents without unnecessary delay, and minors, on arriving at that age ; in the settlement of Crown Lands, unappropriated public lands shall, until further directions, be open for sale, at the rate of \$1 an acre in cash.

3. Pre-emption Rights :—Any person, being the head of a family, or a single man above the age of 21 years, who has made, or shall hereafter make, a settlement in person on the public lands, who has inhabited and improved the same, and who has erected, or shall erect a dwelling thereon, may have himself entered with the land-officer of the division in which such land is, for any number of acres, not exceeding 160, or a quarter section of land, to include the residence of the claimant ; and being a subject of Her Majesty by birth or naturalization, may obtain a patent therefor, upon paying to the Crown the price of such lands.

4. Homestead and Volunteers' Rights :—Any person who is the head of a family, or who has attained the age of 21 years, shall, after the 1st day of May, 1871, be entitled to be entered for one quarter section, or a less quantity, of unappropriated public lands, for the purpose of securing homestead rights. With respect thereof, each officer and man of the Ontario and Quebec battalion of rifles, now in Manitoba, shall be entitled to a free grant of one quarter section. No other person shall be entitled to more than one homestead right at any time ; and after the first of May, 1874, the Governor may withdraw from the operation of the above system, to the width of three townships on each side of the line, then sanctioned for the Inter-Oceanic Railway.

## APPENDIX B.

### EMIGRATION AND TRAFFIC COMPANIES.

Of the companies which have been recently formed to foster emigration to the territories, the first place must be given to the North-West Emigration Society. The objects of this Association will be readily understood by a reference to the duties of the Executive Committee, as presented in its constitution:—"It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to procure and direct the publication of information as to the best and cheapest routes for emigrants to the North West, to make arrangements with railway and steamboat lines for a system of through tickets for passenger and freight, to encourage the formation of Emigration Companies, to appoint proper agents *en route*, to establish Branch Associations throughout the Dominion, to communicate and make arrangements with the General and Local Governments for the prompt settlement of emigrants upon lands in the North West, and generally to take such measures as may be lawful and expedient to accomplish the objects of the Society."

The Company has been active in collecting information; and when it is remembered that it comprises prominent men of both political parties, such as the Hon. John Murrich, Hon. William McDougall, Hon. M. C. Cameron, Dr. Canniff, W. H. Howland, Walter McKenzie, Q. C., and others, united for a common purpose, we have a certain indication that the Company will conscientiously carry out its proposed objects. From the materials collected by this Society, we gather the following facts and figures as to the route via St. Paul; but the regulations and price of the other routes having been modified since the issue of their last circular, it will be necessary to state the new arrangements.

The route to which the Emigration Committee apparently leans, as at once the most expeditious and suitable for emigrants having families, is as follows:—Toronto to Collingwood, via Northern Railway; thence to Duluth by steamer; thence to St. Paul by rail; from thence to Twenty-five Mile Point on Red River, by stage; and from thence to Fort Garry by steamer, down the Red River. The cost for passengers by this way will be as follows:—First class, to Duluth, \$22.50; to St. Paul, \$25.00; to Fort Garry, \$50.00. This fare from Toronto to Fort Garry, includes meals on Canadian steamboats. Second class, to Duluth, \$12.00; to St. Paul, \$15.00; to Fort Garry, \$37.50—exclusive of meals.

The only other routes to Fort Garry, claiming attention from emigrants, are those by Northern Railway and Lake Superior steamers to Fort William and Duluth respectively.



The first of these—that by Fort William, or what is termed the Canadian or Dawson's route—will be open for traffic by the end of May. On this, according to the Government intimation, emigrants will be forwarded from Toronto to Fort Garry at the extremely low rate of \$30, and freight at a correspondingly low figure. In a great part, this route is the same as the former—from Toronto to Collingwood, by Northern Railway; thence by steamer to Fort William. Thence diverging from the former route, 40 miles by waggon road to Lake Shebandowan; and thence by boats and steamers to the North West Angle of the Lake of the Woods; and from thence, over a waggon road, to Fort Garry, a distance of between 90 and 100 miles. On this route the steam launches have already been tried, and are found to be admirably adapted to the purpose required, making some eleven miles an hour, which is a good speed for vessels of the kind. The Department of Public Works is working hard to ensure that every thing shall be in running order, and the Canadian route to Fort Garry rendered expeditious and comfortable. The Minister of Public Works has appointed Mr. Arnold mechanical superintendent of the route between Lake Superior and Red River, and a large and efficient force has already been despatched, to insure the thorough completion of the route.

The other route, that of the Lake Superior Royal Mail Line, proceeds by way of Duluth to Fort Garry, in connection with the North Pacific Railway and the steamers on Red River. As far as Duluth, we follow the same line as in route No. 1—from Collingwood by the steamers Manitoba, Cumberland and Chicora, which are intended to form a bi-weekly line between Collingwood at one extremity, and Duluth at the other—then by the Northern Pacific Railway from Duluth to Dakotah City, on Red River, and thence by steamer to Fort Garry.

On the first of July, when the North Pacific Railway will be completed to Dakotah City, the Company will be enabled to make connection between Toronto and Fort Garry within eight days. The price of passage for emigrants by this line, although slightly in advance of the Fort William, or Government route, will be amply compensated for in the difference in time.

## APPENDIX C.

### HINTS TO EMIGRANTS.

From various sources, we compile the following advice to those intending to make the North West their future home:—If the emigrant be a tradesman or professional man, he must nevertheless be able and willing to farm, in case no other opening should offer upon his arrival in the settlement. It must be borne in mind that the exhaustive labor of clearing land is unnecessary in the North West. Nature has provided much for the settler there. The vast prairie, with its virgin soil and its luxuriant pasture, is before him, productive beyond any Canadian experience, and capable of sustaining innumerable droves of cattle and horses. One yoke of oxen breaks up the turf everywhere, and men can be hired in the settlement to plough the virgin soil for five dollars per acre. If the emigrant has a large family, he ought to leave behind such members as are sick or infirm, or unable to assist him in the new country, until he has fairly established himself in his new home, when he can send for them. If a man of family, he ought to take with him from Ontario not less than \$500 cash, inclusive of the necessary outfit. Single men may get along very well with \$200 to \$250. Emigrants ought to take farming implements with them, but had better confine themselves to such as are absolutely necessary, such as ploughs, harrow teeth, scythes, &c., unless they can afford to take through patent rakes and seed drills, mowers and reapers—which indeed are almost a necessity, and can be used everywhere in the North West. Threshing machines can be purchased in Minnesota. It is well to remind the emigrant that he will be at no expense in building a barn for storing his crop. The dryness of the climate admits of the stacking of grain in the fields, where it is also threshed out.

Major Wallace, who was for some time a resident of the country, has condensed his views regarding stock raising, as follows:—

“The country all along the Assiniboine is especially suited to the raising of stock. It would not be advisable, in our opinion, to adopt the Australian system of ranges in this country. That system caused trouble there, and so it would here. What we want is population, and it would never do for a man or a company to possess themselves of an unreasonably large tract of country to the exclusion of others. Besides, it would be of no object in stock raising, as your cattle can range and feed over the limitless prairies back of the farms.

“Hay would require to be cut in the summer, for winter use. None other but the natural grasses are used in this country; and thousands of acres of unoccupied prairies are in waiting for the mower of the industrious farmer.

“Cattle are fed and housed for between five and six months in the year.

"Stock farming can be carried on on as large a scale as you wish. You can feed as many cattle as you can cut hay for. Of course you would have more trouble than you would in Texas, but then their relative value per head would more than compensate you.

"There will be no difficulty in finding a market for your stock for some time to come.

"Good cows are worth from £5 to £7 sterling. Oxen from £6 to £10. Horses from £15 to £25. There is a good demand for horses, and any one paying attention to the improvement of the breed, by the introduction of good blood, would do well in raising horses. Don't know the price of sheep."

Labor and Chances of Employment :—There is an opening for every class of tradesmen and mechanics. A limited number of the following would find immediate employment : Blacksmiths, carpenters, painters, bricklayers, plasterers, shoemakers, carriage-makers, tinsmiths, practical engineers—that is, men who understand the manufacturing of the steam engine—millers, and brick makers. At present there is no cabinet factory in the country ; neither is there a foundry ; only one tannery, no brick manufactories, no woollen mills, no flax mills, no soap factories, no potteries, no oatmeal mill. Good wages are paid framers, carpenters, and plasterers—\$2.00 to \$2.50 per day, and board is not more than \$4.50 per week. The manufacture of household furniture, from the difficulty of carriage, would prove very lucrative. Useful laborers have obtained at the rate of \$1.00, with board. Of course, in a new country like the North West, fresh openings are constantly presenting themselves for all kinds of labor, skilled and unskilled. Manufactories of various kinds are either projected, or in course of construction—such as breweries, grist mills, flouring mills, cabinet, tobacco, and agricultural implement manufactories. There will, therefore, be no lack of employment for any number of men, willing to adapt themselves to the requirements of the country.

Living and Prices :—Some articles, in immediate demand by the settlers, bring very exorbitant prices. For example, lumber is quoted at from sixty to seventy dollars per thousand feet, and that not of the best quality. The demand now being so great for building material in and around Fort Garry, incoming emigrants have adopted the plan of procuring their lumber at Fort Abercrombie, and other points on the Red River, and floating it down to the settlement. By this means, the price of lumber has been reduced one-half, and the cost of transport considerably lessened.

The latest market quotations, this spring, are as follows :—Wheat, \$2.25 per bushel ; barley, \$1.30 ; beef, per hundred, \$10.00 ; pork, per hundred, \$17.00 ; butter, packed, 38c per lb. Poultry, and other farm produce, at a correspondingly high rate—potatoes, for example, averaging 50c per bushel, the year round. When it is stated that the cost of growing crops in Manitoba is only one-half what it is in Ontario, it will be seen that these prices are extremely remunerative to the farmer—a sufficient proof that those who go to the North West, with a view to bettering their fortunes, will hardly fail to secure an abundant return.

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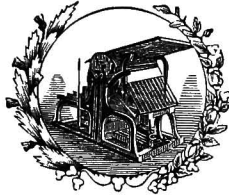
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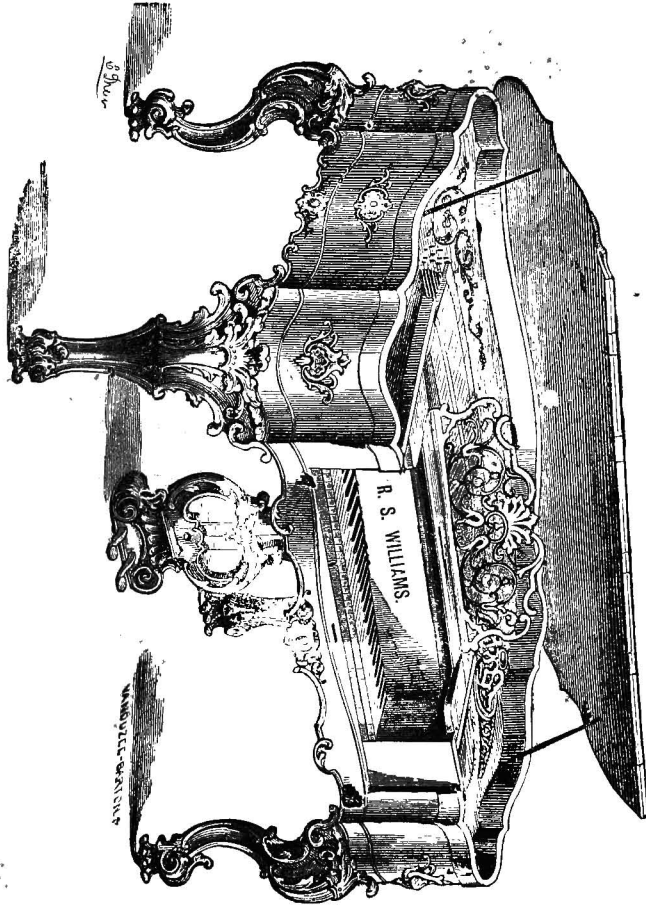
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