

VIEWS OF ANNEXATION
OF THE NORTH WEST TERRITORIES AND RUPERT'S LAND
TO
CANADA



Thesis written by MacGillivray Lee
September, 1929.

756367

Introduction.



A hundred years ago who was there to foretell the future of the vast western lands which now constitute a part of the Dominion of Canada! To demonstrate the influences which contributed to the formation of a final settlement regarding this territory and its ultimate transfer to Canada is the purpose of our present theme. As a background for our discussion let us first review the general situation as it existed at that time. Canada itself in the early part of the nineteenth century comprised only two blocks of territory, Upper and Lower Canada, bordering upon the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. To the east were the Maritime Provinces of British North America and west of Canada and in no way connected with it stretched a great tract of land popularly supposed to be fit for nothing save the production of furs, a distant frozen wilderness, quite beyond the horizon of the ordinary Canadian citizen. To understand the cause of this indifference in the minds of many to the West and its fate, one must look far back in the annals of its history. "This great lone land of the setting sun" had been for years under the sway of the Hudson's Bay Company, a fur-trading concern of illustrious name. As the history of the West was to a great extent analogous with the history of this

firm, to understand the one, it is necessary to know the other. We shall then review the history of this company.

As far back as 1670, when France still claimed the St. Lawrence Basin, Charles II of England had granted charter rights over the whole of the Hudson's Bay watershed, except land under some other Christian Prince or State to "Certain Merchant Adventurers". Amongst these were Prince Rupert, cousin of the King, the Duke of Albemarle, the Earl of Craven, and others. The charter was unprecedented in its generosity in that these merchant adventurers were given such extraordinary powers as those of exclusive trade with the Indians for their rich furs, the building of forts, and even the organization of a military force. In this way they were constituted absolute proprietors of over 1,000,000 square miles of territory with the privilege to make laws, constitutions and ordinances, and to provide penalties and punishments for their violation. For all this they were to pay the "Merry Monarch" and his heirs two black elks and two black beavers, whenever he or his successors entered the lands which he had granted. Thus by the King's ignorance was "granted away" an empire and the famous institution known as the Hudson's Bay Company was created. The great territory, the scene of the Company's activities, was given the name of Rupert's Land.

To show how completely the land was given over to

the company we quote extracts from the charter, a singularly good piece of literary and legal workmanship.

"We do make, ordain, constitute, establish, confirm and declare by these presents and that by the same name of 'Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay', they shall have perpetual succession, and that their successors, by the name of 'The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay' be and at all times hereafter shall be, personable and capable in law to have, purchase, receive, possess, enjoy and retain lands, rents, privileges, liberties, jurisdictions, franchises, and hereditaments, of what kind, nature or quality so ever they be, to them and their successors". #

And again,

"Grant unto them and their successors the sole trade and commerce of all those seas, straits, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks and sounds, in whatsoever latitude they shall be, that lie within the entrance of the straits, commonly called Hudson's Straits, together with all the lands, countries and territories upon the coasts and confines of the seas, straits, bays, lakes, rivers, 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". ##

By this charter was the feudal system transported from the old world to the new, and the charter was also the means of creating a system by which officers of the company ruled their domain for two hundred years. "In the charter lay the secret of all the company's success and all its failures; of its almost paternal care of the Indians ----- of its almost royal generosity when a dependent fell by the way". Of this charter and its tremendous bearing upon the

Martin, "Selkirk's work in Canada"...Appendix A, Page 197.

Ibid... Page 196.

history of the West it will be necessary to say more from time to time.

Hence we find the Hudson's Bay Company established in 1670, and ready to follow the lines of trade opening from the Bay to the interior. But as there was no organized opposition at that time, the Hudson's Bay men did not find it necessary to go far inland. The whole fur-trade came into their hands except that secured by individual French traders from the St. Lawrence, who after securing licenses from the Quebec government, pushed westward beyond Lake Superior. The differences in character between the French and the English traders were recognized by the Indians who rather preferred the gayer and more versatile Frenchmen; nevertheless, when offered better prices, they paddled their canoe loads of furs to the established company. When during the years between 1690 and 1713 France and England grappled in two terrible wars on the continent, the French in Canada seized this opportunity to retaliate the loss of trade with the Indians by capturing the Hudson's Bay posts. During this period it was of no consequence to the French officials whether the furs were delivered at the northern post or found their way down the St. Lawrence. But when the forts were won back and the English had re-established themselves on the Bay, LaVérendrye, French trader and explorer ever alive to the interests of the fur-trade, missed no opportunity

highly valued". #

In 1759 came the conquest of Canada by the English, and no longer need the company fear rivalry from a now vanquished people. But as time went on there came others to take the place of the French Coureurs des Bois, and it was now the people of English birth such as James Finlay and Thomas Curry who sought furs in the west. Now at last the Hudson's Bay Company had to change its policy and send inland to get for itself what was being taken away. In 1772 Mathew Cocking, a servant of the company, took his departure from York Fort and traversed a route very similar to that taken by Hendry eighteen years earlier. In the next year he was sent up again, this time with Samuel Hearne, to build Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan River.

For a quarter of a century onward the conflict between opposing fur-traders was sharp and relentless. The traders from Montreal realized at last that organization was necessary when they saw the Indians demoralized by their cut-throat policy, and in 1783 they combined to form the North-West Company. Keen rivalry and mutual antagonism, characteristics of the fur-trade, were now limited to the two organized concerns and went on more bitterly than before. The newer company, displaying greater enterprise, planted forts all the way through the west to the Pacific and almost monopolized the trade of the interior. As an example one

Burpee, "The Journal of Anthony Hendry, 1754-55. Page 331.

might notice that the Hudson's Bay Company only reached the Red River country in 1793, the date when Mackenzie, representing the North-Westerns, reached the Pacific Coast. But once the older company left the Bay, its spread over the west became rapid.

One of the factors threatening trade and causing uneasiness to the trader was the possibility of settlement taking place. Fur-trade and colonization were held to be incompatible; with the coming of settlers and the tilling of the soil the traffic in pelts would of necessity suffer disaster. To prevent this contingency, stories were constantly being circulated by those interested to the effect that the west was unfit for colonization. It is little wonder then that the view of this great tract of land being fit for nothing save the production of furs should take root in the popular mind.

No history of the west and the Hudson's Bay Company is complete without mention of one little settlement which had grown up despite all efforts to prevent it. Lord Selkirk, a Scotsman, descendant of the famous Douglas race and sometimes called "The Apostle of Western Colonization", had become keenly interested in the regions described by Alexander McKenzie in his book entitled "Voyages from Montreal, on the River St. Lawrence Through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans: In the

Years 1789 to 1793". Selkirk determined to lead the destitute multitudes of Scotland to this Utopia of his imagination. Buying up Hudson's Bay Company stock he soon owned £40,000 out of the £150,000 of its capital, which gave him such a controlling interest that he was able to acquire from the company an area of 160,000 square miles now comprising parts of Manitoba, North Dakota and Minnesota, one of the most fertile districts of the North American continent. Fearing for its trade and jealous of this intrusion of its hunting grounds, war to the knife was carried on by the North-West Company against the colony. To realize how deep-seated the animosity was we have only to read an extract from a letter written by Simon MacGillivray, one of the outstanding men of the North-Westerns, to the wintering partners. He says,

"It will require some time and I fear cause much expense to us as well as to himself, before he is driven to abandon the project; and yet he must be driven to abandon it, for his success would strike at the very existence of our Trade". #

As soon as the Earl had made arrangements with the Hudson's Bay Company he set about the task of securing his colony, mainly from the north of Scotland. The North-West Company did all in its power to dissuade the people from going upon such a hazardous journey by circulating malicious reports. Finally however, the first band of settlers, one

Martin, "Selkirk's Work in Canada", Page 55,
Copied from Simon MacGillivray to N.-W. Partners,
April 7th, 1812, Selkirk Papers, 9109.

hundred and twenty-five in all, left Sligo on the long voyage. They arrived in the fall of 1811 and spent the winter in huts at York Factory. In the spring under command of Captain Miles MacDonnell they continued the journey of seven hundred more miles to the Red River and reached their destination in August 1812, the date which marks the landing of the "Pilgrim Fathers of Western Canada". It is not necessary that we go into detail as to the fortunes of the several early bands of colonists sent out by Lord Selkirk. Sufficient is it to know that the Hudson's Bay Company boats brought out their little quota of settlers yearly until 1815. The North-West Company, at first outwardly friendly enough, did not take long in showing its teeth. The crisis came when in January 1814 Miles MacDonnell in the name of Lord Selkirk issued a proclamation forbidding anyone "The North-West Company or any individual, or unconnected trader whatever" taking provisions, dried meat, or food of any sort from Assiniboia, except what might be needed for travelling, and this only by license. As all the North-West brigades depended upon the meat of the Red River for their food this meant the crippling of the company and they ignored the order. Moreover Alexander MacDonnell, cousin of Miles MacDonnell, and Duncan Cameron were sent out to see that the colony was broken up. Alexander MacDonnell in a letter to William MacGillivray on August 5th, 1814, writes,

"Something serious will take place. Nothing but the complete downfall of the colony will satisfy some by fair or foul means---- A most desirable object if it can be effected. So here is at them with all my heart and energy". #

Cameron was able to persuade more than half of the colonists to go east and settle in Upper Canada. The rest were forced to retire to Lake Winnipeg. By June 25th, 1815, there was not a vestige of Selkirk's colony but ruined fields and trampled crops. MacDonnell, the governor, was arrested and taken to Montreal to answer a charge of having appropriated goods belonging to the North-West Company, taken in retaliation for the ignoring of his proclamation. In August of that year Colin Robertson, Selkirk's agent, reached Lake Winnipeg and persuaded the colonists to go back to the Red River, by telling them that a new governor, Robert Semple, had been appointed and that Selkirk himself was coming out the next year. Semple arrived in November and matters grew steadily worse. On June 19th, 1816 there occurred what has been called the Massacre of Seven Oaks. The governor and a score or so of men left the colony to waylay Cuthbert Grant of the North-Westerns, with his band of frontiersmen. An engagement took place in which Semple and most of his men lost their lives. Disaster followed disaster. Death and starvation stalked the unfortunate colonists. Lord Selkirk involved in lawsuits with the North-West Company, died in

Begg. "History of the North-West"...Page 175.
Copied from letter of William MacGillivray,
Montreal, May 6th, 1815, Selkirk Papers, v 1467.

in 1820 of discouragement and a broken heart. Grasshoppers ruined the crop and in 1826 the Red River over-flowed its banks and all narrowly escaped drowning. But despite everything the colony was never entirely uprooted; it always seemed able to gather its scattered forces and maintain some kind of existence, isolated from the rest of the world. In 1834, Selkirk's land was transferred from his family back to the Hudson's Bay Company for the sum of £34,000. It was now organized as the district of Assiniboia with a president and a council of fifteen appointed by the company, and was divided into four judicial districts with a Justice of the Peace in each. From now on until 1843 the colony entered upon the quietest period of its existence characterized by steady growth and development.

Meanwhile a new phase had been entered upon in the history of the fur-trade. The North-West Company's wintering partners dissatisfied with their share of the returns felt that the Montreal merchants were reaping where they had not sown. Long overland routes proved to be disadvantageous and the Hudson's Bay Company would not allow them a port on the Bay from which to ship their furs. Moreover the North-West Company was a loose association of men bound together in a common business enterprise which was to last until 1821, and there were difficulties in the way of a fresh agreement. The company having no chartered rights did not feel the sense of stability and permanence which characterized the Hudson's Bay

Traders. Ruthless competition was exercising a ruinous influence both on trappers and animals and the traders must have felt the truth of the old adage, "United we stand; divided we fall". For these reasons negotiations were commenced by the North-Westerners with the Hudson's Bay Company which resulted in the amalgamation of the two companies under the name of the older and chartered concern. Regions west of Rupert's Land now came under the control of the company in a business way when a license of trade was granted by the British Government. This privilege of exclusive trade in the region known as The North-West Territory was to continue for twenty-one years and in 1838 was extended for a further term of equal duration. Witness then a fur-trade concern with a monopoly from Labrador to the Pacific and from Canada and the United States to the Pacific Ocean.

Thesis Proper.

1843-----1870

It will be our endeavour to show that the acquisition of Rupert's Land and the North-West by the Dominion of Canada was not a fortunate after-thought of Confederation, but that there were men who recognized the value of opening the west for settlement while Confederation itself was still only a pleasant dream. We wish to draw attention to the fact that there were men who made Rupert's Land a subject of their interest, who recognized the difficulties involved in breaking the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company, and who saw the need of opening a means of communication through British North America to the Pacific Ocean. These men were also cognizant of the dangers involved in allowing the United States to encroach on this territory lying to its north. The period with which we deal in tracing the general trend of feeling of Canadians towards the west embraces the years from 1843 to 1870. In our discussion there are numerous factors to be considered, the question of the validity of the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company upon which it based its monopoly and which was so often called into dispute, the attitude of the British Government which wished to deal fairly with both Canada and the Company and act in the best interests of both, and the general trend of events in the Red River Settlement

itself. But above all it is our object to trace the awakening of interest in Canada, the general movement towards the consummation of the aim of those Canadians who wished to see the North-West joined by ties of government and of national feeling to themselves.

Our introduction briefly spans the early years of the history of the Hudson's Bay Company. From the fusion of the two rival fur-companies in 1821 the activities of the organization were carried on more vigorously than ever before with the result that one hundred and fifty trading posts were dotted across the territory employing more than three thousand men. Secure in its stability with the well-beloved Sir George Simpson as Governor-in-Chief of Rupert's Land the Company reigned without rival in the field of western fur-trade. When all powerful it is easy to be generous, and so in a spirit of benevolent despotism, Half-Breeds of the Red River Colony were allowed to carry on their own trade, since the company realized that eventually all furs would find their way into its possession. But in the 'forties American settlement was advancing in Minnesota, close to the Red River Settlement, and in Oregon, adjacent to Vancouver Island. Particularly were trading posts springing up just south of the border which tempted the Half-Breeds to risk an illicit trade in furs. This was sufficient cause for the Company to enforce its monopoly more rigidly and trading privileges were

now strictly prohibited. This created considerable hard feeling at Red River which found vent in a memorial drawn up and presented to the British Colonial Office in 1847. Mr. A. K. Isbister, leader of the memorialists, was in reality operating against the company's monopoly for the sake of obtaining control of the furs but he made it appear that it was in protest against faulty administration on the part of Hudson's Bay Officials. The petition, bearing almost a thousand names, charged the company with harsh government while general discontent and misery prevailed. Moreover it protested that the company by exclusive trade with the Indians had amassed a large fortune but made no effort to christianize them. For its own selfish interests it had avoided developing the agricultural and mineral resources of the country. Moreover, liquor, the curse of the Red-Man was being distributed. The memorial went on to say that as the larger part of the native population was no longer able to find a means of supporting life from the product of the chase, the more enterprising had framed a resolution to export their own produce and import their own supplies independently. They felt justified in doing this as they knew of no clause in the charter which bound them to exclusive trade with the company. For the above reasons the petition desired the government to inquire into the condition of the Indians particularly as the Hudson's Bay Company was without direct accountability to the Legislature

of Britain and practically beyond the control of public opinion. #

A letter was enclosed with the memorial, written by the Rev. Herbert Beaver to the "Company of the Aborigines Protection Society" relating to the Indians of the north-west coast of America. Mr. Beaver quoted the grounds upon which the Hudson's Bay Company laid claim to renewal of its license of exclusive trade, such as that of increasing and improving the native population, improving the country itself by the formation of agricultural settlements and the establishment of an export trade in wool, flax and other natural productions, and finally, the advantage accruing from the monopoly to the general commercial interests of Great Britain. As these were the grounds upon which the company based its claim for a renewal of its license Mr. Beaver protested. He pointed out that none of the conditions outlined above had been fulfilled.

As a result of this memorial instructions were sent in June, 1847, by Earl Grey, Secretary of State for the Colonies to Lord Elgin, Governor General of Canada, to investigate the charges laid and the suggestion was made that this might be done through the Protestant Ministers and Roman Catholic Priests of Assiniboia. A later letter on June 6th, 1848 from Elgin to Grey showed that the result of enquiries was favourable to the company and that the authority which it exercised was very advantageous to the Indians. He suggested, however,

"Memorial of 1847".

that it would be advisable to have greater surveillance by the British Government which could be arranged by stationing a militia officer at some point within the North-West Territory. The whole result of the memorial and inquiry was to put Mr. Isbister and his followers in a bad light and add prestige to the administration of the company.

One important result of the petition was that steps were now taken to investigate the powers claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company and the validity of its charter. In July, 1849, the British House of Commons passed an address to the Crown asking that an inquiry might be made into the legality of the powers claimed by the company in respect of territory, trade, taxation and government, in short, the gifts so lavishly bestowed by Charles 11. Earl Grey, accordingly, communicated with the company on August 23rd asking that they send a statement of the rights to which they considered themselves entitled, and the extent to which these rights were exercised. In September of the same year the request was complied with when a carefully prepared statement was forwarded to the government setting forth the various claims and authority to substantiate them. This statement was submitted in 1850 to Sir John Jarvis and Sir John Romilly, the law officers of the Crown, to examine and report upon. They expressed the opinion that the privileges claimed by the company rightly belonged to them and added that if a more formal decision were required concerning this question, it

would be wise to lay the matter before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The next step taken by Earl Grey was to write to Mr. Isbister and the others who had presented the petition against the company in 1847 asking if they would appear as complainants should the case be tested. This they declined to do and the matter was closed for the time being as no one else would accept the responsibility of a trial. "Thus at the middle of the century the company was left to continue its prosperous career in comparative tranquillity, untroubled by any too-prying eyes investigating its affairs or surveying the possibilities of the realm under its sway. But such a condition of affairs could not much longer continue".

It is an old saying and a true one that, "Nothing is constant but change". It was inevitable that this placid state of affairs should be ruffled, that sooner or later the question of the future of the North-West should again come before the public eye. George Brown, Editor of the Toronto Globe, was one of the first Canadians interested in the West. Coming as he did into contact with men who knew the value of the country he desired to see it opened for settlement. Robert Baldwin Sullivan, a friend of Brown, wrote a series of letters under the nom de plume of "Legion". In 1847, Mr. Sullivan delivered in the Mechanics Institute, Toronto, an address on the North-West Territory which was published in full in the Globe. He uttered the warning that Americans

rapidly spreading westward would occupy British Territory if steps were not soon taken to prevent this encroachment. In his discussion he showed a very accurate knowledge of the resources of the West. In 1852 an article appeared in the Globe drawing the attention of its readers to the indifference which was felt for that territory.

"It is a remarkable circumstance that so little attention has been paid in Canada to the immense tract of country lying to the north of our boundary line, and known as the Hudson's Bay Territory.----- It is unpardonable that civilization should be excluded from half a continent, on at best but a doubtful right of ownership, for the benefit of two hundred and thirty-two shareholders.--r--The too general impression entertained is, that the territory in question is a frozen wilderness, incapable of cultivation and utterly unfit for colonization. This impression was undoubtedly set afloat, and has been maintained, for its own very evident purposes. So long as that opinion could be kept up, their charter was not likely to be disturbed. But light has been breaking in on the subject in spite of their efforts to keep it out. In a recent work by Mr. Edward Fitzgerald, it is stated that 'there is not a more favourable situation on the face of the earth for employment of agricultural industry than the locality of the Red River'. ----- Let anyone look at the map, and if he can fancy the tenth part that is affirmed of the wide region of country stretching westward to the Rocky Mountains, he may form some idea of the profitable commerce which will soon pass through Lake Superior. Independent of the hope that the highroad to the Pacific may yet take this direction, there is a field for enterprise presented, sufficient to satiate the warmest imagination". #

Still later in 1856 there appeared a series of

Lewis. "George Brown". Pages 213, 214, 215.

letters in the Globe signed "Huron" which drew attention to the North West Territories and which attacked the administration of the Hudson's Bay Company. William McDougall at that time also a member of the Globe's staff, advocated union of the North-West Territories with Canada. In an article reviewing the events of the year 1856 the Globe said,

"This year will be remembered as that in which the public mind was first aroused to the necessity of uniting to Canada the great tract of British American territory lying to the north-west, then in the occupation of a great trading monopoly. The year 1856 has only seen the birth of this movement. Let us hope that 1857 will see it crowned with success". #

In December of the same year there was a meeting of the Toronto Board of Trade at which addresses were delivered by Alan McDonnell and Captain Kennedy in regard to the West. Captain Kennedy stated that he had lived for twenty-five years in the territory in question and had for the past eight or nine years tried to draw attention to the country through the medium of the newspapers and had gone so far as to write to Lord Elgin on the subject. The most important work that Canada could do, he declared, was to settle the two hundred and seventy-nine million acres of land lying west of the Great Lakes. As a result of the meeting a resolution was passed which claimed that the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company was injurious to the rights of the people of the territory as well as to the rest of British North America.

Lewis. "George Brown". Page 213, 214, 215.

The Board also petitioned the Legislature of Canada to ascertain the claims of the company and a few days later later the Globe declared that the time had come to carry on a vigorous campaign for the opening of the territory to settlement and the establishment of communication with Canada, and thereupon proceeded to take the lead in this movement. While George Brown's interest in the West was actuated by political motives, (that is the annexation of the North-West to Canada would give Upper Canada a preponderance of members in the Canadian Legislature) nevertheless it had the effect of arousing the public mind in regard to the question.

In January, 1857, a convention of Reformers in Toronto adopted a platform which among other things involved the incorporation of the North-West Territory to Canada. It was therefore resolved,

"That the country known as the Hudson's Bay Territory ought no longer to be cut off from civilization, that it is the duty of the Legislature and Executive of Canada to open negotiations with the Imperial Government for the incorporation of the said territory as Canadian soil". #

Just at this time also the Hon. Mr. VanKoughnet, president of the Executive Council of Canada, at a public meeting declared that he sought a boundary for Canada, at the Pacific Ocean and that no charter could give to a body of men control over half a continent and that he would not rest until the charter was abolished.

Lewis, "George Brown". Page 217.

Another step in the same direction was taken when on the 27th of February, 1857, a memorial was sent to Sir Edmund Walker Head, Governor-General of Canada, from the united counties of Lanark and Renfrew. The memorial reads,

"That there is a vast region extending north of Lake Superior and the forty-ninth parallel of latitude and now claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company under a charter from Charles 11 which was afterwards renewed for seven years in the reign of William and Mary, but which your Memorialists are not aware has since been renewed otherwise than by license of occupation granted by the British Government for certain portions of the said territory.

That a large portion of the said region is of the most fertile description, with a climate that will compare favourably with that of Upper Canada, well adapted for colonization and presenting every inducement to the Farmer, the Merchant, and the Manufacturer.

That a small section of said territory, known as the Red River Settlement immediately upon the American frontier is inhabited by a people thoroughly British in feelings and principles, whom your Memorialists would be grieved to see become victims of the policy of our neighbors of the United States, so notorious for annexation, who have pushed their settlements to the north of the boundary line or the forty-ninth parallel of latitude and have garrisoned a fort almost close to the colony of Red River while, on the other hand, the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company has been to keep the region under this rule in its pristine state of barbarism and to discontinue every approach to civilization, and all intercourse with the British settlements in Canada, for the sole and selfish object of monopolizing the fur-trade.

That taking the aforesaid circumstances into consideration, your Memorialists, protesting against the renewal of the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company, are earnestly desirous that the so-called Hudson's Bay Company's territories, be henceforth incorporated with Canada". #

This petition bore amongst others the names of John Motherwell, James and John Mair, Robert Robertson and John McGillivray.

But while there were some men who wished light to be thrown upon the Hudson's Bay Company, who saw the west as an ideal place for settlement, and who wished to prevent encroachment on the part of American colonists, there were others more skeptical who jibed at the far-sighted. In January 1857 the Niagara Mail wrote,

"The Toronto Globe comes out with a new and remarkable platform, one of the planks of which is the annexation of the frozen regions of the Hudson's Bay territory to Canada. Lord have mercy on us! Canada has already a stiff reputation for cold in the world, but it is unfeeling in the Globe to want to make it deserve the reproach". ##

Another skeptic was the Montreal Transcript which declared that the fertile spots in the west were small and separated by immense distances, and described the Red River region as an oasis in the midst of a desert, "a vast treeless prairie on which scarcely a shrub is to be seen". The climate was unfavourable to the growth of grain, it declared, as the summer though warm enough, was too short in duration

Correspondence of the Governor-General of Canada to Secretary of State. Extracted from Canadian Archives.

Lewis. "George Brown". Page 217.

so that even the few fertile spots could "with difficulty mature a small potato or cabbage".

A little later another petition presented by the Board of Trade of Toronto to the Legislative Council of Canada is a fair expression of the views held at that time, and might be considered to show a desire on the part of the petitioners to engage in the fur-trade of the west themselves.

"Your petitioners more especially pray the attention of your Honourable House to that region of country, designated as the Chartered Territory, over which said company exercises a sovereignty in the soil as well as a monopoly in the trade, and, which said company claims as a right that insures to them in perpetuo, in contradistinction to that portion of country over which they claim an exclusive right of trade, but for a limited period only.

Whilst your petitioners believe that this latter claim is founded upon a legal right, they humbly submit that a renewal of such license of exclusive trade is injurious to the interests of the country so monopolized, and in contravention of the rights of the inhabitants of Canada.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your Honourable House will take into consideration the subject of how far the assumption of power on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company interferes with Canadian rights, and as to the necessity of more particularly declaring the boundaries of Canada on the westward, and on the northward, and of extending throughout the protection of Canadian laws, and the benefits of Canadian institutions. And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray". #

The petition was signed by Thomas Clarkson, President, and Charles Robertson, Secretary.

Begg. "History of the North-West" ... Page 310.

Meanwhile continued dissatisfaction was being expressed by the Red River settlers, and American settlement was increasing along the border. Furthermore the license of the company to a monopoly of the trade of the North-West Territory was about to expire in 1859. The directors of the company were desirous of knowing as soon as possible what views the British Government entertained upon the subject of renewal. These factors, combined with the view held by some Canadians that their western boundaries extended to the Pacific, thus over-lapping the territory over which the company claimed jurisdiction, induced the British Government to bring the whole subject up for investigation by a select committee of the House of Commons. The inquiry was not only to decide the question of the renewal of the license but would "incidentally embrace the general position and prospect of the Hudson's Bay Company". At last the opponents of the company felt that their efforts had not been in vain and they eagerly awaited developments.

The Canadian Government, glad that the inquiry was to be made and feeling that the question was of paramount importance to Canadian interests, decided to appoint a special agent to appear before the proposed select committee. Chief Justice W. H. Draper was the delegate chosen whose most important instructions were,

"His Excellency feels it particularly necessary that the importance of securing the North-West territory against the sudden and unauthorized influx of immigration from the United States should be strongly pressed. He fears that the continued vacancy of this great tract, with a boundary not marked on the soil itself, may lead to future loss and injury both to England and Canada. He wishes you to urge the expediency of making out the limits and so protecting the frontier of the lands above Lake Superior, about the Red River, and from thence to the Pacific as effectually to secure them against violent seizure, or irregular settlement, until the advancing tide of emigrants from Canada and the United Kingdom may fairly flow into them, and occupy them as subjects of the Queen, on behalf of the British Empire". #

The Committee, composed of such noted men as the Rt. Hon. Henry Labouchere, Colonial Secretary, Mr. Gladstone, Lord John Russell, Lord Stanley, Rt. Hon. Edward Ellice, and Mr. Roebuck, Chairman of the Crimean War Commission, were in conference from the twentieth of February until the ninth of March, and again in May and June. During the sessions a mass of valuable evidence was submitted respecting the North-West from witnesses of high standing. Called before the committee on 28th of May, Mr. Draper upheld Canada's position as being desirous of determining what her actual boundaries were. Canadians wished the right to survey and explore, he said, so that communication might be opened up. He declared himself to be under serious apprehension lest if measures were not

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 311.

soon taken, the West would cease to be British Territory. The natural outlet for Assiniboia appeared to be the United States rather than Canada, therefore Canada ought to have some direct interest that would induce her to apply her resources to opening up communication. Mr. Draper did not think, however, that Canada could at once assume the government of the Red River Settlement, but let a continuous range of settlements be made between Canada and the colony and then they could be better governed as British possessions by being made a part of Canada than in any other way. Her institutions should however, extend just as far and no further than the actual settlement. But since Canada was the necessary line of communication to new colonies she would be willing to undertake the survey and exploration if they would ultimately be made a part of herself. In the meantime the Hudson's Bay Company should maintain forts and its trade to keep peace among the Indians. Mr. Draper wished to see the time when a railroad would go across the continent terminated at the Pacific. The committee asked, whether if the land west of the Rocky Mountains belonged to another British colony, this would make any difficulty in arranging the construction of a railroad. If such an event did occur, Mr. Draper thought the logical thing to do would be to ask the Imperial Government to take the settlement of the question into its own hands. He would ask on the part of Canada that she have at least

the same privilege that was afforded to the Hudson's Bay Company to settle this western land and in the meantime there would be no reasonable grounds on which to object to them having the exclusive right to trade.

John Ross, a member of the Canadian Legislature and President of the Grand Trunk Railway, also testified. He was asked if he had considered the problem of the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company with reference to the extension of communication in British North America. He made answer that he had thought a great deal about it and had come to the conclusion that they should not be allowed to prevent the extension of settlement and civilization, but that it would be a great calamity if their control and power were to entirely cease because they tended to keep peace among the Indians. But as fast as the Canadian Government might wish to open up any part for settlement they should give notice to the company that they intended to make a survey of this space of country and then expect it to be surrendered within a stipulated period. If a railroad were to be carried across the continent the most feasible route would be through the part belonging to Great Britain and its extension would depend a great deal upon the settlement of the country. During the previous eighteen months exploration had been carried out along the north shore of Lake Huron and a part of Lake Superior and inland in a westerly direction. The

report represented the land as being very good, bearing fine timber, and well fitted for settlement. So if a connection were made between the Canadian system of railways and the Red River country it would be through the valley to the north of Lake Huron and Lake Superior until it reached the head of Lake Superior. The question of a railway to Vancouver Island would be more of an Imperial question than a Colonial one as he considered it too large an experiment for Canada to make with her present resources. But, he went on to say, a railroad "carried across the continent" would be "for the interests of both the Imperial and Canadian Governments" and "trade with India and China might be drawn over such a line of communication". #

Another important witness was Sir George Simpson. He stated that he had been governor of the Hudson's Bay Company for thirty-seven years and during that time had travelled extensively through its territory. On this authority he based the statement that the land was not fitted for colonization, crops were uncertain and the company had seldom been able to raise wheat on the banks of the Saskatchewan River. Moreover in the Red River colony clouds of locusts had destroyed the fields for three successive years and the colonists had been forced to send away for seed grain. Lack of fuel was another grave handicap to settlement, as were also the difficulties involved in making canoe navigation into a regular course of

Report of the Select Committee on Hudson's Bay's Affairs of 1857. Page 12

communication. No restrictions were set upon the colonists, Simpson declared, the only stipulation being that they should not traffic in furs. He also explained something of the organization of the company and the strict supervision exercised over employees. The Indians depended upon the company for support during the entire year and mutual good feeling existed. Stories of cannibalism and starvation had been much exaggerated. Simpson's testimony was on the whole very unfavourable to colonization, which was the natural view-point considering the lack of transportation facilities at that time and the failures along agricultural lines which the company had experienced in their experiments.

Other witnesses were called and the investigation was carried on in the thorough manner peculiar to the British Government. The final report did not lay down any rules regarding the point of law that was at issue, but comprised fourteen clauses pointing out the necessity for some definite action to be taken. It gave the opinion of the committee on what the future relationships of Canada to the Hudson's Bay Company in regard to settlement might be. It said,

"Your committee trusts that there will be no difficulty in effecting arrangements as between Her Majesty's Government and the Hudson's Bay Company by which these districts may be ceded to Canada on equitable principles and within the districts thus annexed to her

the authority of the Hudson's Bay company would of course entirely cease. ---- How far the chartered rights claimed by the Hudson's Bay company may prove an obstacle to their attainment, they are not able with any certainty, to say. If this difficulty is to be solved by amicable adjustment, such a course will be best promoted by the government, after communication with the company, as well as with the Government of Canada rather than by detailed suggestions emanating from this committee". #

One of the recommendations was the termination of the company's control over Vancouver Island "as the best means of favouring the development of the great natural advantages of that important colony". This advice was acted upon when in 1859 Vancouver Island became a Crown Colony. Another result of the sitting of the committee was that the company declined the renewal of the license for exclusive trade in the North-West Territory. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton offered an extension for a period of two years but the company claimed that the stipulation of so short a period would paralyze their authority by injuring their prestige with the Indians. The jurisdiction of the company, although deprived of the monopoly, did however survive the expiry of the license in the territory beyond the disputed boundaries of the chartered land.

The attitude of some Canadians at this time may be judged from a letter written in March 1857 during a sitting

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 320.



of the committee by John Shepherd, Governor of the Company, resident in London, to Henry Labouchere in which he requested that a military force be stationed at the Red River settlement to prevent disturbances caused by certain Canadians and Americans. The Hudson's Bay company was always prepared, he said, to co-operate cordially with the Government of Canada.

"We are convinced notwithstanding the hostile agitation of parties in Canada against our company, that our prosperity is not opposed to that of Canada, neither is the advancement of Canadian interests incompatible with ours, but, on the contrary, that in all matters of essential importance our joint interests are mutual and identical". #

Another letter was written by Simpson to Shepherd at Hudson's Bay House telling of agitation in Canada having for its ostensible object the annexation of the Hudson's Bay company's territories to Canada but which was really a desire to participate in the Indian fur-trade. He went on to say,

"By recent advices from Canada I learn that active measures will be adopted for promoting both the ostensible and covert designs of the annexationists. Several persons who have rendered themselves conspicuous in this movement, (including Mr. William Kennedy and Mr. Alan McDonnell) have proceeded from Toronto to the Red River Settlement with a view, it is stated, of taking advantage of the present juncture, pending the negotiations for the renewal of the company's license of trade to incite the inhabitants to resist the constituted authorities and to embark in the Indian trade in disregard of the company's rights. In these objects they no doubt

Correspondence of the Secretary of State to Governor-General of Canada, Extracted from Canadian Archives.

will receive willing support from the American traders on the frontier, who have a common interest in the matter with the Canadian agitators". #

Mr. Ross recognized this same desire on the part of Canadians to participate in the fur-trade and he indicated the weak spot of the opponents to the company when he said,

"I believe there are certain gentlemen at Toronto very anxious to get up a second North-West Company; and I dare say it would result in something like the difficulties which the last North-West Company created. I should be sorry to see them succeed". ##

In August of 1857 a letter was written by Mr. A. K. Isbister to Sir Edmund Head, Governor-General of Canada, in which he stated that he had been requested by the inhabitants of the Red River Settlement to lay before him a desire on their part to be annexed to Canada, should their colony as a result of the sitting of the Select Committee be detached from the jurisdiction of the company. The petition was signed by nine hundred and fifty-nine settlers and leading Indian Chiefs. Nothing came of this however.

About this time also a letter was written by Head to Labouchere in which he showed himself unsympathetic to the views of some of the Canadian agitators at the time but, nevertheless, did appreciate the danger threatening from the United States. He disclaimed definite knowledge of the company and its territory but added that he saw that all

See Page 20.

Beckles Willson. "The Great Company". Page 470.

sorts of dreams and speculations were floating in the public mind despite the fact that Canadians did not govern properly the territory already belonging to Canada. Yet it seemed to be assumed in some of the papers that there was an inherent right on the part of Canada to some of the future spoils of the Hudson's Bay Company. He went on to say, however, that he thought that a boundary line should be determined between the North-West Territory and the United States. He thought that one or two really good men might act on a boundary commission to decide the boundary without arousing the jealousy of either the United States Government or the Hudson's Bay company.

Allied with the awakening of a more general interest in the question of the value of the North-West Territories for colonization was an increased interest in transportation and communication. The early writers upon this subject were Englishmen, considering these questions from an Imperial standpoint. Imperial integrity, protection in time of war, increased trade relations, an asylum for the poor and destitute of England - each of these had its urge for them. Nevertheless, whatever the motive, it is true that writers upon this subject helped to arouse the nation at large to the importance of solving the problem of the West.

An early writer upon the subject of transportation was Major Carmichael-Smyth R. E. who in 1848 publicly advo-

cated a railway across Canada. In the following year he published a pamphlet which created considerable stir and comment in England. Dedicated to his friend Thomas Chandler Haliburton, Mr. Smyth made a plea to the people of Great Britain to look forward to a great national railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Through this attempt,

"there will soon arise a work that will be the wonder and admiration of the age--- and such a mercantile and colonizing road will be open to Great Britain that at no future period, (at least within the imagination of man), will she ever again have to complain of too great a population on her soil, and too small a market for her labor".--#

The problem of an asylum for convicts was next discussed. The view now taken by Mr. Smyth had already been suggested in "The Progress of the Nation" in 1836. It would seem that England could not better employ her convicts than by using them for a work that would be of lasting importance to herself, the colonies, and mankind in general. Mr. Smyth quoted the Times which has made a further suggestion that soldiers who had served their country for ten years might well be rewarded by small freeholds as a pension, and then be required to appear on duty at certain times. This system would be particularly useful as a method of guarding the convicts in their work on the railway; and from the standpoint of expense it would involve no greater outlay to keep convicts employed, fed and guarded in Canada than elsewhere,

Carmichael-Smyth. "Thoughts on the Subject of a Railway Communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific from The Magnificent Harbour of Halifax, in Nova Scotia to The Mouth of Fraser's River". Page 9

particularly when the British Government would be reimbursed for the amount expended on the work.

But before plans of this kind were too far advanced, steps should be taken to enter into negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company. According to Mr. James Edward Fitzgerald they should be approached somewhat as follows,

"You have the power of becoming the founders of a new state, perhaps of a new empire, or of arresting for a time, for you cannot ultimately prevent, the march of mankind in their career of victory over the desolate and uncultivated parts of the earth. For now nearly two centuries your sway has extended over half a continent, and as yet you have left nothing behind you in all that vast country, to bear witness to your power and your riches. Now a new destiny is before you; You may, if you will, place your names beside those who have devoted themselves to the noble task of stimulating and directing the enterprising genius of their fellow countrymen, who have prolonged the existence of their nation by giving a new life to its offspring". #

The company having been persuaded to come to terms, England, the North American Provinces and the Hudson's Bay Company itself would all employ their wealth and power to unite the Mother Country with the new land in one great unbroken iron chain, a railway, by means of which all the obstacles and barriers of the Rocky Mountains would fade forever. Cooperation, power and wealth would soon accomplish the

Carmichael-Smyth. "Thoughts on the Subject of a Railway Communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific from The Magnificent Harbour of Halifax, in Nova Scotia to The Mouth of Fraser River". Page 9.

desired work from which so many benefits would accrue.

Writing just after Lr. Smith in 1850 were Captain F. A. Wilson and Alfred B. Richards who in collaboration published, "Britain Redeemed and Canada Preserved". Their aim was, they said,

"to show the feasibility of a line of railway across the Canadas, joining the Atlantic and Pacific oceans; the necessity of this to retain the most important of our colonies, and to keep pace with the vast designs of the United States". #

They saw the west opened up for settlement with a railroad for communication to relieve the situation in England. Great Britain, with colonial dependencies embracing about one-third of the globe, with supremacy of the seas, and with only a native population of twenty-seven millions was yet suffering from over population and congestion. In the year 1844 the number of people given relief amounted to nearly one-eighth of the population, while the poor rates were about £8,000,000 per annum. What then would be the remedy for such a state of affairs? The logical answer seemed to be by an uncompromising system of emigration and obviously there was one place suitable,

"this country of promise is Canada..... her expansive bosom peopled from her eastern to her western extremity; and the intermediate space constituted the grand high-road round the world's circumference, the future channel of the whole world's general intercourse and commerce; and all this, marvellous as it may seem, by easy, cheap, and self-evident means." ##

Wilson and Richards. "Britain Redeemed and Canada Preserved". Introduction, Page 6.

Ibid. Page 58.

It was naturally in the interests of the Hudson's Bay Company to belittle the west as fit for settlement. The country was presumably too remote and desolate; yet the truth was that nowhere was there a more favourable situation on the face of the earth for agriculture. The mountain district, moreover would seem to present an insurmountable barrier but the Rockies had been crossed at various places by adventurous explorers and surely modern science would not admit itself vanquished by this obstacle. The barrier crossed, the atmosphere and capabilities of the district could not be surpassed or even equalled by any other point along the whole Pacific. This statement would hold good whether considered from a military standpoint with Vancouver Island lying so protected and protecting; or commercially when it was in a direct course from north-eastern Asia and capable of sheltering in its waters the fleets of the whole world, prophetic of the rise of a port that would snatch the transient prosperity and renown of San Francisco and perhaps in future outrival "even the universal mart and immortal fame of ancient Tyre and Sidon".

The only answer to the problem of the existing ills in England would be to provide transportation and labour for unfortunates in British North America. Proposals were made whereby they could be drafted for work in the building of a transcontinental railway from Halifax to the Pacific, thus killing two birds with one stone. A discussion of the minute details of the undertaking

followed which are not relevant to the present subject. It is necessary to add just a word in regard to the colonization scheme. As the capabilities of the soil and climate were excellent for immigration in a short time the pioneers would be able to maintain themselves and relieve the Government of England from responsibility for their welfare. The one thing left would be the ways and means of obtaining money to finance the undertaking in its original stages. This might be accomplished by the transference by the parishes of England of the six million pounds annually spent in poors' rate to the Government for a term of three years. Summing up the advantages to be gained by such a programme there would be the preservation of the land for Great Britain, the establishment of new trade relations, an open door for the struggling masses in England, and a check to the rapidly increasing power of the United States.

That the writers thought little consideration was due the Hudson's Bay company and that the charter should not be an impediment to any scheme which might be evolved for colonization of the west can be seen from the following remarks,

"No constitutional or monarchical authority can will away to any country, corporation or individual native or foreign, that which the nation has conquered or discovered. The power that makes charters can unmake them; and when such are iniquitously and injuriously granted, the revocation is a necessary duty of justice..... What should we say if the Merchant Tailors upon the strength of a charter musty from age, and questionable in its origin - the after-dinner gift of capricious and unscrupulous levity in a prince, whose character and acts rendered odious all

that arose from them - were coolly to dispatch a member of their corporation to Paris, there, with open effrontery and in the teeth of proprietary right inherent in the people of these realms, to traffic and haggle for the sale of Alderney or Sark, as portions of their chartered possessions which they themselves did not choose to retain?" #

Another writer on the subject was Captain Lillington Synge who published a pamphlet in 1852 entitled "Great Britain, One Empire". We are amused and interested to find that according to his report we are transported into a land rich with mineral wealth, blocks of copper weighing two hundred and fifty pounds, mountains of iron, just waiting to be transported, almost incredible returns of wheat, inexhaustible supplies of animal life, fish, easy water transportation, and virgin forests. This is the great west, the wealth lying at England's door. Would it not seem only sensible and logical that such bounties should be taken advantage of for the benefit of the nation? Is it not superfluous, Synge argues, to point out the importance of having a secure, independent and complete system of communication for the Empire? His view is of an empire extending to every part of the earth which must be kept together by communication.

"Intercommunication of the most rapid and continual description will assuredly take place between the various parts of the British Empire. It may be made the means of solving all difficulties in the way of her Imperial integrity". ##

Wilson and Richards. "Britain Redeemed and Canada Preserved". Page 270.

Synge. "Great Britain, One Empire". Page

Synge's remarks became the more significant when we consider that the date of writing was just previous to the Crimean War. If a struggle came with Russia, Synge continues, India in an isolated position would be liable to intrigues that would undermine England's predominance in that part of the world. If Britain could free herself from dependence upon eastern routes of communication it would be most beneficial and would prove a source of greater security, prosperity and glory. Where then would she be most likely to find a route that would keep open a channel of intercourse with India and yet be independent. The answer was across the American continent on British soil. In the first place this would be the shortest route to China, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. More than this it was the only one not laid open to attack and was besides the most salubrious and profitable. The already existing British Provinces would be induced to carry on their trade through a strictly British channel rather than by way of the United States. That country had already by a start of one hundred years deflected the course of trade southward to the detriment of the colonies of Britain. This fear of trade drifting to America was always one of the reasons propounded for acquisition of the North-West before such time as it could be commercially absorbed into the bosom of the United States. Once submerged along lines of trade the thin edge of the wedge towards annexation would be widened into inevitable absorption by that country. Synge points out the danger when

he says,

"The national allegiance of the country may depend upon the system and balance of intercourse".

He goes on to estimate the labour which would need to be expended before such a route would be complete.

Part Two of the book asserts what Synge considers to be the most speedy attainment of the entire undertaking and the work involved. If the proposed route were carried out the result would be impetus to colonization. If it were of interest to the Empire, and Synge has already spent much time in proving to us that it would be, colonization would be equally concerned in the welfare of Great Britain. It would relieve the congested population of England, should an arrangement be made whereby land could be purchased or granted to the colonists by parliamentary act. The emigrant would be forced to work, instruction could be provided in every kind of industry for the unskilled, and earnings over and above that necessary to pay the government would then be applied to the purchase of shares in an associated enterprise. Optimists would point to this as the eventual highest attainable prosperity for the country, commercially, nationally and politically.

Missionary activity was another factor which helped to stimulate the popular interest and curiosity in regard to the North-West. In 1855 there was published at Toronto an account of the Hudson's Bay territory by the Rev. John Ryerson who had undertaken in the previous year a tour as "Co-delegate, and deputation

to the Wesleyan Missions in Hudson's Bay". The work, composed of a series of letters written to the Rev. Enoch Wood, General Superintendent of Wesleyan Missions in Canada and Hudson's Bay, is comprehensive in form and deals with numerous subjects which came under Mr. Ryerson's observation. He touches upon the scenery, soil, agriculture, extent of country, trade, Indian Tribes, and organization and government of the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as upon the religious phase. This work now out of print, did much to enlighten the people of the eastern provinces in regard to activities in Rupert's Land and proved a standard book of information on the subject. Mr. Ryerson extols the wealth of the west in the following quotation,

"The British territory north of Sault de Ste. Marie, and extending from the Labrador Coast, in the east to New Caledonia, and the shore of the Pacific Ocean, west; in the bounds of which is Rupert's Land, or the Hudson's Bay territory proper, is one third larger than all Europe. In many parts of this immense country there is a great deal of excellent land, very suitable for agricultural purposes; this is especially the case in many localities south of latitude fifty-five, where almost every kind of summer grain and useful vegetables can be grown with the greatest facility and in great abundance. There is not to be found in British America, finer, richer, and a more productive soil, than there is in Selkirk settlement, on the Assiniboine and Red Rivers; and in the bounds of Rupert's Land there are millions of acres equally rich and fertile, and equally suited, from climate and locality, for farming and agricultural purposes".. #

Ryerson. "A Missionary Tour in the Territory of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company". Page 141-2.

Undoubtedly the year 1857 maybe regarded as a landmark in the history of the North-West Territory and the interest awakened was to lead eventually to the shattering of what had been "a corporation's preserve". The Canadian Government had, previous to the British Enquiry of that year, appointed a select committee to "receive and collect Evidence and Information as to the Rights of the Hudson's Bay Company under their Charter, the Renewal of the License of Occupation, the Character and Soil and Climate of the Territory, and its fitness for Settlement". This committee reported unfavourably to the continued sway of the company with the result that the Canadian Government decided to send an exploring party to the Red River settlement to consider the opening up of communication. The party was organized under George Gladman, an old Hudson's Bay Company employee, with Henry Youle Hind, Professor at King's College, Toronto, as geologist, W. L. Napier as engineer, and Simon J. Dawson as surveyor. Mr. Hind has written a record of his work in "The Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition". He tells us that on the 23rd of July, 1857, the party left for Collingwood, whence they embarked on a steamer bound for Fort William. From there they proceeded by the usual canoe route, making various explorations, and travelling up the Red River to Fort Garry. Mr. Hind returned by way of the United States, arriving in Toronto on November 4th, three and one-half months from the date of departure.

The next year an expedition under Dawson was divided

into two sections, the Saskatchewan and Assiniboine Rivers being surveyed by Hind, while the route between Lake Superior and the Red River was explored by Mr. Dawson. Hind's narrative of these expeditions is valuable because of the extensive information given regarding the North-West, its topography, the Indian tribes and their customs, as well as the peculiarities of the prairies. Then too, the description of the fertile belt is important giving as it did to the Canadians an idea of the value of the land still under the control of the fur-traders which helped to quicken the interest of the Canadian Government in the future of the North-West. He says,

"It is physical reality of the highest importance to the interests of British North America that this continuous belt can be settled and cultivated from a few miles west of the Lake of the Woods to the passes of the Rocky Mountains, and any line of communication, whether by wagon-road or rail-road, passing through it, will eventually enjoy the great advantage of being fed by an agricultural population from one extremity to the other". #

He went on to say that no other part of the American Continent possessed even an approximation to the wealth of this belt from the standpoint of soil and climate. Its natural resources were of great value, and timber, lignite coal, salt, and iron ore were either within the limits or on the border of this region of fertility. Then follows a plea that this territory might remain in British possession.

Hind. "The Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition". Page 234.

"Bounded on the west by British Columbia, whose gold-wealth will insure her a marvellously rapid progress, and on the east by the powerful, energetic, and loyal colony of Canada, which now in conjunction with sister provinces contains a population exceeding by 1,000,000 that of the thirteen colonies during the revolutionary war, is it likely that British Enterprise and Patriotism will permit the intervening country to remain a wilderness or pass into the hands of a foreign government?" #

In this is sounded a warning against the encroachment of the United States and the possible annexation of the Red River Settlement to it, a future for the colony which some far-seeing men were already dreading.

Dawson's work was to report upon a line of route between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement. The winter of 1856-9 was occupied in exploring the country between Rainy Lake and Lake Superior but the details of his findings are too numerous to be quoted here. Sufficient is it to say that he carefully outlined a land and water-way route as far as Lake of the Woods and from there a road line to Fort Garry. In a report on his work which he forwarded to the Hon. William McDougall some years afterwards in 1868 he emphasized the need of better communication between Canada and the Red River Settlement,

"But while taking this view of its utility, I must also draw attention to the fact that the opening of the communication, even in this simple way, would have the immediate effect of drawing the trade of the North-West Territories to Canada....The State of Minnesota has, of late, been doing a good

Hind. "The Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition". Page 235

deal to facilitate intercourse and trade with the Red River Settlement. During the summer now approaching a tri-weekly line of stages will be established, mails will be delivered every second day, and the people, cut off from Canada, will naturally draw closer to the only neighbors with whom they can hold intercourse, and if this state of things continues long, they must become a community of the United States rather than a British Colony". #

It was a coincidence that in this same year, 1857, Captain Palliser, and Dr. Hector, Botanist, were also sent to the west on an exploring expedition by the Imperial Government to report upon the fitness of the prairie region for colonization and on the question of transportation. The report of Palliser's exploration in British North America is made up of a series of letters written to the Secretary of State for the Colonies with enclosures and observations made by the explorers. Amongst other things mention is made of the three prairie levels and the discovery of coal on the route to Edmonton, Mr. Hind in his narrative says that in July 1858 Captain Palliser was requested by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies to state his opinion on four points connected with the country which he was engaged in exploring. These questions were, first, whether the Red River Settlement possessed qualifications which would adapt it for an English colony; second, what could be the dimensions and the boundary line of such colony, and whether it would be advisable to include the Saskatchewan district in it so as to establish one great border-line from the new colony of British Columbia up to the Red River Settlement, under a

Russell. "The Red River Country, Hudson's Bay and the North-West Territories, Considered in Relation to Canada". Pages 184-5.

sway and jurisdiction distinct from the Hudson's Bay company's authority; third, what means of access existed for British emigrants to reach this settlement; fourth, whether judging from the explorations which he had already made, he considered that the country presented such facilities for the construction of a rail-road as would at some period, though possibly a remote one, encourage her Majesty's Government in the belief that such an undertaking between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans could ever be accomplished. In answer to the second query Captain Palliser outlined a boundary which would isolate the colony from Canada and interpose between the two countries a territory which would still be in the occupation of the Hudson's Bay company. Mr. Hind, looking at the problem from a Canadian's standpoint, saw a difficulty in such a boundary as it would leave the entire region between the height of land west of Lake Superior (the boundary of Upper Canada) and the western shore of the Lake of the Woods in the hands of the company. Moreover valuable pine, spruce, minerals, and water-power of the east coast of Lake Winnipeg and the Winnipeg River would thus be legally cut off from the new colony. In answer to the third question Captain Palliser said, "I think there are no means of access to be recommended save those via the United States". The opening of a line from the Atlantic

to the Pacific through British territory, he thought, would very largely depend upon the progress made by British Columbia, and it gave promise of becoming a very wealthy British Colony. He did not however, recommend that the British Government should take steps along these lines.

"I, therefore cannot recommend the Imperial Government to countenance or lend support to any scheme for constructing, or it may be said, forcing a thoroughfare by this line of route, either by land or water, as there would be no immediate advantage commensurate with the required sacrifice of capital". #

We see that, judging from the standards of their day, the reports of these exploring expeditions were filled with much valuable information regarding the western part of the continent and undoubtedly helped to bring the question of its future before the public notice of Canadians.

As a result of these exploring expeditions the Canadian Government made an attempt in 1858 to establish a mail service between Canada and the settlement. To this end the North-West Transit Company was incorporated, but some of the shareholders became involved in a Chancery suit and the affairs of the company could not be successfully carried on. They had hoped also to operate west of Red River by obtaining Imperial support. But the British Government refused to entertain the proposals of the company because of the large subsidy that would

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 250.

be required for the carriage of British Mails to the Pacific. The attempt was soon abandoned as a failure, leaving the colony to the mercy of the United States for its transportation and mail service. The feeling of the settlers in this regard may be judged from a letter written by Donald Gunn, resident of the colony, to John J. Vickers, North-western Express, Toronto,

"You asked the feeling of the people of the Red River as to the opening of the route via Fort William. I would simply say that the difficulties into which the Transit Company's affairs have got by the unfortunate misunderstanding which has taken place between the stock-holders in that company has almost destroyed all our fond expectations like a speedy opening of that most desirable route; so much indeed, does this feeling prevail among all classes here that our importers are now endeavouring to establish agencies from the Atlantic to St. Paul as a matter of necessity, but certainly not of choice". #

The advantages of the American route by way of the Red River were so obvious that the Hudson's Bay itself in 1859 brought supplies by way of St. Paul. Later, in 1861, the company took a step further by placing a small steamer, The Pioneer, originally called The Anson Northup, on the river to ply between Fort Abercrombie in Minnesota and Fort Garry. Goods were taken by wagon from St. Paul and loaded on the boat. In 1862 a large steamer called the International was used and two years later Governor Dallas arranged for a through mail service from St. Paul to the settlement.

The Hor'Wester. Issue of March 28, 1860.

That the people of Canada were actually awakened in the late fifties to the opportunities lying latent in the West may be seen by the frequency with which the subject was now under discussion. Among the number of those who were alive to the situation was Alexander Morris, Barrister in Montreal, long afterwards Chief Justice and then Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba. Morris was interested in a Confederation scheme and he also advocated the acquisition of the North-West by Canada. In a lecture entitled Nova Britannia delivered in Montreal in March 1858, before the Mercantile Library Association, he endeavoured to show the dangers involved in allowing Rupert's Land to remain unoccupied. He suggested that a means of communication by road and water, for summer and winter use, should be opened between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement and that colonization should be placed under the jurisdiction of Canada, which should be given power to settle the territory. Once the colony were open to commerce a wide field of enterprise would be established. Morris quotes the remarks made by Bishop Mountain of Quebec who, writing in 1844, said,

"The soil, which is alluvial, is beyond example rich and productive, and withal so easily worked that, although it does not quite come up to the description of the Happy Islands there is an instance I was assured, of a farm in which the owner with comparatively light labour in the preparatory processes had taken a wheat crop out of the same land for eighteen consecutive years, never changing the

crop, never manuring the land, and never suffering it to lie fallow, and that the crop was abundant to the last". #

Imperial as well as Colonial interests demanded the opening up of such a vast stretch of agricultural land, Morris affirmed. Such a "paradise of fertility" should not remain longer locked up.

"The knell of arbitrary rule has been rung. The day has gone by for the perpetuation of monopolies...It will suffice to express my confident belief that Canada has only to express in firm but respectful tones her demands as to that vast territory and these will be cheerfully acceded to by Great Britain". ##

Again in his lecture entitled "The Hudson's Bay and Pacific Territories" delivered during the winter of 1858 Morris says in speaking of the mist of obscurity which had surrounded Rupert's Land,

"As some fair statue freed from the accumulation of ages in which it laid buried and gradually disinterred by some adventurous Leyard - stands before us a vision of beauty and of rare excellence; or, to speak more appositely, as the treasures of the hoarding miser are brought to light, and the tenacious grasp of the Hudson's Bay company is relaxed, so will these fair territories stand before us and present to the attention of the human family vast expanses of rich arable country - goodly habitations for the residence of civilized man... With the information we possess,

Morris. "Nova Britannia" Page 28.

Ibid. Pages 30, 32.

We believe that there are large tracts, princely provinces in fact, that are well adapted to become the seats of busy industry; and I am utterly irdisposed as are, I believe, the people of Canada also, to accept as an accurate representation ' of the character of the territory of the Hudson's Bay Territory, with reference to its adaptation for the purposes of colonization and cultivation' the authoritative and positive assertion of one of the officials of the company that 'no part of the Hudson's Bay company's territory is well adapted for settlement' I believe that as our own territory is sufficiently large, and we have scope and verge enough for the expansion of a dense population (denser than ours will be for years to come), similar prompt and energetic measures should be adopted with regard to the Red River Country, which until it be admitted a member of the Canadian Confederation - an object to be kept steadily in view - should meanwhile be constituted into a territorial government under the direct authority of the Crown, with a constitution adapted to its position, with entire freedom for importation and exportation, save upon the charges of moderate expense, necessary to defray the expenses of the government. Then, with an energetic colony on the Pacific, with another centre of civilization and progress on the Red River, and with Canada stretching out towards the Prairie and traversing anew her old North-Western path reopened and improved, the vast country would bid fair to be peopled with an industrious population and the avenue would be opened up for the inroad of the locomotive. The construction of the Atlantic and Pacific railway would be facilitated, its ultimate

construction assured, and a step of immeasurable importance taken towards laying the foundation of the new Britannic Northern Empire on these shores.....Passing by the general question of legality with the simple affirmation of my belief that it ought to be judicially tested, we, as Canadians, have especial ground of attack against the charter, and we have territorial rights to conserve. But it must be borne in mind, whether we assume that the charter is valid or invalid, that Canada is clearly not entitled to the whole of the country reaching to the North Pole. If the charter be invalid, the British Crown would be the sovereign of a large portion; but nevertheless, I believe that Canada is the rightful owner of a large extent of the territory. The question of boundary is important, as a subsidiary one, and its right decision will add many fruitful acres to our borders. It derives much significance from the impressions which distinctly exclude 'all the lands actually possessed by or granted to any of our subjects, or possessed by the subjects of any Christian province or state'. Resting upon this expressed prohibition Canada claims by inheritance a large tract of the territory. Canada, under the sway of the French authorities had adventurously pushed her way into the territory, and the subjects of another 'Christian province' then possessed a large portion of it". #

After the investigation of 1857 the Hudson's Bay company appears to have been willing to come to terms for the transfer to Canada of a portion of the North-West Territories, although they held that to do so would likely entail

Morris. "Nova Britannia". pages 56-8; 76; 83.

loss upon them through an increase of expense in conducting their trade. But the Canadian Government at this time insisted upon testing the validity of the charter as is shown by the following clause taken from the joint address of the Legislative Council and Assembly of Canada to the Queen, August, 1858.

"That Canada, whose rights stand affected by that charter to which she was not a party, and the validity of which has been questioned for more than a century and a half, has, in our humble opinion, a right to request from your Majesty's Imperial Government a decision of this question with a view of putting an end to discussions and questions of conflicting rights, prejudicial as well to your Majesty's Imperial Government as to Canada, and which, while unsettled, must prevent the colonization of the country". #

A letter from Head to Lytton of the same month stated that the question was narrowed down to two points, firstly, whether the company had a right to exact compensation, and secondly, if so, upon what principle and to what extent. Head favoured submitting the question to the decision of a judicial tribunal and then if the charter were held to be valid the tribunal could decide upon the compensation for whatever sacrifices the company should be called upon to make either in resigning land fitted for colonization, or the total surrender

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 330.

of territory and trading monopoly. He went on to say that a decision having been arrived at, the great work of colonization would commence and the Red River Settlement would be established into a province with the possibility of further expansion into the Saskatchewan area. He added that any desire which Canada might urge for the acquisition of these two provinces would be readily entertained if accompanied by an offer to colonize and govern them and probably the work of occupation and government would be best accomplished by Canada or by the Imperial Government and Canada conjointly. He considered that the remainder of the so-called chartered country situated on the tributaries of Hudson's Bay would best be left under the management of the company with its powers of government and existing exclusive right of trade with the Indians. Following this on the 4th of September, a minute of the Executive Council of Canada was transmitted to Lytton which drew attention to the importance of opening a direct line of communication, by a railway or otherwise, from Canada through the Red River and Saskatchewan Territories to the Fraser River and Vancouver Island.

About this time Messrs. Cartier, Ross and Galt visited England in connection with the Hudson's Bay Company question and intimated to the Secretary of State that the Canadian Government would undertake the necessary legal proceedings to test the validity of the charter, but when the Secretary of State wrote to the Canadian authorities on the 22nd of December suggesting

that they take this step he received a letter from Head dated April 19, 1859 intimating that the Executive Council would not advise steps to be taken for testing the charter by scire facias. On May 13th Lytton wrote to Head, "It is not without surprise that I learned the intention of the Canadian Government not to test the validity of the Hudson's Bay Company's charter". He had previously written to the company on the 9th of March urging them to come to some agreement with Canada. He resolved to bring the question before the judicial committee of the Privy Council, but was unable to do so as his party went out of office.

That considerable discussion was taking place at this time in Canada and that the question of the future of the west had become an issue in Canadian politics may be learned from extracts from the Lor'Wester, a newspaper published for the first time in 1859 at the Red River Settlement by two Canadian journalists, Buckingham and Coldwell. In the issue of March 28, 1860 a lengthy editorial regarding annexation to Canada reads,

"Mr. Isbister's letter to Mr. Donald Gunn, which we published in our first number setting forth the purposes of the Colonial Secretary and identifying the Premier of Canada with the policy of non-annexation of the North-West Territory to that province has provoked controversy in the Canadian press. The last mail brings utterances many and loud.

on the subject. The misfortune is, however, that party feeling is the main element in Canadian politics, and that questions are considered less in relation to the well-being of the community than in reference to their bearing upon the plans and interests of the various contending parties". #

Then follow extracts from Canadian papers which indicate, on perusal, that the question resolved itself around the political preponderance on the part of Upper Canada in the Canadian Legislature which would result should the Red River Colony be annexed. The Lower Canadians naturally were disinclined to submit to such a course. The Globe article reads,

"We have in the declarations of Mr. Cartier to Sir Bulwer Lytton a remarkable commentary on the speeches of Mr. Van Koughnet in favour of North-Wester annexation. While he was talking largely about extending Canadian enterprise over the prairies of the Red River and Saskatchewan Mr. Cartier's hand was upon him all the time, and he was saying in effect, 'You shall not touch the country; you must not injure the interests of Lower Canada; you may talk to please these pharasaical brawlers of Upper Canada, but you shall do nothing'. While the Upper Canadian ministers at home were advocating the annexation of the Hudson's Bay Territory, Mr. Cartier in England, was refusing to have anything to do with it. This is the tyranny which Mr. John A. Macdonald and his colleagues have submitted to during the last five years....The North-West Territory lies open before us - a field white for the harvest. We must not enter upon it; Lower Canadian interests forbid it. The interests of trade, of agriculture, the promptings of

The Nor'Wester. Issue of March 28, 1860.

national and personal ambitions, lead us in that direction; all must be abandoned because Lower Canada commands it. The Grand Trunk may be extended to the East through Lower Canada; docks at Montreal may be constructed with Upper Canadian money, but there can be no extension of operations to the west within British territory because they would weaken the influence of Lower Canada.....The Home Government have waited long for action on the part of Canada, and can wait no longer. A Bill will be introduced into the Imperial Parliament during the coming session to establish an independent colony at Red River. If its passage is not prevented by Canadian interference, Canadian merchants will encounter next year a hostile tariff at Red River and the settlement of the colony will be blocked by the Hudson's Bay Company who will control its affairs". #

The foregoing Globe article, bitterly hostile to Lower Canada, shows George Brown still an advocate of the necessity of the acquisition of the West on the part of Canada.

Next follows a quotation from the Toronto Leader, an exponent of the Canadian ministry and in favour of a policy of non-annexation.

"Even the advocates of a mere Canadian federation must see that the proposed annexation of the North-West is in antagonism to their scheme. But, in any case, a little reflection would serve to show that the great North-West can never be governed by a central government of which the seat would have to be on the banks of Ottawa. A federal would get rid of the whole difficulty; but in the meantime it is desirable that

The Nor'Wester. Issue March 28, 1860.

Red River be organized into a separate colony preparatory to its entrance into the family of the federated provinces. Canada does not want territory. Her difficulty is of the opposite kind. She wants people to cultivate the territory she now possesses, and of which by far the largest proportion lies in its primeval wilderness. If any of our people want to go to Red River we may bid them God speed but it is not our business to follow them with our political institutions". #

Then is quoted an extract from the Ottawa Citizen strongly opposed to the policy of annexation.

"It is plain that the annexation of this territory would be incompatible with the maintenance of the existing union. To widen the area of Upper Canada by an extension to the base of the Rocky Mountains, with the consequent increase of power in the Legislature would be literally to swamp Lower Canada. The Lower Canadians under such an arrangement, would be at the mercy of those with whom they have comparatively little in common. The governmental resources of the union would be drained for purposes which, politically speaking, would be hostile to Lower Canada. We hold, therefore, that Mr. Cartier was right when he said that if the North-West Territory be annexed to Canada the present Canadian union would be destroyed. The next question is, can Upper Canada honestly undertake to administer the affairs of the North-West? We must not trust to an answer prompted by political ambition. These very journals which denounce Mr. Cartier, and everlastingly prate about the annexation of the North-West, themselves afford the best answer to their demands.

The Nor'Wester. Issue March 28, 1860.

For are they not constantly crying out that Upper Canada is ruined, are they not always telling us that Upper Canada is unable to bear its present load of debt and difficulty? We don't believe these tales. We know that the cry of ruin and decay is a mere political trick, resorted to as the last shift by men who would sacrifice everything to acquire power. But on their own showing Upper Canada is not competent to deal with the North-West. Properly to develop that region a large expenditure must be incurred. Roads must be made, and all the machinery of government maintained. The majority of our people are not willing thus to shoulder additional responsibilities, simply that a certain party may achieve its ends. Moreover, annexation to Canada would be most injurious to the Red River Country. As a distinct colony, with its own rulers, development would proceed easily, naturally and with regard only to local resources and wants, To be tacked onto Canada on the other hand, would be to encumber it with responsibilities utterly beyond its strength without securing any benefits worth half so high a price. We think then, that in opposing annexation Mr. Cartier consulted the welfare of Canada; and that the Red River people have good cause to rejoice in being delivered from an absorption which would have entailed many costly evils, without any counter advantages". #

The last expression of Canadian opinion on the subject was that of the Hamilton Times, Reform Journal. This paper, according to the Nor'Wester, refused to believe that Sir

The Nor'Wester. Issue March 28, 1860.

Bulwer Lytton had been influenced against annexation solely by the feelings of Mr. Cartier; and argued that the erection of the Red River Country into a distinct colony was justified from the standpoint of Canada, of the empire, and of the territory. The Times said,

"We trust that the future of a remote but magnificent region will not be influenced in any degree by the party tactics of Canadian politicians. The question is much too momentous to be decided upon the impulse of faction or under prompting of political greed". #

In concluding the editorial in the Nor'Wester the writer expressed a hope that patriotism should be exercised in deciding the future of the West rather than partisanship and personal ambitions, whether the settlement be organized as the nucleus of a new colony with its own governor and administration or whether it be annexed to Upper Canada or United Canada.

In 1860 and 1861 the Duke of Newcastle, the new Secretary of State, contemplated arriving at some settlement with the company. A correspondence was entered into between the colonial office and the company in which the latter expressed a willingness to yield upon equitable terms, the jurisdiction over the Red River and the Saskatchewan districts with a view to colonization under Imperial auspices. No measure was actually brought before parliament because no agreement entirely satisfactory to both sides could be arrived at.

Nor'Wester. Issue of March 28, 1860.

At this juncture a new phase of the question was entered upon when, the affairs of the Grand Trunk Railway having become dreadfully entangled, the committee of shareholders invited Sir Edward W. Watkin to accept the post of Superintendent Commissioner with full powers. In endeavoring to unravel the tangled condition of the railroad and make it a paying concern the only way seemed to him to be to extend it to the Pacific Ocean. Watkin wrote,

"That way to many, would be chimerical; to some incomprehensible and possibly I may be looked upon myself as some what visionary for even suggesting it. To undertake the Grand Trunk with the notion of gradually working out some idea of this kind for it and for Canada, throws an entirely new light on the whole matter, and as a means to this end doubtless the Canadian Government would cooperate with the government of this country and would make larger sacrifices for the Grand Trunk in consequence. The enterprise could only be achieved by the cooperation of the two governments, and the associating with the Railway's enterprise some large land scheme and scheme of emigration". #

Holding such views it was inevitable that Watkin should sooner or later be confronted with the task of getting rid of the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly. Writing later of his experiences in "Canada and the North Atlantic Company 1851-1886" he says,

"The works to be effected were, first, the physical union of the Maritime

Trotter. "Canadian Federation". Page 180.

Provinces with Canada by means of intercolonial railways and second, to get out of the way of any unification, the heavy weight and obstruction of the Hudson's Bay Company. The latter was most difficult for abundant reasons". #

Carrying out his plans conscientiously Watkin proved to be a transportation man who, though originally working in the interests of railway building, became involved in the problem of the North-West and helped to awaken an interest in the problem of how the monopoly of the company might be abolished.

In September, 1861, Watkin visited Fredericton and Halifax in the interests of an intercolonial railway from Halifax to Quebec, and later in the Autumn representatives from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia journeyed to Canada where it was agreed that a delegation should proceed to take their case to England. This delegation included Messrs. Van Koughnet, Howe and Tilley. Through interviews with the Duke of Newcastle the Intercolonial Railway was guaranteed and the following resolutions were drawn up, first, that pioneer work should be commenced towards the Pacific by roads and telegraphs, second, that Confederation must be pushed on, and lastly, some solution must be found to the problem presented by the Hudson's Bay company.

Meanwhile the agitation in favour of opening up the Hudson's Bay Territory was continuing in Canada. On the 15th of April, 1862, the Canadian Government sent a letter to Mr.

Watkin. "Canada and the North Atlantic Country 1851-1886. Page 20

Dallas, new Governor of Rupert's Land, expressing a desire to come to some arrangement whereby a road and telegraph line could be constructed through the company's territory to unite Canada and British Columbia and open the fertile belt for settlement. Mr. Dallas answered that such a plan was impossible as the Red River and Saskatchewan Valleys were the source of food for the Northern posts. However he felt safe in saying that the company would be willing to come to some equitable arrangement for the surrender of all the rights conveyed by the charter. Canada then appealed to the Imperial Government for assistance without success, Newcastle writing that it was not in the power of the Imperial Government to grant assistance from Imperial funds to carry out the desired object. A letter dated the 16th of April written by Newcastle to Lord Monck, now Governor-General of Canada, indicates the attitude of the British Government at that time. He acknowledged a dispatch of the Committee of the Executive Council of Canada in reference to the propriety of acting upon an act of parliament to organize the Saskatchewan Country. It is explained in the letter that until the claim of the company was shown to be groundless Her Majesty's Government would not be in a position to take steps to facilitate the government of that territory by Canada. Such an attitude maintained on the part of the Imperial Ministers made it necessary for further action to be taken by the Canadian Parliament if it wished to continue the

existing policy. In September two members of the Canadian Government, Messrs. Howland and Sicotte were, therefore, deputed by Order-in-Council to proceed to England to press the great importance of the West. On 29th of November Newcastle wrote to Monck regarding these delegates to the effect that no definite results had been obtained regarding communications through the North-west Country such as to enable him to enter into any arrangements with Canada for that object. In December a meeting of gentlemen interested in a telegraph service to British Columbia took place at the Banking House of Messrs. Glynn, 67 Lombard St., London, at which the Canadian delegates were present. A course of action was formulated at that time, and at a subsequent meeting on the 21st of January, 1865, for the purpose of supporting the scheme Watkin moved the following resolution,-

"That this meeting, considering the growing importance of British North America and the extent of British Interests therein involved is impressed with the desirability of more closely connecting with the American dependencies, and is of opinion that the completion of a line of communication across the British portion of the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific is a necessity of the times, and this association pledges its support to a well-devised scheme for accomplishing the object in view". #

Meanwhile the Duke of Newcastle undertook to sound the company on its willingness to allow a road and telegraph

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 334.

through its territory. Approached on the subject of giving a large tract of land through the fertile belt, Governor Berens answered,-

"What, sequester our very tap root! Take away the fertile lands where our buffaloes feed! Let in all kinds of people to squat and settle and frighten away the fur-bearing animals they don't hunt and kill! Impossible. Destruction-extinction of our time honoured industry. If these gentlemen are so patriotic why don't they buy us out?" #

Watkin became associated with a scheme to do exactly this.

Various suggestions and proposals were made as to whom the purchasers should be if the property and rights of the Hudson's Bay company were to be taken over. Mr. Watkin was anxious that the British Government should be amongst the purchasing parties, but the Colonial Office showed itself in positive opposition to the scheme, largely because Sir Frederic Rogers, its chief, had grave doubts of the vast territory in question being ever settled; and it was now clear that the promoters of the Pacific Transcontinental Railway would have to act without aid from the British Government. In an interview held on the 1st of December, 1862, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay company showed himself more reasonable than formerly and decided to grant land for the actual site of a road and telegraph or else sell outright.

"The offer" observes Watkin "of a mere site of a road and ground for telegraph poles was no use. So, just as we were

Watkin. "Canada and the North Atlantic Country, 1851-1886. Page 120

leaving, I said, 'We are quite ready to consider your offer to sell; and to expedite matters, will you allow us to see your accounts, charters, etc?'" #

On April 5rd, 1862, Howland wrote a letter to Watkin in which he showed the trend of events,

"Mr. Fleming and myself are preparing some suggestions for you, in reference to the purchase of the rights of the Hudson's Bay company with a view to show in what manner it could be carried out, and afford security that the country should be opened for settlement and at the same time afford an inducement to the parties who might become purchasers". ##

On May 19th, the decision to buy outright for £1,500,000 was decided upon by the group interested in the Pacific Transit proposal. On finding that the Hudson's Bay Company would give no credit they had recourse to the International Finance Association in London, an organization comprising much the same group of men as the promoters of the Transit Scheme. It was understood that the Finance Association acted as agents merely, taking over the shares and then issuing "new stock to the public to an amount which covered a large provision of new capital for an extension of business by the company". In the re-organization the new proprietors were to carry on the present trade under the charter, but were also to promote settlement and develop transit and postal communications.

Willson. "The Great Company". Page 477.

Watkin. "Canada and the North Atlantic Co." Page 107

Sir Edmund Head, the late Governor-General of Canada, was elected the new Governor of the company.

Watkin tells us that he saw no way of securing supervision over the fertile belt and around it, except by the construction to begin with of a main line of telegraph from St. Paul to the Hudson's Bay Territory and thence by Fort Garry to the extreme western post on the east side of the Rocky Mountains. He accordingly went to Canada to negotiate with the Canadian Government for aid in carrying out the colonization, telegraphic and postal plans of the company across its territory to the Pacific, but apparently he did not meet with a favourable reception as will be seen from the following extract from an Order-in-Council passed by the Canadian Government.

"A telegraph line will not accomplish these objects (mentioned in previous clauses of the order), though it may serve an important service and lead ultimately to their attainment. But unless the 'Atlantic and Pacific Transit and Telegraph Company', (Mr. Watkin's scheme), are prepared to undertake the construction of a road paripassu with the telegraph line, the committee can not in the present condition of the Canadian exchequer, and with the important questions of boundary, territorial jurisdiction and form of government in the vast territory proposed to be opened, still unsettled, recommend the acceptance of the 'Heads of Proposal' as submitted by them, and conditionally approved by his grace. The committee are of opinion that in view of the recent change in the construction and objects of the Hudson's Bay company, which from correspondence laid

before the House of Lords appears to have been effected and the claims which the new organization have reiterated, with the apparent sanction of his grace, the Duke of Newcastle, to territorial rights over a vast region not included in their original charter it is highly expedient that steps be taken to settle definitely the North-western boundary of Canada. The committee therefore recommend that correspondence be opened with the Imperial Government, with the view to the adoption of some speedy, inexpensive, and mutually satisfactory plan to determine the important question and that the claims of Canada be asserted to all that portion of Central British America, which can be shown to have been in possession of the French at the period of the session in 1763". #1

It is evident from the foregoing that the reconstruction of the company and the increase of its capital stock had created a feeling of distrust in the minds of some of the public men of Canada especially as it reiterated all the territorial claims of the old organization.

We have seen before that many Americans were casting longing eyes on the British North-west, and the people of Minnesota particularly were welcoming bonds of friendship with the Red River Settlement by their efforts to further communication facilities for the colony. In an editorial of September 23, 1860, a recognition of this feeling was expressed in the Nor'Wester when a reference was made to the constant intercourse

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 335.

Sir Edmund Head, the late Governor-General of Canada, was elected the new Governor of the company.

Watkin tells us that he saw no way of securing supervision over the fertile belt and around it, except by the construction to begin with of a main line of telegraph from St. Paul to the Hudson's Bay Territory and thence by Fort Garry to the extreme western post on the east side of the Rocky Mountains. He accordingly went to Canada to negotiate with the Canadian Government for aid in carrying out the colonization, telegraphic and postal plans of the company across its territory to the Pacific, but apparently he did not meet with a favourable reception as will be seen from the following extract from an Order-in-Council passed by the Canadian Government.

"A telegraph line will not accomplish these objects (mentioned in previous clauses of the order), though it may serve an important service and lead ultimately to their attainment. But unless the 'Atlantic and Pacific Transit and Telegraph Company', (Mr. Watkin's scheme), are prepared to undertake the construction of a road *pari passu* with the telegraph line, the committee can not in the present condition of the Canadian exchequer, and with the important questions of boundary, territorial jurisdiction and form of government in the vast territory proposed to be opened, still unsettled, recommend the acceptance of the 'Heads of Proposal' as submitted by them, and conditionally approved by his grace. The committee are of opinion that in view of the recent change in the construction and objects of the Hudson's Bay company, which from correspondence laid

before the House of Lords appears to have been effected and the claims which the new organization have reiterated, with the apparent sanction of his grace, the Duke of Newcastle, to territorial rights over a vast region not included in their original charter it is highly expedient that steps be taken to settle definitely the North-western boundary of Canada. The committee therefore recommend that correspondence be opened with the Imperial Government, with the view to the adoption of some speedy, inexpensive, and mutually satisfactory plan to determine the important question and that the claims of Canada be asserted to all that portion of Central British America, which can be shown to have been in possession of the French at the period of the session in 1763". #1

It is evident from the foregoing that the reconstruction of the company and the increase of its capital stock had created a feeling of distrust in the minds of some of the public men of Canada especially as it reiterated all the territorial claims of the old organization.

We have seen before that many Americans were casting longing eyes on the British North-West, and the people of Minnesota particularly were welding bonds of friendship with the Red River Settlement by their efforts to further communication facilities for the colony. In an editorial of September 23, 1860, a recognition of this feeling was expressed in the Nor'Wester when a reference was made to the constant intercourse

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 335.

existing between the two peoples. At the same time a plea was made that Canada should take action to increase transportation from her territory and thus counteract the growing tendency towards Americanization. This increasing intercourse may be gleaned also from a memorial of the legislature of Minnesota published in the *Nor'Wester* in the issue of January 28th, 1860. The memorial petitioned that the provisions of the reciprocity treaty which had been concluded in 1854 between the United States Government and Canada should be extended to the Hudson's Bay Territory.

A further proof of this feeling was indicated by a letter from the Governor of Minnesota written in November, 1862, to Thomas Rawlings of Greshamhouse London, enclosing another memorial of the Minnesota Legislature showing that no stone was left unturned by the Americans to ingratiate themselves with Fort Garry. The memorial reads,

"Meanwhile the revenue and postal system of the United States has been extended to Pembina, and beyond; and, with the aid of steamboat navigation (transferred to the Red River from the adjacent sources of the Mississippi by the enterprise of the citizens of Minnesota), has rapidly removed former prejudices to commercial, and even political association with the United States. It is not too much to say, that if England shall not immediately take measures in behalf of the Red River and Saskatchewan districts by a political organization, and effect-

ive measures of colonization, that the Americanization of a grain region as large as six states of the size of Ohio cannot long be postponed". #

Another event is worthy of mention in this regard.

In 1861 there arrived at Fort Garry an American Official, James W. Taylor, a special agent sent by the Hon. W. B. Chase, the Secretary of the American Treasury, to investigate conditions in North-West British America, in their relationship to the interests of the United States. In a letter to Washington amongst other things Mr. Taylor wrote:

"One thing is very apparent; unless the English Government shall promptly respond to the manifest destiny of the great interior of British America-the basin of Lake Winnipeg-the speedy Americanization of that fertile district is inevitable. The indispensable requisites to the integrity of British dominion on this continent are such action in behalf of the Saskatchewan and Red River Districts as the French River excitement secured for the area fronting on the North Pacific three years since". ##

The following paragraph from a report which Mr. Taylor made during the American Civil War is startling to say the least,-

"I hasten Sir, to lay before you these facts in regard to the Red River Settlement, as confirming my conviction that no portion of the British Territory on this continent is so assailable, so certain of occupation by American troops in case of a war with England as Fort Garry and the immense district thence

Rawlings. "The Confederation of the British North American Provinces; Their Past History and Future Prospects". Page 200.

Black. "A History of Saskatchewan and the Old North West". Pages 135-6.

extending along the valley of the Saskatchewan to the Rocky Mountains. If our struggle is to be in the fullest sense a struggle for national existence, against foreign foes as well as domestic traitors, Minnesota however remote from the scenes of the southern insurrection, will claim the distinction of a winter campaign for the conquest of Central British America". #

In 1866 Sir Edmund Head called the attention of the Home Government to Taylor's remarkable reports and added,-

"We think therefore that we are the more bound most respectfully to suggest whether, if it is intended to retain the territory north of the 49th parallel as British soil, some steps ought not to be taken for asserting its British character, and maintaining law and order within it.

This may, no doubt, either be effected by the direction and action of the English Government, or be attempted by the agency of Canada, but, as we understood the latter course to have been deliberately selected, the Committee (provided the company are fairly dealt with, in the matter of compensation) can have no right to offer any remarks on the subject". ##

During the early sixties all was not well in the Red River Settlement itself. An unsatisfactory state of government existed in the colony due to a variety of causes. Not least amongst these was the lack of an efficient military force. In 1861 the Royal Canadian Rifles, which had come to the west in 1857 to quiet the growing uneasiness, returned home with the

Black. "A History of Saskatchewan and the Old North-West". Page 137.

Ibid.

result that the Hudson's Bay company was without an army to enforce law and order. Then there were the different attempts made by Canadians and some Englishmen to discountenance the rule of the company which could not but create a feeling of restlessness, not to say lawlessness. Nor did the publication of the Nor'-Wester, which took the Canadian point of view, tend to lessen such feelings. An article of March 14th, 1860, protested in no uncertain terms against the attitude of the Council of Assiniboia in excluding the press from a meeting held on the 27th of February of that year.

"The high handed proceeding against which we protest, indicates that the Councillors have yet to learn the first principles of government, as these are accepted in this the nineteenth century. The people of Red River can very well dispense with the services of men who love secrecy-of men who must have closed doors while they are legislating for the public and voting away the money of the public. We wonder whether the Governor and Committee in London will enforce the action of the Red River Council. We call their attention to the point and the attention of those politicians in Canada and England who have hitherto taken such a warm interest in questions affecting this country. We feel sure that this circumstance will not be without its effect in the general settlement of the affairs of this country which will be made during the present session of the Imperial Parliament". #

And in a later edition of April 28th, a note on the

The Nor'-Wester. Issue of March 14th, 1860.

political condition of the country ran thus,-

"There is a feeling of dissatisfaction in this settlement with our local legislature. It is directed not so much against the councillors for not doing their duty, as against the constitution of the council which is so framed as to fetter free action on the part of the members.....The people have no means of redress as the councillors receive their commissions direct from the Hudson's Bay House, London, and do not depend on the suffrages of the tax-payers for their seats. The privilege of petition is the extent of the people's influence in the council, if their request is granted, well; if not, they have just to acquiesce. The Red River Council ought to be elected and its discussions ought to be open to the public". #

Thus the paper went on sowing seeds of agitation.

It assailed the wavering do-nothing policy of the Imperial Government with regard to the Red River Settlement and protested against the way in which all legislation was moulded upon the material interests of the company. It proclaimed that the company was "utterly suited to the times, absurd in form and impotent for the purposes of good government". A moving spirit in a petition for a change of government was James Ross, a native of the settlement, who at this time held the offices of postmaster, sheriff and governor of the goal. That this reformation movement affected the spirit of justice is clearly seen by the following incident. In 1863 the Rev. G. O. Corbett, who had given evidence against the company before the Select Committee

The Nor'wester. Issue of April 26th, 1860.

of 1857, was arrested for a serious crime and sentenced to imprisonment for six months. He was, however, released by a band of friends who forcibly broke in the door of the goal. The ring-leader, Mr. James Stewart, was arrested and was himself liberated in the same lawless fashion. In 1864 Dr. John Schultz, a prominent citizen of the settlement and strongly pro-Canadian in his views became joint editor of the Nor'wester on the retirement of James Ross who had become associated with it in 1860. An incident now occurred which made the paper a most bitter opponent of the Hudson's Bay company's authority. Schultz had entered into a partnership with his half-brother, Sheriff McKenney in a merchant enterprise. On dissolving business relationships in 1864 the doctor sued his brother for a sum of money which he claimed was due him. In the midst of the trial Schultz made some remarks derogatory to the law-court and was not thereafter allowed to appear on his own behalf. This turned him against the company and as editor of the Nor'wester he made annexation to Canada, a settled plan of the paper. Sometime later Schultz again became involved in a law-suit. On visiting England McKenney had been forced to pay to a Mr. Kew of London the sum of £600 in settlement of a debt that had been incurred by the Schultz-McKenney trading business. On his return McKenney sued his former partner to recover from him his share in the transaction. McKenney won his suit. On

attempting to serve a warrant the sheriff's assistant was kept a prisoner by Schultz for some hours and when Schultz was finally arrested, his friends took the law into their own hands and liberated him. When a vacancy occurred on the Council board of Assiniboia, Dr. Schultz endeavoured to secure the seat and on refusal by the company his wrath was kindled afresh against what he called the usurpation of the right of the people.

Although incidents of this kind occurred, aside from showing the weakness of the government, they exercised no great influence on the condition of the community as a whole. The general state of affairs was satisfactory enough. Another event is, however, worthy of mention because of its amusing character. Thomas Spence of Portage la Prairie undertook to form a new and separate government which he named the Republic of Manitoba. Some of the inhabitants did not concur in the plan and Mr. Spence addressed a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, asking that his government receive favourable recognition. He was not a little chagrined to receive in reply a communication from the Imperial Government to the effect that he was "incurring grave responsibilities" by "creating a so-called self-supporting government in Manitoba, within the territory of the Hudson's Bay company". The republic collapsed immediately and the most important result of the fiasco was the effect produced in Canada. The general impression given was

that the Hudson's Bay company was misgoverning and tyrannizing over the settlement.

The time was drawing near when the old order must change yielding place to new. The responsibility for the government and settlement of the colony must soon be assured either by England or by Canada. It was not unnatural considering these facts that further action was now taken by Canadian politicians. Governor-General Lonck in his speech from the throne on the 19th of February, 1864, spoke as follows,-

"I have considered it advisable to open a correspondence with the Imperial Government, with a view to arrive at a precise definition of the geographical boundaries of Canada in that direction. Such a definition of boundary is a desirable preliminary to further proceedings with respect to the vast tracts of land in that quarter belonging to Canada, but not yet brought under the action of our political and municipal system". #

In the debate on the address which followed, the Hon. William McDougall, Minister of Crown Lands, who had charge of the question said that the government of Canada had come to the conclusion that the first thing to be done was to determine whether the Red River territory belonged to Canada or to some other country and as a consequence a correspondence had already been opened with the Imperial Government on the subject. His individual view of the case was that Canada was

Willson. "The Great Company". Page 486.

entitled to claim as a portion of its soil all that part of the North-West Territories that could be proved to have been in the possession of the French at the time of the cession of Canada to the British.

Newcastle continued negotiations that had been going on for some months with Head with a view to the purchase of the company's territorial rights by the Crown. In April, 1864, he declined suggestions which Head had made in the preceding November, that, first, an equal distribution should be made of the territory fit for settlement, between the company and the Crown, with the inclusion of specific tracts in the share of the former; second, that the company construct the road and telegraph; third, that the crown purchase such of the company's premises as should be required for military use, and pay the company a net third of all future revenue from gold and silver. Counter proposals were made but nothing definite was decided.

About this time the Hon. George Brown, who was in England representing his colleagues in the Canadian Ministry on this question, contended that the company was seeking to sell to Her Majesty's government for an enormous sum territory to which it had no title under the charter and expressed the opinion that it was the duty of the Imperial authorities to secure the extinction of the proprietary rights of the company and its exclusive right of trade and that Canada should undertake the duties of government. At this juncture ill-health compelled

Newcastle's retirement and he was succeeded at the Colonial Office by Edward Cardwell-Cardwell now waited to learn whether Canada would be willing to take over the government of any portion of the North-West Territory and sent a dispatch of inquiry which arrived soon after the formation of a coalition government in 1864.

It was not possible to give an immediate answer to this question as various causes had united to persuade the provinces of British North America to consider a plan of union. Not least amongst the factors tending towards change was the fact that in the Canada's political events had reached such a crisis that the government had to fight for its life day by day in the assembly. Such a political regime was not likely to deal effectively with the momentous question of the west which was looming larger on the horizon as months went by. Union alone would make possible the acquisition and the development of the great western land and indeed it has been said that had it not been for the mysterious urge of the west awaiting the day when it should be incorporated in the union, it is doubtful whether any dominion would have been called into being. Be that as it may, it was sufficient proof that the problem would be given consideration at the conference held in Quebec in October, 1864, that both Mr. Brown and Mr. McDougall, men intensely interested in the western problem, were present. In the discussions that took place Mr. Brown made the following

remarks on October the 11th,

"It must be a federal and not a legislative union. That is the main object of my motion, together with the inclusion of the North-West provinces. The latter opens up a wide question. The population of the Red River Settlement is now 12,000 and we must look forward to the day of settlement and occupation of that country. The inclusion of British Columbia and Vancouver Island is rather an extreme proposition but it would be wrong to exclude them in the formation of the scheme. The Americans are encroaching. A large portion of the land at Saskatchewan might be formed into a Crown Colony or be in the union". #

A discussion of Mr. Brown's views followed. Mr. Palmer, of Prince Edward Island, felt that it was neither right nor politic to embrace a consideration of the Hudson's Bay company's territories. Mr. Carter, a Newfoundland delegate, expressed the same view. However Mr. Brown's motion was in the end unanimously carried.

On Tuesday the 25th, it was moved by the Hon. Mr. Mowat that the North-West Territories, British Columbia and Vancouver should be admitted into the union on such terms and conditions as parliament should deem equitable, and as should receive the assent of Her Majesty, and in the case of the provinces of British Columbia and Vancouver as should be agreed to by the legislatures of the provinces. Unfortunately no such stipulation as this was made in regard to the Red River Settle-

Pope. "Confederation Debates". Page 59.

ment and this omission was to lead later to the Red River Rebellion. Mr. Lovat's motion was adopted as the tenth resolution of the conference. It was recognized that a motion of this kind would be useless unless some provision were also made for communication and on the 27th, it was moved by the hon. Mr. Galt that all communications with the North-Western Territory and the improvement required for the development of the trade of the west with the seaboard should be regarded as subjects of the highest importance to consideration and should be carried out at the earliest possible period. This was incorporated as the sixth-ninth resolution of the conference.

Once the Quebec conference had been completed the Canadian Government was in a better position to deal with Cardwell's request that he should be informed whether Canada would be willing to take over the government of any portion of the Hudson's Bay company's territory, and that if willing to do so they send a delegate to negotiate on the question. They expressed a readiness to render aid towards opening up the country and suggested that the prospective union between the governments of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island should be ample reason for settling promptly the position of the North-West, more especially as provision had been made in the federation scheme for the admission of the North-West Territory, British Columbia and

Vancouver. Canada maintained that the first step towards the settlement of the territory was the extinction of the claims of the Hudson's Bay company, and that it should be the duty of the Imperial rather than the Canadian Government to end the monopoly which had been enjoyed so long with Imperial sanction. As soon as negotiations of this kind were completed the Canadian Government would then be ready to consider the transfer of the territory to Canada. George Brown went to England in December of the same year for further negotiations and emphasized his belief that the claims of the company were invalid and that therefore it should not be necessary to pay the £1,000,000 demanded by the company. As Brown had to be home for the opening of the Canadian Legislature in January final arrangements could not be made but it was agreed that negotiations would be resumed later when a delegation of members of the Canadian Government were to visit England.

While the Quebec resolutions were being debated in the Canadian Legislature on February 8th, 1865, Brown made the following address,-

"It has always appeared to me that the opening up of the North-West ought to be one of the most cherished projects of my honourable friends from Lower Canada. During the discussion of the question for some years back I had occasion to dip deep in North-West lore - into those singularly interesting narratives of life and travels in the north-west in the olden time, and into the history of the

struggles for commercial dominancy in the great fur-bearing regions; and it has always struck me that the French-Canadian people have cause to look back with pride to the bold and successful part they played in the adventures of those days.....Last year furs to the value of £280,000 sterling were carried from that territory by the Hudson's Bay company - smuggled off through the ice-bound regions of James' Bay - that the pretense of the barrenness of the country, and the difficulty of conveying merchandise by the natural route of the St. Lawrence, may be kept up a little longer. The carrying of merchandise into that country, and bringing down the bales of pelts ought to be ours, and must ere long be ours, as in the days of yore; and when the fertile plains of that great Saskatchewan Territory are opened up for settlement and cultivation, I am confident that it will not only add immensely to our annual agricultural products, but bring us sources of mineral and other wealth on which at present we do not reckon". #

That all members were not as enthusiastic as Mr. Brown may be seen from the fact that on the 28th of February, an article was read by Mr. Christopher Dunkin of Brome from the Edinburgh Review of January which referred to the future of the territories held by the Hudson's Bay company by charter of lease and the advantages which would result from a union with Canada,

"The completion of the Inter-Colonial Railway and the probable annexation of the fertile portions of the North-West Territory to the new Confederation form a portion only of the probable consequences

Mackenzie. "Life and Speeches of the Hon. George Brown". Page 329.

of its formation, but in which Europe and the world at large will eventually participate....When the valley of the Saskatchewan shall have been colonized, the communications between the Red River system and Lake Superior completed, and the harbour of Halifax united by one continuous line of railway with the shores of Lake Huron, the three missing links between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans will have been supplied". #

Mr. Dunkin pointed out what appeared to him as the absurdity of such a hope. He said that it was too large an undertaking for Canada to buy the Hudson's Bay Territory, take care of it and make a road all across the continent, a task which Great Britain herself shrank from contemplating. If, as has been said, a pessimist is a man who of two evils chooses both, then Mr. Dunkin was the extreme pessimist of Confederation. That railways have been constructed across the Rocky Mountains and Mr. Dunkin's doleful prophesy discredited by future events was due to the fact that others of more optimistic viewpoint were willing to dare the future.

At about this time Watkin wrote to Sir John A. Macdonald reviewing the suggestions which he had previously made when in Canada for the government of the Red River Settlement. Apart from the continuance of government by the company he had considered three possibilities, annexation to the province of Canada of a tract of land stretching to the British Columbia boundary, the formation of a separate Crown colony entirely

independent of Canada, and the formation of a separate colony but with more or less extensive federation with Canada and the establishment of a customs union between the two communities. Watkin knew, he said, that Macdonald's own view and that of Cartier had been in favour of a separate crown colony while George Brown preferred a colony having a common customs house but a separate government. Mr. Watkin's personal view was that it was a mistake for Canada to take the responsibility of governing the North-West as a part of herself, especially on the question of defence against both the Indians and the Yankees, but if the government of Canada saw its way clear to do so others should not make any objection.

As previously decided upon with the Imperial Government, in the spring of 1865 a delegation consisting of Sir John A. Macdonald, Brown, Cartier, and Galt visited England and took up the question of the Hudson's Bay Territory. In view of the importance to Canada of having the North-West opened and migration thither directed through Canadian channels the delegates decided that the quickest solution of the question would be in the best interests of Canada. Mr. Cardwell gives the following as the result of his meeting with the delegates,

"On the fourth point, the subject of the North-Western Territory, the Canadian ministers desired that that territory should be made over to Canada, and undertook to negotiate with the Hudson's Bay company for the termination of their rights, on condition that the indemnity, if any should be

paid, would be raised by Canada
by means of a loan under Imperial
guarantee". #

The Imperial Government consented readily enough to
this, glad to escape from the expense of the erection of a
Crown Colony.

Reference has previously been made to Mr. James Ross
and his activities in the Red River Settlement. Amidst the
controversy on the problems of Confederation and the opening
of the North-West Mr. Ross' address at a banquet held in the
Queen's Hotel, Toronto, on November 11th, 1865, represents
the opposition of the Canadian party in the settlement to the
Hudson's Bay company and shows a desire on their part to be
joined to Canada.

"Mr. Mayor, the people of the
country I represent have hitherto
been little heard of; but they
must nevertheless be taken into
account in the scheme of Confederation,
which has, for some past, been under
consideration.....The government of
the country is in the hands of the
Hudson's Bay company and is of an
extremely primitive and patriarchal
character. This government it is none
of my duty, at the present time, to
criticize, but I may say it is any-
thing but favourable to the progress
of that country.....Being a native
of that region, and a representative
in an ethnological as well as a
geographical sense, I beg to express
my great pleasure in seeing this
measure of Confederation likely to be
consummated, for I believe it will
benefit the North-West. Apart from
the extent of the country, its intrin-
sic value forms an important element,

Begg. "History of the North-West. Page 359.

It is capable of sustaining a vast population, because extensive and fertile. For over one hundred and fifty miles width along the boundary line, there is as habitable a country as can be found on the surface of the globe.....There is, indeed, over the whole country, a vast network of excellent water communication, well adapted for commercial purposes". #

After referring to the wealth of mineral resources and fishing facilities Mr. Ross says in conclusion,

"Allow me, a native of the Red River Country, and its sole representative here, to express the deep gratification I feel in having that part of the country so prominently brought before the attention of the delegates from the Lower Provinces; and allow me to express the hope that in the scheme now being devised, the vast extent, the resources, the capabilities and the value of the North-West may be fully remembered". ##

One of the promises made by the reorganized Hudson's Bay company was that it should facilitate communication across British North America by telegraph or otherwise. In 1865, Dr. John Rae, an Arctic explorer, was sent to ascertain the practicability of establishing communication by a telegraph line. He was accompanied by an engineer by the name of Schwieger and a careful examination was made of the route to British Columbia. They submitted an exhaustive report on the subject, but the company, aside from transporting a large

Whelan. "The Union of the British Provinces". Pages 196-7.

Ibid. Page 198.

quantity of wire to the North-west never proceeded with the work.

While Canadian statesmen were discussing the question of the West with Imperial Ministers, its resources were brought to the attention of Englishmen when Viscount Milton and Dr. Cheadle undertook in 1862 an expedition to the North-west in an effort to discover the most direct route through British territory to the gold regions of Cariboo and to explore the unknown country on the western flank of the Rocky Mountains, in the neighborhood of the sources of the north branch of the Thompson River. In 1865 they published their book, "The North-West Passage by Land", averring in the preface that one of the principal objects in view had been to draw attention to the vast importance of establishing a highway from the Atlantic to the Pacific through British Possessions. An advantage which would follow would be the opening up and colonization of the Red River and Saskatchewan regions. They said,

"We have attempted to show that the original idea of the French Canadians was the right one and that the true North-West Passage is by land, along the fertile belt of the Saskatchewan leading through British Columbia to the splendid harbour of Esquimalt, and the great coal fields of Vancouver Island, which offer every advantage for the protection and supply of a merchant fleet trading thence to India, China, and Japan". #

Milton and Cheadle. "The North-West Passage by Land". Preface, Page 17.

They went on to portray the wealth of the west and its many resources. Referring to the farmers of Red River with their abundance of flocks, herds, and grain more than sufficient for their own wants they said,

"But, shut out in this distant corner of the earth from any communication with the rest of the world-except an uncertain one with the young state of Minnesota by steamer during the summer-and with England by the company's ships which bring stores to York Factory in Hudson's Bay, once a year-the farmers find no market for their produce". #

They went on to protest that the day of monopolies had gone by and that it was strange that the governing power of the colony should remain in the hands of the trading company with interests opposed to development. Some proper colonial government should be established and efforts made to open up the country. They saw hope in the fact that the company had changed hands and that the new directors had sent Dr. Rae to survey the route for the telegraph line,

"That the cessation of the company's business would be a serious blow to the Settlement we readily allow; but the substitution of a proper Colonial Government for that of the company does not destroy their trade as has been sufficiently proved in the case of British Columbia and Vancouver Island. Let them continue to be great merchants, as in those colonies; but let their monopoly cease, and the governing power be transferred to independent hands". ##

Milton and Cheadle. "The North-West Passage by Land". Preface, Page 40.

Ibid. Page 400.

In 1864 Thomas Rawlings dedicated to William Lapiere of the exploring expedition of 1857, a book entitled "The Confederation of the British North American Provinces; Their Past History and Future Prospects; Including also British Columbia and the Hudson's Bay Territory; With a Map, and Suggestions in Reference to the True and Only practicable Route From the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans". As did other writers on the subject of the North-west, Rawlings dwelt upon the richness of the fertile belt,

"The explorations of Simpson, Hird, Palliser, Hector, Sullivan and Blakiston, all serve to prove that within British Territory the most fertile soil west of the Mississippi exists - and that so vast, so rich is this great valley that it is capable of subsisting twenty million". #

His next viewpoint was that the Hudson's Bay Company should encourage colonization and production,

"Gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay company, you have possessed for two centuries a splendid monopoly. We are not of those who wholly condemn the manner in which you have administered the power delegated to you; on the contrary a careful knowledge of the history and results of your rule, prove that your affairs have been administered with much ability, discretion and judgment. Your labors have been prosperous to an unparalleled degree, and the amicable manner in which you, and those under your authority, have conducted your relations with the Indians, and to which they bear testimony for so lengthened a period, certainly is in the highest degree creditable to you

Rawlings. "The Confederation of the British North-American Provinces, etc." Page 90.

when contrasted with the exterminating warfare which has characterized the relations of the United States Government with them. It cannot be expected that a monopoly so entire should be carried on without producing many animosities and that acts have not been committed which appear unwise, impolitic, and arbitrary. It would be unreasonable to suppose that you are so devoid of self-interest as to be willing to give up a power so long possessed and providing such a splendid interest on the capital employed or that you are willing to forego any rights you may possess for the general good.....How the cry against the Hudson's Bay company is that locked in the valleys of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan there is 65,000 square miles, or seventeen million acres at once available for the agriculturist; and this land is black with richness". #

Rawlings goes on to say that if all this were taken from the company the fur trade would suffer but little. The Indians could be taught agriculture. It was nonsense to say that the savage could not be civilized. A reference is made to Mr. Gowler, one of the best farmers of the Red River Settlement who, on bidding good-bye to Professor Lind, said,

"Look at that prairie; 10,000 head of cattle might feed and fatten for nothing. If I found it worth my while I could enclose fifty, one hundred or five hundred acres, and from every acre get from thirty to forty bushels of wheat year after year. I could grow Indian corn, barley, oats, flax, hemp, hops, turnips, tobacco - anything you wish, and to any amount; but what would be the use? There are no markets - its a chance if any wheat is taken and my

Rawlings. "The Confederation of the British North-American Provinces". Page 99-102.

potatoes I may have to give to the pigs. If we had only a market, you'd have to travel long before you would see the like of these prairies about the Assiniboine". †

Rawlings believed that the directors of the company would be far-seeing enough to realize that the best policy for themselves and the people they represented was to be willing to develop the resources of the country, to open the highways, and to prepare for the coming of the iron bands waiting to span the prairies.

Delay in the consummation of Confederation meant also delay in dealing with the final settlement with the Hudson's Bay company because Canada hesitated to open negotiations when Union Government once formed would undertake the work. However, the company, thinking that arrangements were being unduly protracted were anxious to have a final settlement made. Accordingly Head, to indicate that unless action were taken at once the territory might slip out of the grasp of Canada entirely, forwarded to Cardwell a proposal made by a group by Anglo-American Capitalists to buy the company's arable lands with a view to colonization. This proposal was in the form of a letter written by Mr. Alexander McEwen, representing the capitalists, and ran as follows,-

"Will you permit me to enquire on behalf of self and friends whether the Hudson's Bay company is at liberty and willing to dispose of its cultivable territory to a group of

† Rawlings. "The Confederation of the British North-American Provinces". Page 103.

Anglo-American capitalists who would settle and colonize the same on a system similar to that in operation in the United States in respect to the organization of territories and states?" #

Mr. Cardwell in replying to Head reminded him that at the conference which had taken place during the previous summer between Canadian Ministers and certain members of Her Majesty's Government the provincial ministers expressed a desire that Rupert's Land and the North West Territory should be made over to Canada and they undertook to negotiate with the Hudson's Bay company for the termination of their rights on condition that the indemnity should be paid by a loan raised in Canada under Imperial guarantee. Cardwell pointed out that the Imperial Government must keep in mind such a desire on the part of the Canadians. Sir Edmund answered to the effect that the company would,

"Venture most respectfully to inquire for how long a period the option if it may be so called, which had been given to Canada, is supposed to remain open?" ##

He pointed out the consequences to the pecuniary interests of the company, if they were to be considered bound to lose opportunities of sale, because of an indefinite understanding between two other parties. Cardwell then communicated this inquiry of Head's to the Canadian Government, In a Minute of Council of June 22nd, 1866, the Executive Council replied that it deplored

Correspondence of the Secretary of State to the Governor-General of Canada, extracted from the Public Archives, Ottawa.

Correspondence of the Secretary of State to the Governor-General of Canada, extracted from the Canadian Archives.

the idea of such a sale being made and had no doubt that one of the first duties of the confederate government would be to negotiate for a transfer of the Hudson's Bay company's claims. Meanwhile it invited Her Majesty's aid in preventing the sale of any portion of the territory before such time as negotiations could be completed. On the receipt of this protest from the Canadian Government, Cardwell forwarded a copy of the Minute of Council to the company.

On the first of July, 1867, the confederation of the British provinces was made an accomplished fact. In October Sir John A. Macdonald wrote to a friend,

"The Hudson's Bay question must soon be settled; the rapid march of events and the increase of population on this continent will compel England and Canada to come to some agreement respecting that immense country. We shall ventilate the subject during the ensuing session of parliament which commences on the 6th of November, and shall be able to judge what the feeling of parliament is". #

Accordingly when the delegates of the newly formed Dominion were in session the west came up again as a topic for discussion. On the 4th of December, Mr. McDougall, now Minister of Public works, brought in a series of resolutions directly relating to the acquisition of Rupert's land and the North-West based upon the one hundred and forty-sixth section of the B. I. A. Act. These were that it would be to the advantage of Canada

and the Empire if the Dominion were extended westward to the shores of the Pacific Ocean; that colonization, development of mineral wealth, and the extension of commercial intercourse depended upon the establishment of a stable government in the North-west Territories; that the population already inhabiting the remote territories would be enhanced by the formation of political institutions similar to those in the provinces; that the British Government be addressed to unite Rupert's Land and the North-west Territories with the Dominion and grant the parliament of Canada authority to legislate for it; that any difference of opinion which might arise with any corporation or individual in the same should be submitted to judicial decision; that upon the transference of the territory to the Canadian Government the claims of the Indian Tribes to compensation for lands required for settlement should be considered; and that Her Majesty should be approached on the subject of the resolutions. In his speech supporting these resolutions Mr. McDougall concluded with the following words,

"First, it is desirable that this country (the North-west) should be transferred from Imperial to Canadian authority. Second, that the control of that country ought to be in the hands of this parliament and under the direction of this legislature. Then, if the company make any claim to any portion of the soil occupied by our servants, they will come into the courts to make good their claim, and they will have the right, if the decision is adverse to them, to appeal to the Privy Council". #

Begg. "History of the North-west". Page 545.

The Resolutions gave rise to prolonged debates in which all the leading members took part. The Hon. Joseph Howe, member for Hants, Nova Scotia, spoke very strongly against the proposed acquisition. The Hon. L. H. Holton took a similar stand, and moved an amendment to the effect that it was inexpedient to adopt the resolutions until the claims with which the territories were burdened were known. Mr. Morris, writer of Nova Britannia, spoke in support of the resolutions to the following effect,

"Professor Hind described the valley of the Red River as a 'Paradise of fertility' and found it impossible to speak of it in any other terms than those of astonishment and admiration. He also reported that as an agricultural country it would one day rank among the most distinguished". #

Mr. Morris professed his pleasure that the government proposed to deal practically with the great question and to claim that under the Confederation Act this great country should be handed over to the Dominion subject to a reservation of rights of the Indians and to a recognition of such rights as the Hudson's Bay company might be able to establish. This led to a consideration of the position of the company which claimed "all the country, the waters of which fall into Hudson's Bay". Not assuming for a moment the validity of the charter, Mr. Morris maintained that its own wording had expressly excluded from its operation "all the lands actually possessed by

Morris. "Nova Britannia". Page 140.

or granted to any our subjects, or possessed by the subjects of any Christian province or state'. At the time that King Charles II granted the charter Canada was possessed by France. By right then of inheritance Canada claimed the larger portion of the fertile belt and on this authority Mr. Morris endorsed the policy of the government in its action. He trusted that Canada would assert her claim to every inch of soil which she rightfully owned, but would at the same time recognize any legal claim which could be established by other claimants. He also urged the opening up of a highway for travel between the dominion and the Red River Country and, that established, his policy would be to throw open the fertile prairies to settlers with free grants of land to tempt them to build homes. The boast of the American press was that the new dominion had neither enterprise nor energy enough to occupy the fertile belt, and that the overflow of American settlement from Minnesota and Dacotah was about to place its ownership beyond the reach of diplomacy. He therefore trusted that the House should decide at once to accept the territory, and he firmly believed that if it did so the great colonial union would yet be established on a firm, stable and indissoluble basis extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The resolutions were discussed for an entire week and then, slightly amended, were carried by a majority of sixty-three votes.

In February, 1867, Lieutenant-General Sir John Michel, in command of the forces in British North America and Canadian

Administrator, advised in a dispatch to the Earl of Carnarvon against the immediate union of the Hudson's Bay Territory to Canada, or the creation of a Crown Colony at the Red River. After outlining his reasons he concluded with the opinion that,

"until a safe communication for military purposes was completed between Canada and Fort Garry, either the union of the Hudson's Bay territory to Canada or the creation of a Crown Colony at the Red River Settlement, would be a source of weakness and danger both to Canada and England". #

However, as Trotter points out, Lichel was a soldier and looked at the problem with biased caution. Trotter says that such communications as he demanded, that would be secure from any military hazards, would require for their building time that could ill be lost if the territory were to become a part of the new British Dominion.

That the fear of the United States expressed by Mr. Morris and others was not vain has already been ascertained but may be further shown by a letter written on August 30th, 1867, by Sir Frederick Bruce, British Ambassador at Washington, to Lord Stanley,

"There is moreover a considerable section of the western population looking forward to the acquisition of the territory which includes the Saskatchewan and the Red River Settlement and I foresee that if it is not shortly occupied with settlers who can turn its natural resources to

Trotter, "Canadian Federation". Page 288.

account, it will be over-run by squatters pushing up from Montana with whom the Hudson's Bay company and the Canadian authorities will find it difficult to deal". ‡

In the summer of 1867 occurred an event memorable in the commercial history of the North-West. Sandford Fleming met Mr. Begg, the historian, in St. Paul and induced him to undertake at Red River a trade with Canada. Mr. Begg accordingly proceeded to obtain orders from the traders and was so successful that in January, 1868, he returned to Canada with the promise of \$90,000 worth of goods for the settlement. From then on Canadian goods were able to compete in the colony with those from Britain and the United States and found their way to the west in greater quantities each year.

The Hudson's Bay company would not agree to any transfer of its land until terms were definitely settled and as Canada had practically agreed to this the British Government commenced proceedings. The Duke of Buckingham, Secretary of State for the Colonies, sent a dispatch to Lord Monck to the effect that the claims of the company must be settled before further steps could be taken. The result was that Sir George Cartier and the Hon. William McDougall were appointed by order-in-Council as a delegation to proceed to England to represent the Canadian viewpoint and arrange "terms for acquisition by Canada of Rupert's Land", and arrange "for the admission by

‡ Correspondence of Secretary of State to Governor-General of Canada, Canadian Archives.

Canada of the North West Territory into union with Canada, either with or without Rupert's Land, as may be found practical and expedient". On the 8th of August, 1868, Buckingham wrote to Lock enclosing a copy of the act passed in the Imperial Parliament conferring powers for the surrender by the Hudson's Bay company of their privileges. In the act was a clause to the effect that all rights of the company were to be surrendered and extinguished but that nothing was to prevent the company from continuing to carry on in Rupert's Land its trade and commerce. By another clause Rupert's Land was to be admitted into Canada and then all necessary laws and institutions were to be admitted. On the 9th of September, Lock wrote to Buckingham asking that he postpone the negotiations until the arrival of the Canadian delegates who were sailing on October 3rd.

By this time the company was fully alive to the value of the west as a field for colonization. Views had changed radically since Sir George Simpson had testified in 1857 that the land was unfit for settlement because crops were uncertain, floods were frequent, the climate was unfavourable, and navigation facilities were of the poorest. Now the company was determined at every turn to drive as shrewd a bargain as possible, knowing that prairie land was easily cultivated and capable of supporting a large population. Consequently the company's attitude made negotiations more difficult to complete.

The information which we have of the negotiations in acquiring the North-West is in the form of correspondence between the Committee of the Company, the Imperial Government and the Canadian Delegates. The views of the contending parties may be learned by a perusal of these letters. The argument put forward by Mr. Cartier and Mr. McDougall was that it should not be necessary for them to deal with the company at all. On February 8th, 1869, they expressed this view when writing to Sir Frederic Rogers and contended that it had been an unwise move on the part of the Imperial Government to make the assent of the company a condition precedent to the transfer. They recalled the fact that the B. N. A. Act had affirmed the policy of uniting under one government all the colonies, provinces and territories of British North America and that the North-West Territories or Rupert's Land or both were to be admitted on such terms as agreeable to the Canadian Government with British consent, and that no mention had been made of the company. Then the Imperial Government, they went on to say, feeling that there would be difficulties arising over the charter made the stipulation that the company must be consulted if any transfer were to take place. This in itself was displeasing to the Canadian representatives but the more so because the company held out for such large remuneration. In the proposals made by the British Government to the company it assumed the validity of the charter and that Rupert's Land included the

fertile belt, facts which the Canadian Government had always disputed. On more than one occasion the statement had been made by the company that the land was not fit for colonization and that it was at considerable pains and expense in governing. Why, then, the Canadian delegates argued, should the company not be willing to give compensation for having this task taken off its hands, rather than itself demand payment. Mr. Allice, a leader in the company's affairs, had repeatedly stated during the investigation in 1857 that a trading corporation should not be allowed to obstruct for a moment any land that was fit for settlement. Why then should the company do that very thing now? Was there any more justification for it than there had been twenty years before? Moreover Mr. Gladstone had maintained that land capable of colonization should be withdrawn from jurisdiction of the company and Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had already put an end to the company's license of exclusive trade in British Columbia and the Indian territories. The rights of the charter also came up for discussion. The delegates contended that since the charter had read, 'except land already under some other Christian prince or state' and since from the treaty of Utrecht to the Treaty of Paris the whole of the territory known as the Winnipeg basin and fertile belt was possessed by the French, this could not possibly have been given to the company. They should not now demand compensation for it. The territory actually embraced by Canada's interpretation of the charter had little commercial

value, but its price might be determined by the British Government. #

While the Canadian delegates left in the belief that they should be dealing only with the Imperial Government, the company felt just as strongly that it should not be forced to negotiate with Canada, especially as the Duke of Buckingham had already suggested terms nearly a year before. This was of course previous to the arrival of the Canadian ministers in England and had been followed by an act passed in the British Parliament conferring powers for the surrender by the company of its privileges. Then why, the company asked, should negotiations which had originally commenced between the company and the Home Government finally end in a controversy with the Canadian delegates.

While negotiations were in progress, on the 18th of September, 1860, Mr. John A. Snow received instructions from McDougall to proceed to the Red River settlement and to commence the opening of a road from Fort Garry to the Lake on the route recommended by Simon Dawson. At that time Canada did not have any right in the territory and the company felt aggrieved. A letter from McDougall in January, 1860, to Sir Frederic Rogers justified his action on the grounds that it had been done because of appeals made by Red River settlers to prevent starvation. In that year there had been a plague of grasshoppers and the Nor'ester had published an appeal for aid

Report of Delegates Appointed to Negotiate for the Acquisition of Rupert's Land and the North-west Territory, 1869. Pages 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

addressed both to the inhabitants of Canada and the United States. McDougall claimed that the company had rendered no aid to the settlers and he denied any idea or willing to trespass on the soil. As it happened McDougall's statement was incorrect for the Council of Assiniboia had been the first to come to the rescue of the settlers by voting a sum of sixteen hundred pounds, which was followed by a liberal donation from the company itself. The results of Snow's work will be referred to in another connection.

In a letter from Sir Stafford Northcote to Rogers written January 13th, 1869, we learn that he had accepted the position of Governor of the Company vacated by the Earl of Kimberley. He regretted that proposals which had been made by the Duke of Newcastle should now be contended. The only part of the territory in which early settlement would take place would be the fertile belt which was not inferior in quality or climate to Minnesota and should be paid for accordingly.

The British Government in acting as an intermediary between the claims of the Canadian Delegates and the Hudson's Bay company had a difficult position to fill in that it must favour neither side and yet maintain the dignity incumbent upon Her Majesty's Ministers. In the midst of negotiations Disraeli's Government was defeated and Earl Granville became secretary of State. He would not take the responsibility of settling the dispute regarding the validity of the charter or the amount of

territory which Charles II had intended to include in it. His attitude was natural enough as for years the British Government had tacitly admitted the validity of the charter and must now in no way impair its own authority. Becoming impatient when the two parties were no nearer arriving at a solution after lengthy correspondence, Granville wrote to Northcote laying down terms which he hoped would be adopted by both sides without further discussion. If this were not done all negotiations on the subject would cease. This led the company to modify its claims somewhat and the final arrangements were now drawn up.

The company was to surrender Rupert's Land and other parts of the North-West to Canada in return for £300,000. It could retain, however, its trading posts and privileges and a certain number of acres around each post not to exceed in total fifty thousand. The company might also claim the right of choosing a proportion of each township up until ten years after the transfer if the land had not been already sold. This was to apply to the fertile belt and only one-twentieth of a township might be so taken. The company agreed to share in the cost of survey up to eight cents an acre. The claims of the Indians were to be disposed of by the Canadian Government in communication with Her Majesty's Government. Granville wrote to Young, now Governor-General of Canada, concerning this last matter, noting the many ways in which the Indians had profited

by the rule of the company in asking that they be treated with all kindness and consideration by the Canadian Government so that they would realize that their welfare was being considered by the new owners of the land. The Canadian Government proceeded to arrange to take over the government of the North-West and by an Imperial Order in Council of the 24th of June, 1870, Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory were to be formally united to the Dominion of Canada from and after the 15th of July, 1870.

Before final arrangements for the transfer of the country were made, A. J. Russell, C. J. and Inspector of Crown Timber Agencies of Canada, wrote a pamphlet entitled "The Red River Country, Hudson's Bay and the North-West Territories considered in Relation to Canada", in which he referred to various reasons which made the acquisition of the North-West important. After the writing of the pamphlet it was destroyed by fire and before its publication the Hudson's Bay company had already consented to the transfer to Canada of the territory which it claimed. However, Mr. Russell felt that some of the information might prove useful and interesting and proceeded with his publication. We refer to his work because it gives the views of another Canadian on the idea of annexation of the West to Canada written prior to its acquisition. There was, Mr. Russell thought, the need of a field for settlement for Canada because its most favourably situated land had already

been disposed of and there were no regions left to attract and receive immigration. When the acquisition of the West was important as a means of preserving timber through a sufficiency of other lands that would be available for settlers. It would also give a wider market and greater demand for Canadian products. He said,

"We want all the strength its future population and trade can give in addition to all that which the extension of settlement in our remaining vacant lands, and the development of their resources, may afford us, to render it possible for us to maintain that degree of self-sustaining independence or future nationality which the Mother Country contemplates". #

Mr. Russell went on to point out that if British Columbia were united to the Dominion and an adequate line of communication opened through the province from Lake Superior to the Pacific all the commerce of the interior of British America would be drawn to her ports.

Then follows a discussion of the much disputed charter of the Hudson's Bay company,

"We are at issue with the Hudson's Bay company. We deny the justice and validity of their title to the territory most valuable to us - the central prairie country - claimed by them under their charter from King Charles the second in 1670.

....

Far from giving the Hudson's Bay company the interior country on the Red River and the Saskatchewan, their

Russell. "The Red River Country, Hudson's Bay and The North-West Territories Considered in Relation to Canada". Page 98.

Charter, restricted by this exception, did not even give them that part of the coast of Hudson's Bay in front of it.....But though our interests are opposed to theirs as to territorial rights, we should be careful to be just to the company, and consider well the particulars in which their interests and ours may agree.

We must acknowledge that their admirable system, good management and good faith in dealing with the Indians, are highly creditable to them, and have maintained tranquillity in the vast territories under their sway, and peace on our borders, and respect for the British name and power in the minds of the natives; and that their officers and agents are proverbially honorable men.

If the company were broken up and their officers withdrawn from these territories, and the trade of them thrown open to all, it might, no doubt, give a few enterprising men in Canada the opportunity of seeking, probably with some success, to amass wealth like that of the old North-West Company of Montreal. But when the irregular, and too often unscrupulous trading of the adventurers was substituted for the well regulated and reliable system of the Hudson's Bay company, it would probably have, with the free use of spirits that would no doubt attend it, a most injurious effect upon the Indians; and coupled with the many causes of provocation accompanying the advance of settlement, would, almost certainly, lead to difficulties and border warfare with them, as in the adjoining States.

It would therefore probably be better, on the whole, that the fur-trade of these territories should remain in

the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company, under lease from the Dominion, especially in such an arrangement gave Canada more favourable terms in settlement with the company. The importance of economy effected in this way will be seen when it is considered that it might be sufficient to defray the expense of opening a serviceable line of communication for the ingress of settlers.

Or it might be better for the Government of the Dominion to step into the shoes of the company, and continue the trade, through the agents and others now employed, retaining their services by giving them the same interest in the trade as they now hold, or equivalent advantage.

By so-doing, Government would have thoroughly competent Indian agents throughout the whole of these territories, and by maintaining the same policy of management as heretofore, would prevent an important influence over the native tribes from being impaired or falling into foreign hands and could use it for the preservation of that tranquillity which would be doubly necessary in the face of advancing settlement.....

Some will argue that, in desiring to acquire the North-West Territory we allow our ambition to over-ride our judgment; that the organizing of it, and maintenance of jurisdiction over it, are a task beyond the ability of Canada; that it is absurd to incur expense in the development of remote territories, while we have already so much waste land, requiring the making of more roads than we are able to accomplish for the opening of it, to say nothing of the canals and railroads nearer home, which all admit to be desirable for the prosperity of the country.

One might argue interminably in this matter; but there is a shorter and a surer way to a conclusion in this matter. We have only to look south from us and see what has been done by the people there.

We see that they acquired territory after territory in the face of obstacles that we have not to encounter.....The Mother Country has placed in our hands the national banner and the institutions of which it is the symbol, under which she has attained her pre-eminent, moral and material greatness; the standard of responsible constitutional government and law-abiding liberty; and she expects us, with her assistance, and for our own good, to maintain it, and then, honorably, over these broad dominions of which she endows us with the inheritance. May there be no failure on our part through shortsighted unpatriotic pusillanimity". #

The Canadian Government had acquired a vast territory of 2,500,000 square miles and was confronted with the necessity of providing it with a suitable form of government to replace that of the Hudson's Bay company. Unfortunately the public men who had interested themselves in the negotiations did not deem it necessary to think deeply on the difficulties of this undertaking. That they should have done so was amply demonstrated by ensuing events. The inhabitants of the Red River Settlement had been restless under the uncertainty attached to the culmination of arrangements for their political fate, especially as their own feelings had been completely ignored. Some of the colonists such as James Ross,

Russell. "The Red River Country, Hudson's Bay and the North-west Territories, Considered in Relation to Canada". Pages 150-152-155-157-158.

belonging to the Canadian party, wished to see the territory annexed to the new Federation. Others desired the establishment of a Crown Colony, and petitions from both groups were sent to England. Among the American settlers there was a movement for annexation to the United States quite in accord with the ambition of Minnesota to add the British North-West to the United States.

Trouble was already brewing. In September, 1868, as we have already seen, John A. Snow was instructed to survey a road from the settlement to the Lake of the Woods and his instructions were to pay for the labour in provisions. He began his work on good terms with the colonists, "generally people here", wrote the Governor, "regard Mr. Snow's arrival as opportune". Unfortunately this feeling was changed by future events. A series of blunders were made and the low wages created dissatisfaction. Charles Mair, Canadian Poet, had come to the West with Snow and wrote letters home, tinged with dislike of the Halfbreed and which spoke of the general well-being of the colony. Although not meant for publication many of these found their way into Canadian newspapers, especially The Globe. Then they were sent back to Red River where they were read with general resentment and indignation, particularly as the settlers were at this time on the verge of famine. Snow affirmed that he had had no part in the letter

writing and wrote,

"That letters written by Canadians here, which have appeared from time to time in the newspapers in Canada, have done harm I must admit, but I have had no hand in their production, they have been published in opposition to my wishes".

But Snow himself made the mistake in becoming implicated in a scheme to sell liquor to the Indians to secure land for members of the surveying party and for friends in Canada.

On 10th July, 1869, McDougall directed Colonel J. S. Dennis to proceed to Red River and prepare a plan for laying out townships and otherwise making a general survey. This proved to be a great mistake with disastrous results. The company had found it extremely hard to keep order while negotiations for the transfer had been in progress, especially as there was no military organization and the settlement consisted of about eleven thousand, eight hundred persons, of whom almost half were French Half-breeds, with no titles to their land. They now looked with suspicion on the evil-looking instruments of the surveyors which they did not understand and which no one took the trouble to explain to them. Nor did they have any definite knowledge of Canada except the impressions that had been gathered from the officiousness of the Canadian party in the Red River and from the businesslike attitude of the surveyors who did not attempt to conceal their contempt for the habits and customs of these "eaters of pemm-
Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 374.

ican". On October 11th, a group of men headed by Louis Riel interrupted the survey, and as reasoning could not effect anything, the work had to be abolished.

Much of the trouble which came later might have been averted. Bishop Taché, when in Ottawa on his way to the Ecumenical Council in Rome in June, had urged the cause of the French party of the Red River in vain. He maintained that even his own presence would be of little avail unless some explanation were given which would satisfy the people as to their future. Joseph Howe, Canadian Secretary of State, went to Fort Garry in October. He wrote, "I conversed fully with all classes and orders of the people from Governor McTavish downwards" explaining that "the same constitution as the other provinces possessed" would ultimately be conferred upon the country. Howe imagined that the settlement was at least fairly well disposed towards the change that was being made but when the Hon. William McDougall, who on the 28th of September had received the appointment of Lieutenant-Governor, left for the Northwest the feeling of uneasiness became marked. Louis Riel, who had been instrumental in stopping the surveying work, was a French Half-breed who nursed a grudge against the Dominion Government. A committee headed by this leader determined not to recognize the authority at Ottawa or to allow McDougall to enter Fort Garry. A national committee was formed with John Bruce as president and Louis Riel as secretary. On the 21st

of October an order was dispatched to McDougall ordering him "not to enter the territory of the North-West without special permission of this committee". On the 30th of October Governor McTavish wrote to Mr. McDougall,

"So far, all our expedients have failed; and unless the efforts of a temporizing character, which are still being earnestly used for the dispersion of the malcontents, succeed, it is to be feared that your coming into the settlement at the present moment, would not be free from considerable danger". #

Indeed on November 3rd, a party of armed métis compelled McDougall to retire from Pembina where he had arrived on October 30th. Fort Garry was occupied on November 2nd, by Riel and his men as a "lease for protection and supplies". To complicate matters the Proclamation of Her Majesty announcing the acquisition of the North-West to the Dominion was postponed and McDougall had no official status. However he persuaded Governor McTavish to issue a proclamation explaining the terms under which the union was to take place. On November 6th, Riel issued a public notice calling upon the inhabitants of Rupert's Land to send twelve representatives to a meeting to be held on November 16th. On 24th of November he found an excuse for establishing a provisional government in the fact that the company was powerless to govern longer.

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 385.

The Hudson's Bay company's authorities were at this time in a very peculiar position. The Canadian party accused them of playing into the hands of the French. Mr. McDougall went so far as to say in writing to Mr. Howe on November 20th,

"The confirmed belief of every person I have seen, or whose testimony has reached me, is that the Hudson's Bay company's employees with scarcely an exception are either actively or tacitly encouraging the insurrection". #

The Half-breeds, in their turn, suspected the company of playing into the hands of Canada and of being ready to sacrifice their interests. That the company really were working to restore order may be seen from a letter from Donald Smith to Mr. Howe,

"In view of the more serious aspects which affairs at Red River have recently assumed, I beg further on behalf of the company, to offer the assurance that their Governor, factors, and officials generally will use their influence and best efforts to restore and maintain order throughout the territory". ##

Mr. McDougall, believing that the transfer would take place on December 1st, determined to issue a proclamation on that date, convinced that the company's rule should then cease and that Canadian rule should begin. In so doing, he acted contrary to his instructions which had been to await the actual transfer of the country before taking action. A second pro-

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 397.

Ibid. Page 399.

clamation which he issued on December 2nd, called upon all "public officers and functionaries" except the Governor, "to continue in the execution of their several and respective offices". Colonel Dennis was authorized to "arm, equip and provision" a force to disarm and disperse the insurgents. A Bill of Rights was at this juncture introduced into the convention of English and French delegates at Fort Garry and it was agreed by both sides that it should be presented to Canada. The demands made by the bill appeared reasonable enough. Amongst other clauses were requests for responsible government, for all public expenditures for four years to be paid out of the Dominion treasury, and for both the French and English languages to be used in the North-West Legislature and Council. The majority of the delegates felt that this bill should be presented to McDougall and that if he would promise that all the points would be acceded to by the Canadian Government, he might then be allowed to enter the settlement. Riel, however, would not consent to McDougall's entrance until he would actually produce an act to the effect that all the rights demanded would be secured to the people.

In an attempt to excite the English and Scotch against the French, a party of Canadians appealed to Colonel Dennis to form a military force. This had the effect of drawing together all the Half-breeds, including those who had been standing out against Riel. Riel now seized this opportunity

to increase his authority. The offices of the Nor'Wester and of a second newspaper, The Pioneer, were seized, the merchants' stores were cleared of guns and ammunition, and a party of Canadians gathered at Dr. Schultz's warehouses to defend their supplies, were summoned to surrender themselves. On the 8th of December Riel issued a declaration with a preamble to the following effect,

"A company of adventurers known as the Hudson's Bay company, and invested with certain powers granted by His Majesty (Charles II), established itself in Rupert's Land and in the North-West Territories, for trading purposes only. This company, consisting of many persons, required a certain constitution; but as theirs was a question of commerce only, their constitution was framed with reference thereto. Yet, since there was at that time no government to see to the interests of a people already existing in the country, it became necessary for judicial affairs to have recourse to the officers of the Hudson's Bay company. This inaugurated that species of government which, slightly modified by subsequent circumstances ruled this country up to a recent date.

Whereas that government thus accepted was far from answering to the wants of the people, and became more and more so as the population increased in numbers, and as the country was developed, and commerce extended until the present day when it commands a place among the colonies; and this people, ever actuated by the above mentioned principles, had generally supported the aforesaid government and gave it a

faithful allegiance; when, contrary to the law of nations, in March, 1869, that said government surrendered and transferred to Canada, all the rights that it had pretended to have in this territory, by transactions with which the people were considered unworthy to be made acquainted; and, whereas it is also generally admitted that a people is at liberty to establish any form of government it may consider suitable to its wants, as soon as the power to which it was subject abandons it or attempts to subjugate it without its consent, to a foreign power, and maintained that no right can be transferred to such foreign power". #

The declaration went on to "declare and proclaim in the name of the people of Rupert's Land and the North-West" that there had been established on the 24th of November, 1869, a provisional government, that it was the only lawful authority in existence in Rupert's Land and the North-West and that it held itself in readiness to "enter into such negotiations with the Canadian Government as may be favourable for the good government and prosperity of this people".

The Canadian Government had refused to complete the transfer of the North-West to Canada until the Red River disturbance was quieted. This attitude was displeasing to the Imperial Government and on November 30th, Granville wrote to Young expressing his regret at the turn which events had taken and deprecating the action of the Canadian ministers in trying to impose the responsibility of quelling resistance on the

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 416.

Imperial Government. Granville did not see how Her Majesty's ministers could refuse to accept the transfer from the company which Canada was not willing to assume.

On the 6th of December the Bishop of Rupert's Land wrote to Colonel Dennis, advising him not to attack the French in Fort Garry for the time being at least. His letter throws light upon the state of affairs in the settlement, but also shows the lack of proper initiative on the part of Canada and the hostile attitude of Mr. McDougall to the Half-breeds. The Bishop writes,

"Further, it would be well not to act until you ascertain clearly the mind of the Canadian ministers and people on the way of settling this affair, and I think something is due to the people from Governor McDougall. I for one am at this moment perfectly ignorant of any detail of the character or policy of this government. Personally I do not care for this. I am not only fervently loyal to the Queen, but I have unquestioning confidence in the management of Canada. I know all will be right; still, there is not less a great want, a very conciliatory attitude is what is wanted from Governor McDougall and a plain setting forth of how the government is to be conducted, meeting, as far as possible, any of the wishes expressed by the disaffected persons and perhaps referring others to Canada, but promising a generous consideration of the whole grievances". #

On December 10th, the flag of the provisional government, fleurs-de-lis and shamrock, was raised. On the 18th of December, Mr. McDougall, finding that all efforts to gain ad-

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 419.

mission into the settlement had failed, departed for Canada. On his way he met Grand Vicar Thibault and Colonel De Salaberry, two commissioners appointed by the Dominion Government to inquire into the grievances and to pacify them to the extent of allowing the Governor to enter the settlement. They communicated to Mr. McDougall that the transfer had never actually taken place and that his actions at Pembina had consequently been illegal. They proceeded to the settlement but no benefits arose out of their visit in producing a better understanding of the views of the Canadian Government. Instructions which Mr. Howe had sent to Mr. McDougall on the 7th of December did not reach him until he had left Pembina and consequently the commissioners had no instructions to make known the purpose of Canada after McDougall's departure.

On the 27th of December, Riel formally assumed the presidency of the provisional government. On the same day there arrived in the settlement Mr. Donald Smith as Commissioner. "As an officer of the Hudson's Bay company", he was, "to assist or in case of emergency, replace Mr. McTavish". Upon arrival, he was requested to take oath not to restore the government of the Hudson's Bay company and on his refusal was kept "virtually a prisoner within the fort" although he was visited by some of the most influential men in the settlement. Smith's papers and documents were brought from Pembina where he had wisely left them and on January 19th, with the temperature 20 degrees below

zero Commissioner Smith, in the court-yard of the fort, placed the policy of the Imperial and Dominion Governments for the first time fairly before more than a thousand of the settlers. He assured the people of the good intentions of Canada towards them and read his letter of appointment from the Secretary of State for the provinces, also a letter from the Governor General of Canada which said,

"You may state with the utmost confidence that the Imperial Government has no intention of acting otherwise - or permitting others to act otherwise - than in perfect good faith towards the inhabitants of the Red River District of the North-West.

The people may rely upon it that respect and protection will be extended to the different religious persuasions, that titles to every description of property will be perfectly guarded and that all the franchises which have existed, or which the people may prove themselves qualified to exercise shall be duly continued or liberally conferred". #

There was read also the message of the Queen which was in the form of a telegram, dated November November 26th, which had been sent by Earl Granville to Sir John Young. The meeting was adjourned until the following day when further documents were read. It was decided also to call a convention of twenty representatives from the English and twenty from the French to meet and plan in the best interests of the country. Short speeches were given by the Bishop of Rupert's Land, Father Ritchot and Riel and then the meeting dispersed with a

Begg. "History of the North-West". Pages 443-444.

general feeling of good-will.

The convention of forty representatives sat from January 26th, until February 10th, and drew up a second Bill of Rights of nineteen points. Riel desired that a further clause be put in, to the effect that all bargains that had been made with the Hudson's Bay company for the transfer of the territory, should be considered null and void and that arrangements for the transfer should be carried on only with the people of the Red River. This last proposal was discussed and defeated. The Bill of Rights was submitted to Mr. Smith on the 7th of February and he carefully considered and reviewed all points, saying that the demands where ever just would be favourably considered by the Canadian Government. He then extended an invitation to the settlers to send a delegation to Canada to confer with the Dominion Ministers. This offer was accepted in a formal resolution and the delegates chosen for the mission were Judge Black, Father Ritchot and Alfred Scott.

By this time Riel had a considerable number of prisoners shut up in Fort Garry. He had promised, however, that when the provisional government was recognized the prisoners would be at once released. On the 12th of February, sixteen were set free but there was considerable dissatisfaction at the retention of the rest and at Portage la Prairie a party of loyalist took up arms against the provisional government to liberate the

prisoners. Mr. Donald Smith spoke as follows regarding this act in his official report, -

"Rumours now began to circulate of a rising at the Portage and, on the nights of the 14th and 15th of February, some eighty or one hundred men from that district passed down close to Fort Garry and proceeded to Kildonan, where they were joined by from three hundred to three hundred and fifty men, principally English half-breeds from the lower parts of the settlement. Had these men, properly armed and organized, been prepared to support the well affected French party, when the latter took action about the middle of January or even in the beginning of February, during the sitting of the convention, order might have been restored, and the transfer to Canada provided for without the necessity of firing a single shot; but now the rising was not only rash, but purposeless, as, without its intervention the prisoners would unquestionably have been released.... My sympathies were, in a great measure, with the Portage men, whom I believe to have been actuated by the best of motives, but, under the circumstances it was not difficult to foresee that the issue could not be otherwise than disastrous to their cause.... Captain Bolton lead the party and he and his friends at the Portage assured me that he exerted himself to the utmost to keep them from rising, and only joined them at the last moment when he saw they were determined to go forward". #

Bolton and a large number of his companions were captured on February 17th and Bolton was condemned to be shot. Various prominent citizens including the Bishop of Rupert's Land and Mr. Smith interceded on his behalf and as a result of their

Begg. "History of the North-West". Page 501.

pleading Riel finally promised to save his life.

On the 26th of February the elections for the provisional government took place, but the general outlook was still gloomy enough. Then on the 4th of March occurred the execution of Thomas Scott, an Ontario Orangeman, on the charge of disorderly conduct and opposition to the provisional government. Riel was both asserting his now waning authority and venting his spite on the irrepressible loyalist. Riel claimed that the Canadians had laughed at and despised the French Half-breeds, believing they would not dare to take the life of anyone. Scott was court-martialed without opportunity of defending himself and was the next day led outside the eastern gate of the fort and shot by six men. Scott himself did not think it possible that Riel was doing more than giving him a fright and Donald Smith did not know of the intended execution until within a couple of hours of when it was to take place. The whole settlement was filled with horror at the unpardonable crime.

The Canadian Government had already taken steps towards sending a military force to restore and guarantee order in the west. On the day following the execution of Scott, Earl Granville cabled to the Governor General,-

"Her Majesty's Government will give proposed military assistance provided reasonable terms are granted Red River Settlers, and provided your government enable Her Majesty's Government to proclaim the transfer simultaneously with the movement of the force". #

Black, "The History of Saskatchewan and the Old North-West". Page 149.

In a subsequent communication Granville warned that,

"Troops should not be employed in enforcing the sovereignty of Canada on the population should they refuse to admit it". #

Bishop Tache arrived on March 8th, and on seeing the condition of affairs wrote Macdonald that prompt measures would have to be taken. Tache now pronounced a complete amnesty in the name of the Canadian Government, although Scott had been executed, convinced that nothing else would save the situation. On March 15th, the Council of the provisional government met, on March the 16th, the liberation of the prisoners was partially carried out and on March the 18th, Smith left for Canada. Riel and his executive now secretly drew up a third Bill of Rights which was used at Ottawa by Father Ritchot in place of the one drawn up by the convention of the forty representatives. On March the 23rd, Alfred Scott and Father Ritchot left for the east, followed the next day by Judge Black. At this point our outline of the disturbance closes.

The negotiations at Ottawa began in a storm of indignation and both Father Ritchot and Mr. Scott were arrested as rebels. The government secured their release and they were then officially received as delegates from the North-West. On the 2nd of May Macdonald introduced the Manitoba Act to organize the Red River Settlement into the Province of Manitoba in the Canadian House of Commons. It received the assent of the

Black. "The History of Saskatchewan and the Old North-West". Page 149.

Governor-General on May the 11th. On the 11th of May the indemnity of £300,000 had been paid to the Hudson's Bay company. On July the 15th, 27,000 square miles of territory was created into a province of Canada and the North-West Territories were at the same time given a territorial government.

Before closing this outline of the disturbance in the North-West although somewhat of a digression, we should like to make a few remarks relative to certain phases of it. When one entertains predisposed prejudices it is often difficult to change them, even in the face of conclusive proof that the opinions so held were unjustly biased. Public school text-books, from which the pupil of Public and even High School receives his general impressions of Canadian History, affirm that in 1869 occurred the Red River Rebellion. This is a mis-nomer, yet the idea instilled in the mind of the child that there was actually a rebellion continues through adult life. Rebellion, properly speaking, is "insurrection against or open resistance to, lawful or constituted authority". It now remains to be seen under what conditions the events previously outlined took place and to what extent one would be justified in calling the erection of the provisional government a rebellion. The disturbance originated principally with the French Half-breeds when they realized that their land was being taken over by the Dominion. These Half-breeds or Metis were of French-Indian extraction and

inherited enough of the Indian nature to be unadaptable to changing circumstances. There was a natural resentment at seeing themselves supplanted by another race, and in recognizing that they would be unable to adjust themselves to the progress of the country. The realization of their inevitable fate bred a smouldering dull anger ready to burst into flames at the slightest indiscretion on the part of Canada.

The Canadian Party in the West led by Dr. Schultz helped to create hostility in the minds of the Breeds towards the Canadian Government. The party looked with ill-concealed contempt on the Metis and expressed their views frankly in the Nor'Wester. The Canadian Ministers themselves blundered in creating a suspicion that the land was to be snatched from the Half-breeds. Even before the transfer was completed we have seen that surveyors had already commenced work. This was displeasing as the great majority of the Metis had no title deeds to their lands. Puzzled and frightened, they were further incensed on learning that the Indians had been given liquor and had then signed away their rights. Then the word that McDougall was coming with arms and ammunition created a determination to resist his entry into Port Garry. McDougall further blundered by issuing his proclamation in the name of Her Majesty before the transfer had actually taken place. So much for the causes of the disturbance.

It remains to be seen in how far the Letis exceeded their rights by rebelling against lawful authority. The government of the Hudson's Bay company was certainly a dead letter. Even when excitement among the Half-breeds became prevalent the company's authorities were inactive and Governor McTavish ill and unable to exert pressure on the so-called rebels. Nor was the Red River under Dominion authority at this time. The Canadian ministers had refused to take the responsibility of the uprising on their own shoulders by refusing the transfer. They admitted themselves that they did not yet control the affairs of the Red River and gave this as their reason for refusing to grant an amnesty declaring that pardon could only come through the Queen. The leaders of the provisional government said that they never intended to rise against Imperial authority but desired only to come to an understanding. They were British Subjects and as such deemed themselves worthy of consideration. Riel himself said that he would enter into Confederation upon a fair footing. Moreover he showed moderation in numerous ways. There were no battles fought and only three men killed during the disturbance, one of them by accident. It was not a permanent but only a provisional or temporary government that was set up. Of course no one can find justification for the death of Scott or fail to recognize that as time went on and Riel had tasted the fruits of success he was unwilling to relinquish his authority. But this cannot fairly be used as an argument that a

rebellion took place. Fifteen years later Riel again appeared as a leader of the Half-breeds and championed their cause. This time with more justification may the term "Rebellion" be applied to the uprising.

On the approach of troops under Colonel Wolseley in the summer following the rebellion, Riel abandoned Fort Garry and started for Pembina accompanied by his two associates, Lepine and O'Donoghue. There does not seem to be any reason to believe that Riel had contemplated armed resistance to the Colonel who came as the champion of a constitution accepted by the delegates of the people of Red River. He made the remark that he wished only to retain power until he could resign it to a proper government and that he had done all in his power to prevent bloodshed.

Wolseley found himself in peaceful possession but the situation was nevertheless filled with difficulties as the new Lieutenant-Governor, Hon. A. G. Archibald did not arrive until September 2nd. Wolseley having no civil authority called upon Donald Smith to administer affairs pending the Governor's arrival, after which event the Regulars quitted Fort Garry. The French during this period were distrustful and suspicious, especially as the promise of amnesty remained unfulfilled.

The organization of the new provincial government had to be formed from a community unaccustomed to responsibility.

In January, 1871, an Executive Council of five took over the administration and a Legislative Council of seven formed the Upper House. The opening of the Assembly was delayed until March owing to the difficulties of organization but when finally formed it "ushered in a new state of civilization". Forty-three acts were passed during the first session which promised a favourable beginning after the patriarchal rule of the Hudson's Bay company. Thus in brief were completed the arrangements for the formation of a government in the newly acquired territory.

Conclusion.

Many factors have affected the history of the North-West. The fur-trade above all loomed large on the western horizon and interwoven with it was the Hudson's Bay company whose early days we outlined in our introduction. Much has been written of the wealth of Indian legendary lore, the activities of the fur-traders, and the vicissitudes of the life of the early settlers. Amidst it all one phase of the history of the west, that is its relationship to Canada, has been sadly overlooked. Hence we have sought to review only those events which had a political bearing upon the country, culminating in the ultimate goal, the acquisition of the North-West by the Dominion.

Our aim has been to draw attention to the ideas of annexation to Canada advanced by far-seeing individuals who realized that the west had a higher destiny than to remain always a hunting-ground for the Red Trapper, men who saw the vision of the future and "all the wonder that would be". We have endeavoured to show that Canada had among its thinking and public men those who could foresee the vast western wilds spanned by railways, and telegraph communications, who saw the prairies peopled, who realized the wealth that lay within the Dominion's grasp, and who visualized Canada stretching across the entire continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, loyal and British.

We have pointed out that the more far-seeing of these enlightened men realized also the very grave danger arising from the steady encroachment by the Americans, and that they saw that if the territory were to be saved for Canada and Britain no time must be lost in awakening the public mind to the actual conditions existing in the North-West.

We have seen also that these men fought against great odds as the majority of the people were either indifferent or skeptical, while some from various motives were actively opposed to the acquisition scheme. We are surprised to find that the most bitter opposition came from those in high places, newspaper-men and parliamentarians. For many years Sir George Cartier and his friends resolutely opposed all attempts to open up these regions for settlement on the plea that the development of the west would increase the political power of Upper Canada. Then too it is well known that few had actually been in the west, the majority gleaning their knowledge of the country at second-hand, while those interested in the fur-trade were at pains to exaggerate its limitations and circulate the impression that these territories were valuable chiefly as a hunting ground.

We have sought also to draw attention to the work and writings of those explorers and surveyors who were instrumental in educating the public to reverse their preconceived opinion of the prairie as a great barren wilderness. And we have seen

that missionary activity was not a negligible factor in this regard.

To a student of history it is often amazing how destinies are influenced by seemingly insignificant occurrences. So it was with the West. Men in various spheres of activity, explorers, surveyors, travellers, statesmen, whose voices fell on apparently deaf ears were finally able to convince the Fathers of Confederation of the advantages of admitting Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory into the Dominion so that negotiations were entered into with the Hudson's Bay company, the culmination of which preceded the final scene of the drama - the passing of the Manitoba Act in the Canadian Legislature.

Wallace, the Historian, says, "If Canadian national feeling has its eyes set on the mountain tops of promise, rather than on the valleys of achievement, the fact is in large measure due to the vista of possibilities opened up by Confederation and especially by that crowning phase of Confederation, the acquisition of the Great West".

=====

Bibliography.

Source Material.

- Burpee - - - Anthony Hendry's Journal.
- Carmichael-
Smyth- - - Thoughts on the Subject of a Railway
Communication Between the Atlantic and
the Pacific from the Magnificent Har-
bour of Halifax, in Nova Scotia to the
Mouth of Fraser's River.
- Hind - - - The Narrative of the Canadian Red River
Exploring Expedition.
- Milton &
Cheadle- - North-West Passage by Land.
- Morris - - - Nova Britannia.
- Palliser - - Exploration in British North America.
- Pope - - - Confederation Documents.
- Rawlings - - Confederation of the British North Amer-
ican Provinces; Their Past History and
Future Prospects.
- Richards &
Wilson - - Britain Redeemed and Canada Preserved.
- Russell- - - The Red River Country, Hudson's Bay and
the North-West Territory Considered in
Relation to Canada.
- Ryerson- - - A Missionary Tour in the Territory of
the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company.
- Syngé - - - Great Britain, One Empire.
- Watkin - - - Canada and the North Atlantic Company,
1851-1886.

Report of Select Committee on Hudson's
Bay Affairs, 1857.

Memorial of 1847.

Bibliography.

Source Material (Cont'd)

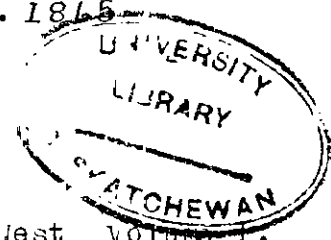
Report of Delegates Appointed to Negotiate for the Acquisition of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory, 1869.

Correspondence Relative to the Transfer of Red River to Canada and the Disturbances.

The Nor'Wester, 1859-1860.

Correspondence of Secretary of State to the Governor General and of the Governor General to the Secretary of State.

Confederation Debates. 1865



Secondary Material.

- Begg - - - History of the North-West, Volume 1.
- Black - - - The History of Saskatchewan and the Old North-West.
- Hammond- - - Confederation and its Leaders.
- Lewis- - - - George Brown.
- Laut - - - - Conquest of the Great North-West.
- Macbeth- - - Romance of Western Canada.
- MacKenzie- - The Life and Speeches of Hon. Geo. Brown.
- Martin - - - Selkirk's Work in Canada.
- Pope - - - - Sir John A. Macdonald.
- Trotter- - - Canadian Federation.
- Whelan - - - Union of the British Provinces.
- Willson--- - The Great Company.
The Life of Lord Strathcona.

Canada and its Provinces--The Prairie Provinces--(Martin).