

NORTH-WEST TOPICS.

A Hudson Bay Commissioner Speaks of the Railway, Indians, etc.

Commissioner J. Wrigley, of the Hudson Bay company, who is now in the Province, was spoken to the other day by a reporter with regard to North-West matters.

"Are the Winnipeg people desirous that the Hudson Bay railway should be built?" asked the reporter.

"Oh yes," replied Mr. Wrigley, "the Winnipeg people have great faith in the scheme. They think it is just what is required to give them easy access to the ocean."

"Do you think the scheme practicable?"

"Well, I cannot speak from personal knowledge. The whole thing seems to hinge on whether the Straits are open for any considerable portion of the year or not. If the Straits are only open for a short time as some assert, well the scheme would hardly be a success, for the ocean travel is what it depends on. If, however, the ocean could be readily reached why that would alter the complexion of things materially, but the length of time that the Straits are open is a matter of dispute."

"What kind of a country would the proposed road traverse?"

"The country is barren and inhospitable. It is simply a medium for reaching the sea. There could never be any local traffic."

"What length would the road be, do you think?"

"Well, I can't say, but the distance between Winnipeg and Fort York is something over six hundred miles."

THE INDIANS

"Is there anything in the rumors of a rising amongst the Indians of the North-West?"

"There are many rumors about the Indians, and in some cases the time is actually fixed for the rising. I think this is absurd. I do not believe there is any plan among the Indians for a rising, but I think that a rising amongst the red men might take place at any moment. You can never depend on the Indians' temper."

"If a rising amongst them did take place, would you consider it serious?"

"Most decidedly so, unless it was crushed out promptly. Any playing with the trouble or red tepism would be dangerous. If a rising amongst the Indians took place, and was allowed to run for any considerable period unchecked, then the trouble would be far more serious than ever before."

"Have the Hudson Bay company settled up with the Government yet?"

"The company's bill for transport services has been paid. We engaged transport for the Government, but received nothing further than a commission for our trouble. What we got from the Government we paid, to the people we employed. We got nothing but a commission on the service."

"You have some claims against the Government for losses in the rebellion?"

"Yes, these claims have been duly presented, and will doubtless be settled satisfactorily."

Mr. Wrigley is only a short time a resident of Canada, and has already won his way into the confidence and esteem of the Hudson Bay company officials, who speak of him in the highest possible way.

A Born Soldier.

The death is announced of Sir George Udny Yule. He was only an able Bengal civilian of the older and more active type; but he once did a wonderful thing. In 1858 he was a commissioner in Bengal proper, when three regiments of Sepoys, breaking late into mutiny, marched across his district to join the insurgent army in Oude. Mr. Yule had no troops, no military authority, and no responsibility in the matter; but the impudence of the affair was too much for him. He was a hunting man, turned out his hunting equipage, borrowed more elephants from native friends, collected eighty European planters and clerks, and a small force of native "guards," and determined to

stop the three regiments. After a pursuit of days, during which he exhibited all the qualities of a first-class General, marching often across a roadless country as fast as the Sepoys in retreat, he actually drove the three regiments—2,400 trained soldiers—in headlong flight out of Bengal and brought back his force without one sick man or the loss of one elephant. And then because had not succeeded in his full intentions, which was to destroy the brigade, he offered to pay for his expedition out of his own purse. He had never been a soldier, and relied only on his hunting experience; but of the Europeans who rallied at his call, no one doubted that if the Sepoy brigade had ventured to turn on him, or had checked its flight for twelve hours, it would have been destroyed. It was a matter of life-long disappointment to him that the Sepoy's thought so, too.

Hudson's Bay Railway Construction.

There is a strong probability that the construction of the railway from Manitoba to the Hudson's Bay will be commenced during the coming spring and that the work will be prosecuted with vigor, and without let up until completed, unless when severity of weather will compel a cessation of work.

It is a matter decided that the work of construction will commence from the head of Lake Winnipeg and be pushed onward in a northerly direction until tide-water navigation on the Nelson river is reached. There may be those who will object to this point of commencing construction, and who think that it should commence from the terminus in this province and move by stages northward. That selfishness might suggest such a course there is no doubt, and the people of Winnipeg more than those of any other place can produce selfish argument in its favor. But after all we believe the projectors of the road are adopting the wise and sensible course, and even those who see immediate gain in another will eventually be most benefited by that about to be pursued.

The commencement of construction at the head of Lake Winnipeg is a wise move, because by the construction of less than half of the whole road a summer outlet can be secured, which will furnish a source of earning to the company in a very short time, and commence the practical test of the value of the outlet for commercial purposes.

Then the course is a wise one because it will compel the utilizing of our North-western waterways, which has scarcely been attempted as yet, and which will we believe prove them to have a value, far beyond any calculations hitherto made upon them, and ere the construction of the whole road is completed show what a valuable auxiliary they really are to railway facilities.

Then the course is a wise one because it will hurry the opening of an outlet which if only available in summer time will be of value to the whole province; whereas starting construction from Winnipeg or any other point in the province a road would be in progress for several years, which ended at nowhere, opened up no productive country of any consequence, and would be of no material value to anyone until completed unless for the circulation of money which its construction created. Thus looking at the programme of construction we must say that from every view point it gives evidence of wisdom, caution and economy on the part of those who arranged it.

But as we look at the arrangements for utilizing Lake Winnipeg in connection with this Hudson's Bay outlet, we naturally incline to ask: But what about the Red River as a feeder to this northern gateway? In almost every calculation made of the value of the Hudson's Bay route the grain carrying from Dakota and Minnesota has been counted upon, and indeed the route would lose much of its commercial value if it did not attract a good share of that trade. But then navigation of any practical value for such a traffic reaches no further up the Red River than St. Andrew's Rapids, and from there north to the international boundary

the river needs no small share of improvement to make it navigable all the open season for craft large enough to be employed in a carrying trade on Lake Winnipeg. Without these improvements Winnipeg, Emerson and the towns south of our province cannot take advantage of a waterway, and would have to transport all freight by rail to the mouth of the river or at least to Selkirk. Under such circumstances the Hudson's Bay line from the head of Lake Winnipeg to Fort Nelson would be of very value to the southern portion of Manitoba, and would offer no temptation to grain shippers south of the line. The haul to the lake port would have to be made by the C. P. R., and so far as freight from all south of fifteen miles this side of the international boundary line is concerned, we would not under the present state of affairs be allowed to build a competing line of rail. Thus the whole United States freight by the Hudson's Bay route could be easily choked off by the managers of the C. P. R.

There is no use in trying to hide the fact that until there is independent communication between Manitoba, Minnesota and Dakota, the supplementary trade for a Hudson's Bay railway from the two latter will not make the owners of such a road wealthy. The cheapest and best link of communication is by the Red River with its obstructions removed. A matter of a quarter of a million of dollars would do that on the Manitoba side, and the efforts being put forth at Washington by our neighbors in Minnesota and Dakota shows that they will not fall short in improving the channel of the river within their territory. Surely private enterprise could take hold of a matter so small as this work in Manitoba, and we might reasonably expect that the Dominion Government would contribute liberally towards the same. — *Winnipeg Commercial.*

Death of a Nobleman Who Hated Horses.

The death is announced of Count Emeric Semmich, a Hungarian magnate, who was known in society for his extraordinary hatred of horses. This aversion amounted to a real hippophobia, and it obliged the Count many years ago to throw up his commission in the army. The Count died at an advanced age on his estate in Slavonia. He was a distinguished agriculturist, an excellent landlord, and on all subjects but that of horses, asses, and mules; a man of sound judgment. He would not allow any animal of the equine kind to come upon his lands, so that visitors who rode or drove to see him had always to alight at his park gates. He himself for many years used a vehicle drawn by trained deer, but latterly he went about his estate in a carriage with a team of oxen. His horror of horses is said to have been innate, as there was no accident in his life to account for it.

Deeds Not Words.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

If words could satisfy the heart,
The heart might find less care;
But words, like summer birds, depart,
And leave but empty air;
The heart, a pilgrim upon earth,
Finds often, when it needs,
That words are as little worth
As just so many weeds.

A little said—and truly said—
Can deeper joy impart
Than hoarse words, which reach the head,
But never touch the heart;
The voice that wins its sunny way,
A lonely home to cheer,
Hath oft the fewest words to say;
But oh! those few—how dear!

If words could satisfy the breast,
The world might hold a feast;
But words, when summoned to the test—
Oft satisfy the least!
Like plants that make a gaudy show,
All blossom to the root;
But whose poor nature cannot grow
One particle of fruit!

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