

date say, visited Banks' or Baring Island?—I visited Wollaston and Victoria Lands, I surveyed all the southern coasts there. J. Ross, Esq. M.P.

397. You were not on Banks' Island?—No. I was not so far north. 23 February 1857.

398. Then you cannot speak to the natural productions of that land?—No; there is nothing to be found on the neighbouring lands, the Wollaston and Victoria Lands, except limestone; a little trap and sandstone rock are seen.

399. I thought that coal was to be found on Banks' Island?—They have found that there, but on the land that I was over there is no symptom of coal; the whole coast is bare limestone.

400. Is it a coal or an ignite?—I am not quite sure. I have seen none of the specimens. I think it is a coal; there are no great quantities of it found.

401. Are animals found on it?—Yes; rein deer and musk ox.

402. Does the musk ox require a very cold climate?—Generally; it is seldom seen south of the Arctic Circle.

403. Mr. Lesc.] You heard Colonel Lefroy express some doubt whether the Company did all they could for the Indians in the matter of goods being sent out; what do you think on that subject?—I have never met with that myself.

404. What do you understand by it?—What Colonel Lefroy, I think, alluded to, was the deficiency of ammunition for a year or two at the Athabasca and the Mackenzie Rivers.

405. Ammunition to be supplied to the Indians?—Yes; I have heard a different reason for that, from that given by Colonel Lefroy. The gentleman in charge of those districts appeared to be very close and anxious to make a very large traffic at a very little expense; and goods were actually forced upon him from the dépôt at York Factory; I have authority for saying so; and more goods were actually sent up than the gentleman asked on his requisition.

406. Was that the only defect?—That was the principal one.

407. Do you think that it would be a good plan if the Company were to furnish goods in great abundance, and with great facility to the Indians?—Clearly, and they do so generally; it is their object both to clothe the Indians well and to give them plenty of ammunition, because the better they are fed, and the better they are clothed, the better they will hunt.

408. Do you give them those things, or do they trade for them?—They get them in advance; they get their goods all upon credit; not to keep them under subjection to the Company; but the Indian is so improvident that if he were paid in the spring he would waste everything before winter. Several attempts have been made to do it, and their debts have been cancelled to them; but it could never be done except at two or three of the forts, where we gave them employment in the summer, when they sometimes earned from 12 *l.* to 25 *l.* worth of goods in a season.

409. Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.] Does that mean 25 *l.* worth of goods at the price of the country, or in the market in London?—At fifty per cent. on the prime cost here, which we put on for charges of freight, loss, damage, and loss of interest. Let me add, to show that this per-centage is not exorbitant, that our servants buy goods, and take them up from the Bay to the United States, at St. Mary's, and sell their clothes to the Americans, a profit being thus made.

410. Lord Stanley.] You say that 50 per cent. upon the prime cost in England is the rent-charge to the Indians?—That is the tariff to the servants; and in supplying the Indians at that price the Indians can gain by their labour at that rate, goods to the value of 12 *l.* to 25 *l.* in the summer season.

411. Are the prices of goods sold to the Indians uniform throughout the district, or is there any increase consequent upon the greater distance in the case, for instance, of forts upon the Mackenzie?—The tariff is increased there; it is higher; but to show that it is not exorbitant, compared with other traders, we sell our goods at Mackenzie's River, at Fort Simpson, upwards of 100 per cent. cheaper than they are sold in the Russian settlements over in the Russian territory, and the Hudson's Bay Company's goods have much further to go.

412. Do you know whether the Russian Company has any monopoly or not?—It is a government thing; of course it is a monopoly.

413. Then you are merely comparing one monopoly with another monopoly?—Yes; at Fort Simpson we have no opposition, and we sell the goods at that rate.

J. Res., Esq., M.D.

27 February 1827.

414. Is it not a fact that in those parts of the territory which border upon Canada and the United States there has been a good deal of trouble with interlopers?—Yes; and there higher prices are given for the furs, consequently all the finer furs have been killed up; the opposition does not pay; there are no profits.

415. In those districts has not the Company, on various occasions, paid large sums to traders to take themselves out of the country?—Never that I heard of. I have heard of the Company buying their furs, and taking the traders into the service frequently, which I think a very bad plan.

416. Buying off their opposition?—I never knew anything of that kind, but I think it a bad plan to buy up their furs at any time, if they are admitted into the service and make a little money, they use it against the company afterwards; they frequently have done so.

417. *Mr. Bell.*] Do you think that the settlement of the Indians is advantageous or disadvantageous to the fur trade?—I should think it is not disadvantageous, because the winter is the time at which they hunt; consequently they can employ the whole summer season to cultivate the ground, and it would make them better off; I believe that the settlement of Indians at Norway House hunt as well as they did before.

418. Do you know why attempts have not been made to settle them at other forts?—There have been attempts, that is to say, it was attempted at Moose Factory when I was there.

419. Which Moose Factory do you mean?—The one at James's Bay; I have known seed potatoes given, which is the only crop that can be grown there with certainty; tools have been given, and ground that had been cultivated, and food for a few days; they would plant their potatoes and never come back to attend to them; I have known that done two seasons while I was at the Moose Factory.

420. Have the missionaries who have been anxious to civilise them been encouraged to do so?—They have, wherever it is practicable, but I cannot speak of other parts of the country except at Moose, where the climate is not very suitable for growing.

421. *Mr. Grogan.*] You stated that at Moose Factory an attempt had been made to settle the Indians by giving them seed and ground for potatoes?—Yes.

422. Were the Indians that you referred to the ordinary residents of that place?—Yes; they came in to trade, to barter there.

423. Did they return to the factory after they had sown the potatoes?—They returned frequently, and they left them to get destroyed; they never looked at them again; they never thought it worth while to dig them out or hoe them out.

424. Did they know the potato practically?—Perfectly well; they used to be supplied at the forts with potatoes when they came in, and they knew the use of them.

425. *Mr. Bell.*] Then do you attribute that circumstance to the particular character of those Indians, because I have read that on the western side of the Rocky Mountains the Indians sow potatoes in large quantities for their subsistence?—Yes; they are a different race; we have found that although the Indian works well in the Company's service he will not settle down generally; there are many exceptions. I cannot speak of the west side of the mountains; I know from hearsay that what you have stated is correct.

426. Do you know what is the cause of the failure of the experiment in the place to which you allude, for it has answered in some places; at the Red River Settlement, for instance, and Norway House, if not in other parts?—It has not answered fully in either place; they never become great farmers, and I believe it arises from a fondness for the chase; they object to settle down anywhere for a length of time.

427. Have the half-breeds the same objection to settle down as the pure Indians?—The French half-breeds have, but the English half-breeds have not so much so.

428. Is there much union of the English and the Indian races going on?—There is; it arose from the Company's servants and people marrying Indian women; there is not so much of it now as there was originally, because many of the half-breeds are growing up, and they intermarry with them instead.

429. Have

429. Have you heard the statement, that south of the Saskatchewan River the English blood is so mixed up that there are no perfectly pure Indians there?—I think it is incorrect; south of the Saskatchewan the Indians are most free from cross of any kind. I understand that they are less crossed than any other with white blood from all that I have heard; I cannot speak from my own knowledge.

430. How far north have you travelled on the Mackenzie River?—I have been down to the mouth; I went down to the mouth with Sir John Richardson in 1848.

431. Have you been westward along the coast?—Never westward.

432. You do not know what facility there is for ships sailing round to the mouth of the Mackenzie?—The only cases of their having come round were those of Captain McClure and Captain Collinson; they passed there.

433. That arises from the great obstruction?—Yes, from the ice; those were the only two instances where they managed to get through.

434. Mr. Roelback.] How far north have you ever been in Scotland?—To the Orkneys and Shetland.

435. Comparing the climate of the Orkneys with the climate at York on Hudson's Bay, where was the great difference?—The difference was, that the summer was much as our summer in Orkney is; but the winter, of course, extended over seven to eight months, when there was no navigation. The winter sets in in the beginning of November, and the ice does not get away from the river before June. I could not get across the north river at York Factory, on account of ice, before the 10th or 12th of June.

436. Can they grow wheat in the Orkneys?—It will ripen in small quantities, but it is not generally grown; barley and oats are generally grown.

437. But you can grow wheat at York?—Never.

438. The climate in the summer, I take it, is finer than at the Orkneys?—It is milder, a little; but it is more irregular because we have frosts, owing to the ice being in the Bay close off York; you can see ice in the Bay almost the whole season round.

439. Going further south, have you ever been to Lake Winnipeg?—Yes; I have passed through it several times.

440. Have you been in that part of the country through the twelve months?—No.

441. You do not know when the winter begins to the south of Lake Winnipeg?—The winter begins about November, that is to say, the ice begins to shut up the navigation by the end of October; the little rivers and lakes are impassable about the end of October.

442. When does the winter end there?—You can get through Lake Winnipeg sometimes about the 1st of June; at other times you may be stopped by ice up to the middle of June; when I went through with Sir John Richardson we were stopped in that way.

443. Agricultural operations you think would not begin before June near Lake Winnipeg?—No; not to go through the Lake.

444. You say that you went from the boundary over to the United States?—Yes.

445. Did you go through Minnesota?—Yes, to St. Paul's.

446. At what time of the year was that?—In the winter.

447. So that you could not very well judge of the difference between Minnesota and the country round Lake Winnipeg?—No, I could not tell further than that it is a perfectly level tract between Red River and Minnesota; there are no hills or difficulties in the way of travelling.

448. On the Saskatchewan I believe you have never been?—I have never been up there.

449. What part of the territory then is it that you say is perfectly fit for agriculture?—I speak of the Saskatchewan from hearsay, not from personal knowledge.

450. Round about Lake Winnipeg is it fit for agriculture?—It is a low flat sandy place, full of marshes along the north shore of Lake Winnipeg; we sometimes had to go many miles before we could get ground to make an encampment on; sometimes we had to travel half the night before we could make an encampment.

J. Rev. Esq. &c.

23 February 1837.

451. Was that during the winter?—No, in the summer time.
452. Then you have travelled in that portion of the world in the summer, but not through Minesota?—No.
453. Were you ever at the Red River Settlement during the summer?—For a short time in the spring.
454. What sort of land is it about there?—Very excellent ground; rich, good ground.
455. When you passed through Red River and afterwards through Minesota, did you see any great difference between the appearance of that country round the Red River and Minesota?—Very little; it was all covered with snow at the time; I could not judge.
456. Are they peopling Minesota now from the United States?—When I passed up I found no settlements for about 400 miles, between Crow Wing and Pembina. I saw the small trading posts, with a little piece of land cultivated on them, but no settlements that could be called so.
457. Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.] Where is Crow Wing?—It is marked as the Crow Wing River beyond St. Anthony, to the north of St. Paul's.
458. Mr. Loxe.] Is the Crow Wing River a tributary of the Mississippi?—It is one of the tributaries of the St. Peter's.
459. Which runs into the Mississippi?—Yes.
460. Mr. Roebuck.] I believe now Minesota is a territory, is it not?—Yes.
461. Did it become a territory lately?—In 1852; it was becoming a territory I think either in 1851 or 1852, when I was passing through.
462. Wisconsin is a state, is it not?—Yes.
463. Is Wisconsin peopled thoroughly, or is a large portion of it still wild?—A very large portion; at least the portion that I travelled through was wild.
464. Whilst Wisconsin remained wild, Minesota was begun?—Minesota, up north as far as St. Paul's, seems to be pretty well settled; that is to say, there are now houses; but beyond that, between that and Red River, there seemed to be from 200 to 400 miles, by the route I took about 450 miles, not settled.
465. While very large portions of Wisconsin remained uninhabited, a portion of the territory of Minesota became peopled?—I cannot give you reasons, because I merely speak of the route that I passed through.
466. Did you pass through Wisconsin?—I passed through a very small portion of it.
467. Was that part of Wisconsin through which you passed uncultivated; was there a large portion of the territory uncultivated?—There was a large portion which seemed scarcely settled; there were saw-mills, and things of that kind.
468. At that very time there were people in Minesota?—Yes.
469. So that Minesota began to be peopled before Wisconsin was full of inhabitants?—Clearly because they followed the route of the river. They could get steam-boats completely up to Minesota, up to St. Paul's. The steam-boats came all the way up the Mississippi with one small break.
470. So that we may conclude that people would go to a new territory if there were inducements to go there, though Canada should still retain lands uncultivated, unsettled, uncultivated?—Yes, if there were inducements sufficient; but the Americans have not had inducements yet to push up beyond, except at St. Peter's River.
471. Going to a different subject, you spoke of the tariff established by the Hudson's Bay Company; do not they establish a tariff upon the goods they sell and the goods they buy?—Yes; they establish there a tariff for their servants.
472. So that if a man sells you a beaver skin, and you sell him a flannel shirt, you put your own price upon the flannel shirt, and upon the beaver skin?—There is a different settlement of tariff for the Indian, and for the servant.
473. Do not you put your own price upon the flannel shirt and upon the beaver skin?—Yes; 50 per cent. is the price put on.
474. For example, we will take an item; take a flannel shirt; suppose it cost here half-a-crown, you say you put 50 per cent. upon that?—Yes.
475. Fifty per cent. would be added to the half-crown when it got to York; if you took it to the Mackenzie River how much would be added to it there?—Nothing to the servant; our tariff is higher there.
476. I am talking of the Indian?—I do not understand the question. Our tariffs are made; there is 50 per cent., a fixed tariff, put on for the servant.

477. We will not talk about the servant?—Then this article is sold to the Indian; there is a certain tariff made without any fixed per-centage. The articles that are useful, such as woollens, guns, and absolute necessities, are sold to the Indian at a comparatively cheap rate; there is no fixed percentage upon them. J. Rec. Esq., M. P.
23 February 1857.

478. So that in fact there is no tariff at all to the Indian?—I never made out the tariff, but this is the way in which we did it. Supposing there was a valuable skin, we could not pay the Indian for that in the same proportion as its value.

479. I am not asking that question; I am asking you whether you do not put your own price upon the goods you sell to the Indian, without regard to any tariff whatever?—Exactly so, but there is a fixed price that the Indian perfectly understands; there is no regular percentage put on.

480. You lived some time at York?—At Moose, in James's Bay.

481. Do you know what the tariff was there to the Indian?—Yes; as far as I remember, it was from 2 s. 6 d. to 3 s. for what we called a made beaver.

482. What was the tariff upon goods taken from England and sold to the Indian there?—I do not know that; I did not make out the tariff.

483. Were you there 10 years without ever learning that fact?—Yes; it is difficult to learn.

484. Why difficult to learn?—Because I find that they have no fixed tariff made out upon the plan you have spoken of, wherever it is. There is no fixed per-centage put on the goods anywhere, wherever we have traded with them, or wherever any person else has traded with them.

485. Mr. Lowe.] Do you ask the Indians different prices for goods at different times?—Never; we cannot vary the price.

486. A beaver skin will always command the same amount of European goods?—At the same place.

487. Mr. Roebuck.] Are there not varieties of beaver skins?—Yes; but the beaver skin is the standard; a large beaver making one skin.

488. Do you give the same price for every beaver skin?—Certainly not; two small ones go for a large beaver; two martens go for a large beaver.

489. Who determines whether it is a small or a large beaver?—The Indians themselves determine it; they know it perfectly well, and so does any man who is acquainted with it; any man who looks at it can tell the age of a beaver.

490. Lord Stanley.] When you say that a beaver skin commands a fixed price, you mean, of course, a skin of the average size?—A skin of the average size; a good large skin killed in winter or in spring.

491. Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.] When you talk of a thing costing so many beavers, you mean that they may give a beaver skin and five or six racoon skins, or marten skins, in the same way that in the buffalo country they talk of a thing being worth so many robes?—Yes.

492. If you bought a horse from an Indian you would give him so many beavers for it?—Yes.

493. If you sold a gun, you would say, "I will take so many beavers for it?"—Yes; it is a thing perfectly understood by the Indian.

494. The beavers being the current coin of the country?—Yes; the same as the current coin of this country. The Indian understands it, and no one will do anything until he gets up to the standard price.

495. Mr. Roebuck.] If a man came with ten beaver skins to the factory at Moose River, you say that he would know what price was to be put upon those beaver skins; but would he know the price to be put upon the European goods?—He does not know anything about the price of the European goods to him. He knows exactly the articles that he wants; he knows how many skins he has got, and he knows what he can get for them.

496. Who determines how much he can get?—It was determined long before I entered the service.

497. It never varies?—It never varies much; it was increased some years ago in favour of the Indian.

498. So that, as goods in England become cheaper, they do not become cheaper in Hudson's Bay?—No; and if the furs sell cheaper we do not give less for them to the Indian.

J. Res. Eq., &c.

63 February 1857.

499. So that, if by improvements in manufacture here, you can manufacture a woollen shirt at one-fourth of the money previously charged, you still ask him the same sum that it cost when it was four times as dear?—The tariff has been cheapened to the Indian several times; it has been several times altered in his favour. That tariff was made long before I entered the service; I do not know what rules it was made by; but I suppose it was so adjusted that there was a fair profit to be got from the business.

500. Mr. *Edward Ellis*.] Do you remember what was usually given for a beaver?—A blanket was four beavers, but if you got the value of it in musk-rats you would not have above a shilling or two profit, which would not cover the expense; ten rats go to a beaver; ten rats, a few years ago, would sell in the London market for about 3s.; they are higher now.

501. Mr. *Roebuck*.] Have you happened to see the account of Hudson's Bay, published by Chambers?—No.

502. If a statement is therein made of a coat being charged 10*l.* or 12*l.* to the Indian, it is incorrect?—Certainly; it may have cost him that, but the chances are that it only cost him 2*l.* or 3*0s.*; it depends upon the skins he gave for it. The tariff is an arbitrary thing; if you paid for the silver fox and for the marten according to their value, the Indians would hunt up those skins and destroy them in a very short time; they would not think of hunting the inferior skins of the musk-rat, which form about half the returns of the southern districts; and the Indians would not be any better off.

503. Sir *John Pakington*.] If I understand your use of the word "tariff," it is a written scale of prices according to which the goods which the Indians require are supplied to them, estimated in beavers?—Exactly.

504. What is the money result as regards the payment made by the Indians for those goods so supplied to them, of course taking the average value of the skins; you have said that the servants pay fifty per cent. on the London price; what do you suppose the Indians pay?—Much higher.

505. How much higher?—I cannot say; it varies.

506. Do you think they pay 200 per cent. on the London price?—I should think they do.

507. Do you think they pay 500 per cent.?—I cannot say.

508. Do you think they pay very much more than 200 per cent.?—I should think they pay more than that, but it is a calculation that I never entered into; it varies so much with the prices of the furs, and the quantities of skins obtained.

509. You say you have never entered into the calculation; at the same time you seem to have an accurate idea to this extent, that they pay more than 200 per cent. upon the cost price in London?—Yes.

510. Do you think they pay 300 per cent.?—They may; I never made a computation.

511. Do you think if anybody said that they paid 500 per cent. it would be at all an extreme statement?—I cannot tell you; I never made the calculation. Besides which I have been for the last eight or 10 years employed in quite a different service, and have had little to do with the Company's affairs.

512. When did you leave the service of the Hudson's Bay Company?—Only in 1826, but since 1847 or 1846 I have been almost wholly employed in arctic service, consequently I have been only one year on actual duty in the Company's service since then, and I can only speak generally.

513. I think you stated that you had been in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company for a very long time?—Twenty-three years.

514. Where did you chiefly reside during that time?—Moose Factory was the place where I remained longest. I was there 10 years.

515. The neighbourhood of the Moose Settlement being the part of the district with which you are most familiar, as I understand you, is there much wood about that part of the country?—There is pine wood.

516. Is it extensively wooded?—It is well wooded.

517. Are there extensive forests?—There are extensive forests.

518. There is not much prairie about there?—Merely swamp.

519. Does the wood grow to any large size?—About two or two and a half feet in diameter is about the largest that I have seen.

520. Mr. *Edward Ellis*.] Does not the profit made upon the article that is

given

given for the beaver in the country depend upon what the beaver sells for in London?—Of course, entirely. J. Res. Eq., n. 2.

521. Do you remember the price of beaver a pound some 20 years ago in London?—I do not. 32 February 1857.

522. Was it 30 s.?—About 30 s. or 32 s.

523. Do you remember what it was selling for about three years ago?—Seven shillings or eight shillings a pound.

524. It is now, I believe, about 13 s.?—Yes.

525. Mr. *Percy Herbert*.] What is the weight of an average beaver?—About a pound; some of the large ones are a pound and a quarter.

526. Mr. *Grogan*.] Am I to understand you to say, that in fact the whole trade there is one of traffic?—Yes.

527. And that the beaver is the unit of computation in the purchase and sale of any article?—Yes; it is the currency understood by the Indian.

528. I think you stated that latterly the tariff for that barter had been augmented by the Company in favour of the Indian?—Yes.

529. That is, that they allow a larger quantity of European goods for the beavers than they formerly did?—Yes; there was a modification of the tariff in favour of the Indians some years ago; I forget the season.

530. How do you reconcile that with the fact which we have just heard, that the value of beaver has fallen from 30 s. to 7 s. or 8 s., or 13 s.?—I do not know the reason for making this modification.

531. Have you any impression on your mind that the Company are carrying on an unfortunate trade?—No, I think not.

532. How does it arise that the Company are able, notwithstanding the great reduction in the value of beaver, to give a larger quantity of European goods to the Indian and still have a large profit?—It arose, I fancy, from the fact that European goods got cheaper; that is the only way that I can account for it; I was ordered to make a modification at Mackenzie's River, and I would not do it, except to a small extent, because I found that things went on just as well; that the Indians could clothe themselves very well if they did any work.

533. Are the goods furnished to the servants of the Company and to the Indians the same in quality?—Exactly the same.

534. Are the Indians aware that they pay a higher rate for them than the Company's servants are charged?—They do not seem to be aware of it; they are not told that they pay a higher value, but they are quite satisfied with their treatment generally, and the Indian can clothe himself and get all his requisites if he likes to work.

535. Mr. *Bell*.] Has the same reduction taken place with regard to other furs besides the beaver; the silver fox, for instance; is that selling at a proportionately lower price now to the beaver?—No, I believe not.

536. Is it higher?—It is about the same that it always has been; they vary considerably; some kinds of fur go out of fashion, and others come in.

537. Has the general average price of furs in this country fallen within the last 20 years, or risen?—Some have varied. I do not think the average price on the whole has altered; but beavers have fallen very much, and they were the principal returns of the country at that time.

538. And some have risen?—Yes; I believe a few have risen.

539. Mr. *Roebuck*.] I suppose, during your residence at Moose Factory, you saw the trading with the Indians?—I saw it; I was not a trader, but I saw the mode of trading.

540. I will read you a description given of that mode of trading, and will ask you whether it be a correct one: "Thus, an Indian arriving at one of the Company's establishments with a bundle of furs, which he intends to trade, proceeds, in the first instance, to the trading room; there the trader separates the furs into lots, and, after adding up the amount, delivers to the Indian a number of little pieces of wood, indicating the number of made-beaver to which his hunt amounts. He is next taken to the store-room, where he finds himself surrounded by bales of blankets, sloop-coats, guns, knives, powder horns, flints, axes, &c. Each article has a recognised value in made-beaver. A sloop-coat, for example, is 12 made-beavers, for which the Indian delivers up 12 of his pieces of wood; for a gun he gives 20; for a knife, 2; and so on, until his stock of wooden cash is expended." Have you ever seen that process?—

J. Res. Exp., &c.

25 February 1857.

Certainly; but a coat generally costs five or six skins. The process is true; but the details are not true.

541. I will now read to you from the "Indian tariff of the territory embraced within the Royal License, situated east of the Rocky Mountains." I find that a gun, which in England cost 22 s., is charged to the Indian 20 beavers, equivalent in market value to 32 l. 10 s.; is that anything according with your experience?—It was true many years ago, but it is not true at present.

542. Have you wonderfully reformed of late?—No, but the price of beaver is not that; it is 13 s. in the market at the present day.

543. Then the Indian would have to give more beavers?—No, it would still be the same; and the gun might rise to 30 s. or 40 s.

544. In marten skins he gives for the same gun, costing 22 s., 60 skins, and their value is 46 l. 10 s.;—I never saw more than two martens go to a beaver since I have been in the service.

545. He gives five silver fox skins for the same gun, and their market value is 50 l.;—Yes, it is true.

545* Do they descend to musk-rats, which form half the stock?—At some places.

546. They do not say anything about musk-rats?—No; that is just the thing; there is little or no gain upon them. Let me give my side of the tariff: ten rats go to a beaver; for a gun it would be 200 rats, and the price in the market, some years ago, was 3 d. or 4 d. a skin.

547. Mr. *Gregg*.] How many beavers go to a gun?—Twenty by that account, and that is the Mackenzie River tariff; that is the very highest tariff that we have to the Indians. If you are paid for that gun in rats you have scarcely the profit that a London merchant would take, even in the City, instead of going to the Saskatchewan, and those musk rats form one half of the bulk of the returns of the southern department, and a great portion of the northern.

548. Mr. *Rosack*.] Can you state the difference between silver foxes and beaver skins; how many beaver skins go to one silver fox?—Four or five.

549. Then they give five silver foxes for this same gun?—Yes, in Mackenzie River, but about half the amount elsewhere.

550. And that is equivalent, it is stated, to 50 l.;—Yes.

551. That is the mode of trading with the Indians?—That is the mode on the one side; you must take both sides. There is a loss, at least not a gain, in trading with the inferior furs. Were we to pay according to the value of the skins the Indian would hunt up and destroy all the valuable fur-bearing animals, and would not catch a musk rat or the inferior skins at all.

552. When you trade in musk rats in order that the Indians should catch musk rats in place of catching beavers, you give more for the musk rat in proportion than for the beaver?—The more inferior the skin, the higher the price which is given in proportion.

553. Supposing an Indian comes with musk rats to buy a gun, how many musk rats will he give for this gun?—About 200 in Mackenzie River, and a little more than half elsewhere.

554. And how much is each musk rat worth?—They have got up this last year, they were from 3 d. to 4 d. for several years.

555. What are they now?—I forget, but they have increased this last season.

556. Are they 6 d.;—Yes, fully that; more.

557. That would be 120 l.;—Yes, at Mackenzie River, but not much above half the sum elsewhere.

558. Instead of 22 s.;—Yes; but 6 d. was a high value, 2 l. 10 s. to 3 l. would be the value of them some few years ago; 2 l. 10 s. would be at 3 d.

559. Mr. *Garnsey*.] If I understand rightly, the principle is, that you give a higher price for the lower skin, and a lower price for the more valuable skin, with the view of yielding the Indian a fair average on his general hunt?—Exactly so, because were we not to pay them for the inferior skins higher than any person could do with a profit, they would not hunt up those skins, which are very numerous; they would follow up the others as they have done on the frontier, and destroy all the valuable animals without advantage to themselves.

560. Mr. *Leve*.] It is a contrivance for preserving the more valuable animals;—Yes, and probably the Indians also, because the poorer Indians and the women and children hunt up the musk rats, of which there are abundance, and can provide food and clothing for themselves in that way.

561. Mr.

561. Mr. *Edouard Ellice.*] You were at Moose for a considerable time, and were through the Indian territory; what disposition have you generally observed in the Indians towards the traders?—They are most friendly, as far as I have ever seen them.

J. Ros, Esq., M.P.

23 February 1857.

562. When Indians came to the fort that you were at, in distress or in a state of destitution, did the servants of the Company relieve them?—They were always relieved both in food and clothing if requisite, and in medicines if necessary, for those who were sick, and that was done gratuitously; they got the clothing gratuitously; if they could not pay for it, it remained a debt. If it was an old person that could not hunt he got the clothes gratuitously, and some food also.

563. At your station were spirits ever bartered for the furs?—Never. Where I was, there was a dram occasionally given to a good hunter when he came in, one on coming and one on going, but spirits were never bartered for furs.

564. Was it an uncommon thing to see an Indian in the territory in a state of intoxication?—Very uncommon in late years in the Company's territories.

565. Are you aware that spirits are given in small gratuities at certain times of the year?—They are given in the summer when Indians are employed to voyage; they are given because it is an old custom with the men, much as it is with sailors or anybody else, to give them a little spirits when they come down to the dépôt, and the Indians so employed get the same quantity. But the Company, wherever I have been, have offered them other articles, tobacco, tea, and sugar to two or three times the value, if they would take them, instead of the spirits.

566. Mr. *Roebuck.*] The spirits were for payment in that case, then?—No, the spirits were given as a gratuity. What they call the regale given to the men when they come down.

567. Mr. *Edouard Ellice.*] The supply of spirits was limited to what was called the regale?—Where I was, and in many cases, we had no spirits; we have no spirits in the Athabasca or in La Crosse or on the Mackenzie River, for the men, officers, or Indians; the persons in charge had no spirits or wine allowed them.

568. In trading with the Indians, did you find them tolerably quick in their dealings with you, or were they credulous and to be imposed upon easily?—They understood the value of every skin they had, and they had in their mind everything that they wanted.

569. Were they shrewd in their dealings?—Perfectly shrewd.

570. They knew their rights?—Perfectly so.

571. They were aware that with this tariff, which was established for the barter, the servants of the Company could not interfere; that it was a fixed thing with them?—They knew it thoroughly.

572. Mr. *Gordon.*] But I think you said that you thought the Indians were unaware of the much higher per-centage that they were paying for articles?—Yes; they did not understand anything about the per-centages.

573. Mr. *Edouard Ellice.*] Is there any district in the country besides the district you were first speaking of, the Saskatchewan, where you think a self-supporting colony could exist?—Not in the present state of the country; not till it is settled up to that point, and then it might, but it would take a long while.

574. To what part of the country do you allude besides the Saskatchewan; to the thick wood districts?—The only part that I should fancy, would be up about the Rainy Lake.

575. The Rainy Lake is between Lake Superior and the Red River?—Yes.

576. In what part of the thick wood districts, north of Lake Winnipeg, do you think a self-supporting colony could exist?—Nowhere, according to my experience.

577. I believe you have travelled in the country between the northern shore of Lake Superior and the Red River?—Yes, in winter.

578. What sort of a district is it, keeping on British territory, between the Red River and Lake Superior?—From the Red River to Lake Superior, by the route that I came to Fort William, towards the west end of Lake Superior, is not a difficult country to travel over, because we in the winter followed the lakes and rivers; but on coming to Lake Superior, the hills on the north shore there run north and south, consequently there is a continuous series of ridges

J. Bar, Esq., &c.
23 February 1857.

having deep ravines between them, where the streams running out to Lake Superior pass through, and you have to go about 100 miles to the north of the place before you can travel well. I went to the north about 100 miles, and found the country there difficult to travel over; we were obliged to leave our dogs, and carry our clothes and provisions on our backs.

579. That is on the northern shore of Lake Superior?—Yes.

580. Was there any temptation to a colonist to settle?—It was the winter time, and I saw no country that would do for settlement; there were a great many swamps. I passed along the head waters from Nipegon to Long Lake, and it seemed to me a swampy country, like most of the head waters of the country.

581. In travelling from Fort William to the Red River, in taking goods is it a difficult or is it an easy route?—Very difficult; we are not able to travel there with any thing but canoes; the rivers there are too difficult for boats even.

582. It is a very level and swampy country?—It is a level and swampy country in one part, and it is very hilly close to Lake Superior; there are some high hills to climb over, two in particular.

583. For all purposes of practical transport that country is an impracticable one in winter, is it not?—Quite so, to a great extent.

584. There has been a good deal said about a railway coming from Canada to the Red River, and so on; from what you saw of the character of the country, are the physical difficulties very great against carrying out that railway?—I should think they would be immense; not insurmountable, but immensely expensive, particularly on that line along the north of Lake Superior.

585. Did you hear Colonel Lefroy's evidence?—Yes.

586. He describes that as a line which engineers had drawn in the air, of course imagining that science and art can overcome all the physical difficulties; I suppose you agree in that evidence?—Perfectly; as far as the practical results go, it could never pay anything in the present state of the country.

587. Supposing that a British colony was founded, and that the Government of Canada was to be extended to the Red River, and no railway was to be made, how could communication be kept up between the seat of government in Canada and the colony of the Red River in winter?—There is no regular communication without going through the States; there could be no regular and quick communication.

588. If any one now wanted to go, say from Toronto to the Red River, in winter, how would he go?—Through the States, by railway as far as it went, and he would then cross over the prairie country, which is unsettled, with horses or dogs.

589. Mr. *Kinnaird*.] Was the 400 miles that you travelled to St. Paul's with horses?—Dogs; horses could not travel; the snow was too deep; it was in February or March.

590. Could you have done it with horses in the summer?—Yes, it is practicable in summer both with horses and with waggons; light waggons go regularly across the prairie plains.

591. Mr. *Edward Ellice*.] Do you know the Nipissing at the head of the Ottawa?—I have never been there, but I know where it is.

592. Taking that to be the end of the railway concession, how far is it in a straight line from the Red River?—It is difficult to say, but I think it is somewhere about from 1,000 to 1,200 miles; it is on the charts.

593. I understand you to say that you have been through the district extending from there, and are able personally to speak to the sort of country which it is?—I have traversed that country once, and I have passed through Lake Superior several times by water; the whole of the shores of Lake Superior are perfectly impracticable; there is a little cultivable ground at the mouth of each river, but otherwise it is an immense rocky tract.

594. Mr. *Reobuck*.] Supposing you were going from Lake Erie up to Lake Superior, could not you go in a steamer up Lake Erie, and from Lake Erie into Lake Huron, and from Lake Huron into Lake Superior?—Yes, in summer.

595. Mr. Lowe.] Is there a canal open now?—They are preparing one; I am not quite sure whether it is open. *J. Res. Exp., &c.*

596. Mr. Roebuck.] When that canal is finished, if it be not finished, there will be a regular communication from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of Lake Superior?—Yes. *23 February 1857.*

597. You say that the road is impracticable during winter?—Yes.

598. If the country were peopled, would not the people make a road in for the sleighs?—Not along the north shore of Lake Superior.

599. Would they not travel over the ice?—The lake is so bad that the ice gets detached from the rocks; it does not remain fast, and our expresses seldom or never attempt to go there. The wind comes on, and the waves from the lake break up the ice; and several of the expresses have been nearly lost.

600. Sir John Pakington.] Which line do they take in winter?—They go further to the north by Lake Nipigon, and a place called Long Lake, 100 or 120 miles in from Lake Superior.

601. Mr. Roebuck.] So that if the country were peopled at Lake Nipigon, there would be a regular communication by sleighs?—I cannot say; the route that I passed by is impracticable to sleighs.

602. Are you at all aware of the richness of the northern shore of Lake Superior in metal?—I have understood that there are mines; at least that there is copper ore there.

603. Is that no attraction, do you think?—I understood that the geologists, who visited them, said that they would scarcely pay for working them; they are not equal to the mines on the south shore. I have not examined them myself; I only speak from hearsay on that point.

604. Therefore you cannot say whether that country has inducements to settlement or not?—I can say that it has not the least inducement of having fine agricultural land to settle upon along the north shore; it is a perfectly barren, rocky coast, perfectly iron bound, except at the mouths of some of the little streams where there is a little alluvial deposit of land, where little patches may be cultivated; generally speaking, it is a rocky, barren coast with ridges.

605. Do you know the northern shore of Lake Huron?—I never came along that side.

606. Have you passed over from Lake Huron to Lake Nipissing?—I never was there.

607. Then the questions put to you about Lake Nipissing you cannot answer?—No. I said that I could not answer them. I never passed that way.

608. Mr. Edward Ellice.] Will you describe upon the map the line of country that you have been through, starting from Fort William; where did you go to, going up towards Nipigon?—I passed directly from Fort William up to Lake Nipigon; I then struck east to a place called Long Lake, about 100 miles.

609. What sort of a country was it between Lake Nipigon and Long Lake?—It was low and swampy. I passed through a number of little lakes and rivers, and swamps, apparently; they were all covered up with ice at the time. Then from Long Lake I went to the Pice River, a difficult tract of country; that is on Lake Superior.

610. What sort of a country was it between Long Lake and Pice River?—Very rough and rugged; our dogs got knocked up; we could scarcely use them; we were obliged to carry our clothes on our backs.

611. Which way did the rivers run there?—Nearly north and south generally.

612. Mr. Roebuck.] The Pice River falls into Lake Superior?—Yes.

613. Mr. Edward Ellice.] And the water the other way run to the north, to Hudson's Bay?—I did not go so far up, I was only at the watershed at the head waters.

614. Did there appear to be no valley in that direction, or no part eligible for settlement?—I saw nothing, excepting that the country which I went over was low; it looked swampy, like most of the watersheds there.

615. Where did you go to from Pice River?—To Michipicoton.

J. Res, Esq., &c. &c.

23 February 1857.

616. There you came down into Lake Superior?—Yes. From that I came to St. Mary's; we were obliged to leave our dogs behind.

617. *Sir John Pakington.*] How did you get on?—We walked on foot, and carried our baggage and provisions on the backs of men. It is one of the roughest countries I ever passed through.

618. *Mr. Edward Ellice.*] With respect to the mines on Lake Superior, are you aware of the number of them, or the available state of the work at those mines?—I am not.

619. But a great many companies have attempted to work them?—Several.

620. Both on the American and on the Canadian side?—On both sides.

621. The general result has been not very profitable?—Not on the north side, because they have given them all up, or most of them. There are only a few of the American mines paying where they get large masses of copper.

622. I believe that the great difficulty with the copper there is from its extreme purity, and the great masses that it is in, so that they cannot easily break it?—On the south side; but they have found nothing of that kind on the north side that I am aware of.

623. But all the copper is actually in large solid masses, requiring great force to break it?—I have seen pieces of one or two tons, and pieces are found much heavier than that.

624. *Sir John Pakington.*] What was the length of time occupied in your journey from the Red River to Toronto?—To St. Mary's, two months; about 60 days.

625. It is a journey rarely made I suppose?—Not by the same person; there are generally relays of men at each post; each eight or ten days.

626. The journey is made from post to post?—Yes; by different relays of men.

627. In that way is the journey often made during the winter months?—Only once or twice when the express comes down; the winter express used to come that way communicating with all the posts bringing information down to Canada.

628. What is the distance between the posts?—Generally 100 to 200 miles; by the route followed it is more.

629. *Mr. Grogan.*] You said that the express went by Lake Nipigon and by Long Lake; did the express travel that route because there were posts there?—Partly, and partly because they cannot travel along the lake on account of the ice breaking away sometimes with a gale of wind, which renders it very dangerous; the shore is so precipitous that the ice is apt to break away and prevent travelling.

630. Are there no posts between Lake Nipigon and the north shore?—No.

631. It is the only route that is practicable?—It is the only route that the Company's people go generally; they make a rush sometimes across the Bay, but they do not do so generally, it being so unsafe.

632. *Mr. Bell.*] Are there any whales in Hudson's Bay?—I saw a few up to the north.

633. You do not know whether the Hudson's Bay abounds with them?—No, not the southern part; I saw a few in the northern part, towards Repulse Bay.

634. Are there any seals?—There were plenty of white porpoises and many seals, and some walruses the last time I was there.

635. Do they afford a large quantity of oil?—Yes; the Esquimaux kill them.

636. There are no British fisheries?—No; none are established there.

637. They are not allowed, I suppose?—No one ever attempted it that I am aware of.

638. Do you know whether that is part of the Hudson's Bay monopoly?—It is part of the Hudson's Bay territory.

639. So that no ships can come into the Hudson's Straits to fish for whales?—I suppose so; there are not many whales.

640. Do you suppose there would be a sufficient quantity of fish of that kind to support a settlement?—I think not; when I went in 1846-7 I saw a good many whales; when I went in 1853 and 1854 I saw only one or two small ones.

641. At what part of Hudson's Bay?—Inside Southampton Island.

642. *Mr. Edward Ellice.*] How long is the water so free from ice that vessels could hunt the whales?—About two months; it is very dangerous; it is full of currents;

currents; it nearly wrecked Sir George Back's vessel, and prevented another gentleman, Captain Lyon, twice from getting up there, whose vessel got nearly destroyed; the currents are very strong and it is very dangerous; I got on because I had boats and got inside the ice in shoal water.

J. Rae, Esq., M.P.

23 February 1852.

643. Mr. *Charles Fitzwilliam*.] Do you know of any coal being discovered anywhere on the shores of Hudson's Bay?—I am not aware of any.

644. Mr. *Grogan*.] Along the journey which you have described to us as having taken, were there any houses or any people?—None, except the posts that I have mentioned.

645. The whole of the rest of the country is unoccupied and desolate?—Quite, except by Indians.

646. Mr. *Kiassird*.] From your evidence I gather that you entirely approve of the rule of the Company, in not selling spirits to the Indians?—Perfectly; it is the best rule that was ever made.

647. Have you compared them with those who have access to spirits?—Yes, I have seen the effect; the Indians are much easier to deal with, more attentive, and better in every way.

648. You also, I gather, approve of settling and attempting to civilise them; you think that it may be done with success?—I think it is a good thing; if it could be possibly done it would be beneficial in every way; it is not even opposed to the Company's trade, because the time when they would be employed in the settlement is not the time when they hunt.

649. The scheme has been partially successful in the Red River?—Yes, but very partially, because most of them hunt in the winter, and they do not depend upon the farms.

650. The settling and the civilising have never been opposed by the Company in any way?—Not that I am aware of.

651. *Chairman*.] Still, do you think that the constitution of the Company is such as to make it very well fitted for the management of settlements except upon a very small scale?—I speak of the Indians settling down, not of others settling; not of colonising, not of strangers coming in.

652. When you use the word "settlements," you mean mere Indian villages?—Indian villages and settlements; local trading places.

653. Mr. *Roeback*.] But surely a fur company is opposed to colonisation, is it not?—I should fancy so, generally.

654. Therefore, inasmuch as the Hudson's Bay Company is a capital fur Company, it is a very bad coloniser?—I should fancy so; it never professed to be a colonising Company.

655. Mr. *Love*.] With regard to the half-breeds, do you consider them a material from which an agricultural population can be formed?—I believe that the English half-breeds may be so; they are a very excellent race generally, but careless and improvident.

656. Will they settle down and cultivate the ground?—There will be a difficulty about it, because they generally prefer the hunting.

657. Have they settled in any great numbers?—In the Red River to a considerable extent.

658. Have they given up hunting altogether?—Not so far as I know. They generally hunt as long as they are able; they go as voyageurs in the summer, and hunt in the autumn and winter.

659. And they do not really cultivate the ground much?—Many of them do, but the generality of them prefer the sort of wild life of hunting.

660. Are they troublesome people to govern?—Not so far as I am aware.

661. The Company has no difficulty in ruling them, and keeping them in order?—I think not; I speak particularly of the English half-breeds. I have generally had them with me on my expeditions, and found them good practicable men.

662. *Chairman*.] Is the number of the half-breeds much increasing?—I should think it is; where they are colonised, they are increasing largely.

663. Mr. *Charles Fitzwilliam*.] You spoke of the settlement at the Red River just now, as if it was a settlement of Indians; there are very few Indians there, I believe?—There are a good many at both ends.

664. I mean full-blooded Indians?—A good many Crees are settled there, and others.

J. Ros, Esq., &c. &c.

23 February 1857.

665. They do not farm, do they?—They do to a small extent.

666. Are they not the only instances of Indians, except those that have been surrounded by the population of Canada, that you know of, who have settled down as farmers?—There is one instance in the States that I have heard of.

667. Where?—I forget the name of the tribe.

668. The Cherokees?—Yes; they have settled down, and have really become civilised; they have their own Member going to the Legislature, and they have schools.

669. The Cherokees are not now inhabiting the ground where they were originally found?—No; they have changed their ground, and also so have some of the others; some have immigrated from their own lands to the Red River.

670. *Mr. Roebuck.*] In the whole history of America has there been one instance of a half-breed settlement continuing up to the present time?—I am not able to answer that question.

671. Has it not been found by experience that the red man is opposed to that kind of life which we call civilised life?—Exactly so; there is no doubt about it.

672. And wherever the civilised man comes the red man disappears?—Yes, that is the result, generally speaking.

673. *Mr. Gordon.*] In a letter from Sir George Simpson, which is to be found in some papers laid before Parliament in 1842, he says: "Our different trading establishments are the resort or refuge of many of the natives who, from age, infirmity, or other causes, are unable to follow the chase; they have the benefit of the care and attention, free of expense, of our medical men, of whom about 12 are usually employed in the service; every trading establishment being in fact an Indian hospital." How far does your experience as a medical man in the service of the Company bear that out?—Wherever we act as medical men our services are given gratuitously. We go to a distance if an Indian is at a distance, and have him taken to a fort, and he is fed and clothed there. And it is no uncommon thing to hear the old Indians, when unfit for hunting, say, "We are unfit for work; we will go and reside at a fort." That is the ordinary feeling which prevailed in the country. Although there are no medical men up at the different posts (there may be the number Sir George has mentioned scattered over the country), yet medicines are sent up to all the posts in regular supplies.

674. If that attendance were asked it would always be afforded?—Yes.

675. Was it frequently afforded?—Frequently so; but those places on the coast are liable to much more disease than places inland.

676. Then, in short, you think that if a statement were made, that the Directors of the Hudson's Bay Company considered that it was their business to attend to the Company's own servants, but not to any other class of the population, it would be a false charge?—Perfectly erroneous; in fact the Indian is more readily attended to generally than the others.

677. And as a rule the medical men appointed by the Company would not consider it their sole duty to attend to the Company's servants?—Certainly not; they are there for the Indians as much as for the Company's people.

678. *Mr. Roebuck.*] How long did you say that you dwelt at Moose Factory?—Ten years.

679. During that time what was the average number of the worn-out hunters who lived there upon your charity?—I cannot exactly tell that. The population of the place was, I think, about 180 altogether; few Indians came there; but there were generally two or three or four old families, or six sometimes, pensioners at the place. They called at the Fort; they were there regularly every week; they had their encampment at the place, and they went and hunted at intervals as they were able, and if they were not able to get food enough, they had it given to them.

680. How many people would those families number?—Perhaps 12; perhaps 13 or 14 altogether.

681. Then I understand you that at the Moose Factory there was an average of about 12 old Indians?—Yes, women and men.

682. That was the sum of the great advantage that the Indians round about Moose Factory derived, namely, 10 or 12, or, say, 14 or 16?—The whole population there is about 180, and if any of them came in and were unfit to hunt,

they

they were received at the Fort; we never forced them into the Fort; but if they came and asked assistance and wished to stay, they did so.

J. Roe, Esq., &c.

23 February 1857.

683. Mr. Labouchere wishes to know whether anything is done with respect to vaccination?—Yes; vaccine matter is sent to all the posts. I may mention a curious fact, which is, that in the year 1835 the small-pox was brought up by a steambot from the States. A gentleman at the Saskatchewan vaccinated all the Cree Indians that came in; and there was scarcely a single case occurred among the tribe; we supposed it was because they had all been vaccinated; whereas deaths took place amongst the more distant tribes, near the Missouri. The small-pox was brought by steambot up the Missouri, and was brought over to the Saskatchewan by a quantity of horse stealers, who heard that the disease was at the Missouri, and went to steal horses there. They found the Indians dying by hundreds; they took the disease with them, and most of them died upon the road.

684. Taking you from Moose Factory to the mouth of the Mackenzie River, where you lived; how long did you live there?—About nine months at Fort Simpson, and two years at Bear Lake, which is in the Mackenzie district.

685. How many worn-out hunters lived there, deriving charity from you?—I do not remember; I think there were about two or three families whilst I was there; at the one post.

686. Say six people?—Yes, about that at that time; but it varies according to the privations which the Indians have suffered.

687. Mr. Gurney.] Did I understand you rightly, that in addition to the worn-out hunters who were resident, there was also gratuitous medical advice given to the other Indians as they happened to require it?—To every one that came, or that we heard of.

688. Sir John Pakington.] How far south do the Esquimaux come?—Along the shore of Hudson's Bay; they come to Churchill, in latitude 59°.

689. Do they come down as far south as the Great Slave Lake?—They do not go inland at all; the furthest inland that they go is up the Back River, that we know of now.

690. They always keep to the rivers or the sea?—Yes, it is generally found so.

691. Is there in the interval a large tract of land between the North American Indians and the Esquimaux?—Certainly; a sort of debatable land; and between each tribe of the Esquimaux themselves there is a debatable land; for instance, the tribe of Esquimaux about the Copper Mine River do not seem to me to associate or mix with those to the West or East; when any one has gone there, they have found that they have no tools, either Russian or Hudson's Bay, among them; nothing that could be traced either to the Russians or to the Hudson's Bay Company.

692. The Esquimaux, I presume, from what you say, are different tribes, but not different races?—Not different races, I think.

693. What is the extent of the debatable land between the Indians and the Esquimaux?—It varies according to the circumstances; the Chipewyans and the Esquimaux frequently meet at Churchill; then the Louchoux and the Esquimaux meet again on the Mackenzie, but on the Coppermine River the interval between them is about 60 or 100 miles.

694. Mr. Grogan.] How long at any time did you reside at the Red River Settlement?—About two months at one time; that was the longest period I was there.

695. Do you know the regulations of the American companies with regard to hunting; do they give a larger price relatively to their value for the inferior skins, as the Hudson's Bay Company does?—They sell their goods nearly at the same price as the Hudson's Bay Company, only the goods are inferior; Indians, frequently from the American side, come over to the Hudson's Bay Company to get good guns or a good article, and they get them as cheaply as in the States; that I have heard from hunters who have been among the Americans. Another point I may mention, namely, the proportion of spirits which is acquired on the American frontier; when I travelled down from the Red River to Crow Wing to the Minnesota territory, nearly every American Indian that I found travelling, had bottles of spirits with him.

J. Bos, Esq., M. P.

23 February 1857.

696. Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.] That country which you travelled through from Red River down to Crow Wing was a so-called settled country, was it not?—No.

697. It formed what is called in the States, Indian territory?—Perfectly so, as much as in any of the Hudson's Bay Company's territory, where I passed through; we came to little posts between Pembina and Crow Wing.

698. I mean within the boundary of the Minnesota territory?—Yes.

699. Consequently these people who traded in this liquor were not the licensed Indian traders, men who had paid money to obtain a license to trade with the Indians, but they were the free settlers?—Yes, I think free settlers.

700. Over whom no company had any power whatever; an American trading company has no power over the free settler of Minnesota:—The Government have; they made it a rule that no spirits should be sold to the Indians on or near the frontier; that was what I understood; whereas there they had abundance; it was against the rules of the Government for them to get it, but the Government could not prevent it.

701. Chairman.] Do you imagine that the American Fur Trading Company does put any effectual check upon the sale of spirits to the Indians in their country?—I cannot tell, because I have never been among them.

Jovis, 26th die Februarii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Addlesley.	Mr. Grogan.
Mr. Bell.	Mr. Gorrey.
Mr. Blackburn.	Mr. Percy Herbert.
Mr. Edward Ellice.	Mr. Kinnaird.
Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.	Mr. Labouchere.
Mr. Gladstone.	Mr. Lowe.
Mr. Gordon.	Mr. Roebuck.
Mr. Gregson.	Vacant Sandon.

THE RIGHT HON. HENRY LABOUCHERE, IN THE CHAIR.

Sir George Simpson, called in; and Examined.

Sir G. Simpson.

26 February 1857.

702. Chairman.] I BELIEVE you hold an important situation in the administration of the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company?—I do.

703. What is it?—I have been Governor of their territories for many years.

704. How long have you held that situation?—Thirty-seven years I have been their principal representative.

705. Mr. Edward Ellice.] As governor the whole time?—Yes; I have held the situation of governor the whole time.

706. Chairman.] What is the nature of your authority in that capacity?—The supervision of the Company's affairs; the presiding at their councils in the country, and the principal direction of the whole interior management.

707. Where do you generally reside?—I have resided for several years at the Red River Settlement; I have resided in Oregon; I have resided in Athabasca, and latterly I have resided in Canada.

708. Is there any fixed seat of government within the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company?—There is no fixed seat of government, but there is a seat of council for the northern and the southern departments; one at Norway-house, at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg, and the other at Michipicoton, or Moose Factory, for the southern department.

709. Your authority extends, I imagine, as well over Rupert's Land as over the territory which the Company holds by license?—Over the whole of the Company's affairs in North America.

710. What

710. What is the nature of the council which you have mentioned?—The principal officers of the Company, the chief factors, are members of council. If there is not a sufficient number of chief factors the number is made up by chief traders, who are the second class of partners, and all matters connected with the trade are discussed and determined at this council.

711. What is the nature of the authority of the council as distinguished from your own; are they merely advisers?—They are advisers, and they give their opinions and vote upon any question that may be under discussion.

712. Does the ultimate authority and decision reside in you solely, or is it with you in conjunction with the council?—With me in conjunction with the council.

713. Do you mean that they could outvote you and prevent your doing anything which you thought proper?—They could outvote me, but it has never been so; in the absence of the council my authority is supreme; in travelling through the country, or giving any direction connected with the management of the business, my authority must be acted upon until it be annulled or disallowed by the council or the Company.

714. Of course, having administered the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company during so long a period, you are well acquainted with every part of their territories?—I have travelled through the greater part of the country; I have not visited what are usually known as the Barren Grounds.

715. You are well acquainted with the western portion, as well as the eastern?—Yes; I have not been in Mackenzie's River, but I have been in nearly all the other parts of the country; my usual route in going up the country is from Montreal by Rainy Lake and Lake Winnipeg to Red River; I have crossed the Rocky Mountains at three different points to Oregon.

716. Will you have the goodness to give to the Committee an account of your impressions of the character of the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company in point of soil and climate, particularly with reference to its adaptation for the purposes of cultivation and colonisation?—I do not think that any part of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories is well adapted for settlement; the crops are very uncertain.

717. Do you mean that observation to apply only to Rupert's Land or to the entire of the territory now administered by the Hudson's Bay Company?—I mean it to apply to Rupert's Land.

718. How would you describe the limits of Rupert's Land to the west?—The Rocky Mountains to the west.

719. Would you apply that observation to the district of the Red River?—Yes.

720. And the country immediately behind it?—Yes.

721. Is it not actually settled?—I do not consider it well adapted for settlement.

722. Why so?—On account of the poverty of the soil, except on the banks of the river. The banks of the river are alluvial, and produce very fair crops of wheat; but these crops are frequently destroyed by early frosts; there is no certainty of the crops. We have been under the necessity of importing grain within these last ten years from the United States and from Canada, for the support of the establishment.

723. Have you an equally unfavourable opinion of the country on the Saskatchewan River?—Yes; the climate is more rigorous, and the crops are even less certain on that river; the scarcity of timber also is a great bar; there is little or no wood in the country. The present population of Red River have great difficulty in providing wood for their immediate wants.

724. Is there any part of the territory of Rupert's Land towards Lake Superior that you think adapted for cultivation?—Immediately upon the right bank of the Rainy Lake River cultivation might be carried on to advantage; but there is merely a slip of land adapted for cultivation; immediately behind are deep morasses which never thaw.

725. Mr. Gladstone.] Is that right bank of the Rainy Lake River in the Hudson's Bay territory?—Yes.

726. Mr. Edward Ellice.] Do you mean by "never thaw" that in the summer, when the surface is thawed, if a person was to walk through that morass his foot would get to the ice below?—No, not immediately so; but by digging deeper you would come to ice.

Sir G. Simpson.
26 February 1857.

727. *Chairman.*] You have stated that in Rupert's Land you do not think there is any extent of territory of any consequence which would, for some time at all events, be adapted for colonisation and settlement?—Which would be favourable for colonisation or settlement; it is possible.

728. Do you apply the same observation to the land to the westward of the Rocky Mountains?—In the British territory I do, north of parallel 49°; it is a rugged, precipitous, mountainous country.

729. Is the whole of it of that character?—Principally of that character.

730. Do you know Vancouver's Island?—I have passed Vancouver's Island previously to its being British territory; I cannot speak to it.

731. Do you consider Vancouver's Island as being within the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company?—No.

732. You do not mean your observations to apply to that?—No, not to Vancouver's Island.

733. Are you acquainted with the coast near Vancouver's Island and above it?—Yes, I have gone along the coast from Puget's Sound to the Russian principal establishment at Sitka.

734. Do you believe that coast to be altogether unfavourable for the purposes of colonisation?—I believe it to be quite unfit for colonisation.

735. Do you know Queen Charlotte's Island?—I have not been on Queen Charlotte's Island.

736. *Mr. Edward Ellice.*] You confine your observation to the main land?—Yes.

737. *Mr. Gladstone.*] I think you have spoken of Rupert's Land as including, from west to east, the whole country, beginning from the Rocky Mountains and moving eastwards?—Yes, to the shores of the Bay.

738. Do you understand that to have been the original signification of the term Rupert's Land, dating from the period of the charter?—Yes, that it includes the land on all waters falling into Hudson's Bay; they form the boundaries of the territory.

739. There is a reference in the charter to the fall of the water, is there?—I cannot call that positively to mind; that is the impression upon my mind, and I believe it is the general impression.

740. It is difficult, I suppose, for you to state what you would take as the northern boundary?—The northern boundary of Rupert's Land I call the Methy Portage and Lake, dividing the waters that fall into the Bay from those that fall into the Arctic Sea; there is a height of land at the Methy Portage.

741. Taking the Methy Portage as the northern boundary for that longitude, as you come eastwards the territory trends very much to the north?—Yes.

742. And goes up to the Melville Peninsula, which seems to be about the northernmost part?—Yes.

743. Speaking of the whole of that country, as included in Rupert's Land, would you draw any material distinction between the climate of one part and the climate of another?—Yes; the climate of the southern part of the country is not so rigorous as that of the northern; the winters are not so long.

744. What would you say was the length of the winter in the most favourably situated parts of the territory?—Five and a half months, I should say, at Red River, which is the most favourable part of the country.

745. Is there any part of the coast of Hudson's Bay, or James's Bay, which partakes of a comparatively good climate?—Certainly not.

746. Is the softening influence of the sea not much felt in any portion of it?—Not much; at York Factory, within about 18 inches or two feet of the surface, we come to ice.

747. *Mr. Edward Ellice.*] At all times of the year?—At all times of the year.

748. *Mr. Gladstone.*] Would that observation apply to James's Bay, even down to the southernmost point, viz., Moose Fort?—I should say the climate is not much more favourable; barley very seldom ripens there, and the potatoes are exceedingly small, and the crops unproductive.

749. Irrespective of the question of north and south, is not there a good deal

deal of difference in the climate, according as it lies eastward or westward?—
Yes.

Sir G. Simpson.

750. Does the climate improve westward?—It rather improves westward; as you go from the coast westward the climate improves. 26 February 1857.

751. Did you ever hear the saying in America that a degree west was equal to a degree south?—No, I never heard it.

752. Take the Saskatchewan country, upon the banks; is there no alluvial soil on the River Saskatchewan?—There is alluvial soil, but the season is not so long, and the frosts are earlier than at Red River.

753. Have you travelled up the Saskatchewan yourself?—Repeatedly; we have very seldom been able to raise wheat in the Saskatchewan.

754. Have you travelled up different branches of it?—I have.

755. What length of winter would you give to the banks of the Saskatchewan?—About a fortnight or three weeks longer than at Red River.

756. Would it be six months?—Yes.

757. In the account which you have given of the climate of that country, take, for instance, the climate of the banks of the Saskatchewan, you have made no allowance for the influences upon climate which are produced by settlement?—No; I am not aware that settlement does produce any material influence upon climate; I have not known it do so in Canada; I have been in the Canadas for a great many years, and I do not find the climate improved; I think the last two winters have been the two most rigorous winters I have experienced in Canada.

758. I suppose it is not to be doubted that when a large district of country becomes populous, there is then an influence upon climate?—I have not seen it; from my experience it is not so; I think the climate of Canada is as severe as it has been at any time during the 37 years for which I have known the country.

759. And that is true even with respect to the most settled and the most densely peopled parts of the country?—Yes.

760. Taking the case of the country to the west of the Rocky Mountains, I understand you to have described Vancouver's Island as upon the whole favourably circumstanced with respect to climate?—I do not speak to Vancouver's Island; I have never been there, except touching the northern part of the island in a steamer; the weather was unfavourable and I could not examine the island.

761. Taking the coast opposite to Vancouver's Island, is it less favourably situated than Vancouver's Island?—It is so; it is rugged; it is only the southern end of Vancouver's Island that is favourable for settlement; the northern part is exceedingly rugged, of the same character as the opposite mainland coast.

762. Take the coast opposite the southern end of Vancouver's Island; it has a south-western aspect, has it not?—The southern part of the mainland has.

763. Is that as favourably circumstanced as Vancouver's Island itself?—I think not; it is not so favourable as the southern part of Vancouver's Island.

764. What is it that makes the portion of the mainland opposite the southern part of Vancouver's Island less favourable for settlement than the island itself?—That portion in British territory is exceedingly rugged and mountainous, craggy, and there is a want of soil.

765. Is the mainland side of the channel there rugged, and the island side of the channel open and favourable, or are both sides rugged?—The island is less rugged than the mainland at the northern end of the island.

766. I am now speaking of the southern end of the island and of the landward side of it?—The American side of the channel is the same character of country.

767. Rugged?—No, open.

768. What is the character of the mainland opposite that open country on the landward side of the southern end of the island?—The same character; open.

769. Mr. Edward Ellice.] That is not British territory?—No; that is American territory; that is south of 49°.

770. Mr. Gladstone.] Take it north of 49°, between Fraser River and the water?—North of 49°, north of Fraser River, the country is exceedingly rugged.

Sir G. Simpson.

26 February 1857.

771. I know that your own experience and authority are very great; but do you think that the opinion which you have given of the climate of this territory is the general opinion?—I think so; at least it is my opinion, and I believe it is the general opinion.

772. Mr. Gordon.] If I understand you rightly, you think that no portion of Rupert's Land is favourable for settlement, but that some portions might be settled?—Yes.

773. In your very interesting work of a "Journey Round the World," I find at page 45 of the first volume this description of the country between the Lake of the Woods and the Rainy Lake: "From Fort Frances downwards, a stretch of nearly 100 miles, it is not interrupted by a single impediment, while yet the current is not strong enough materially to retard an ascending traveller. Nor are the banks less favourable to agriculture than the waters themselves to navigation, resembling, in some measure, those of the Thames near Richmond. From the very brink of the river there rises a gentle slope of greensward, crowned in many places with a plentiful growth of birch, poplar, beech, elm, and oak. Is it too much for the eye of philanthropy to discern through the vista of futurity this noble stream, connecting, as it does, the fertile shores of two spacious lakes, with crowded steamboats on its bosom and populous towns on its borders?" I suppose you consider that district favourable for population?—The right bank of the river is favourable, with good cultivation; that is to say, the soil is favourable; the climate is not; the back country is a deep morass, and never can be drained, in my opinion.

774. Do you see any reason to alter the opinion which you have there expressed?—I do see that I have overrated the importance of the country as a country for settlement.

775. Chairman.] It is too glowing a description, you think?—Exactly so; it is exceedingly beautiful; the bank is beautifully wooded, and the stream is very beautiful.

776. Mr. Gladstone.] What is the character of the Saskatchewan, or of any of the principal branches of it as a stream, with regard to navigation?—There are several long rapids in the Saskatchewan, at various points. I think a steamboat might, with the exception of those rapids, or by cutting canals round those rapids, ascend to Edmonton.

777. That is on the northern Saskatchewan?—It is.

778. What would you say of the southern Saskatchewan?—On the southern Saskatchewan there are fewer rapids.

779. Are there long reaches which are wholly without rapids?—Yes.

780. With a depth ample for navigation?—There are chains of rapids below the junction of the two rivers.

781. At Nepeeween?—Yes; there are two very long chains of rapids; 10 miles at one place, and seven or eight miles at another.

782. Are there any long stretches of water of navigable depth, without rapids, upon the branches of the Saskatchewan?—Yes.

783. What is the longest stretch that you can remember?—Perhaps 50 or 60 miles.

784. Mr. Grogan.] Is it to be understood, then, that except for those rapids the northern branch would be navigable for steamers, as you describe, up to Edmonton?—Yes; at the junction with Lake Winnipeg there is a very long rapid called the Grand Rapid.

785. What may be the length of it?—From two to three miles.

786. Those three rapids which you have pointed out would be the three obstacles to the navigation?—There are several other smaller rapids; there are a great many rapids, but those are the principal rapids.

787. Those are the rapids which you think would require expense to obviate them?—Yes.

788. Supposing that that expense should be incurred, and a canal, as you have suggested, should be formed, would any difficulties of a serious character, sufficient to impede navigation, exist between Lake Winnipeg and Edmonton?—In the spring of the year the water of the whole river is exceedingly low; I have come down in a perfectly light boat, and we have been frequently under the necessity of getting out of the boat to land it over shoal water.

789. Before the snow has melted?—Before the mountain snow has come down,

down, namely, from about the 10th to the 15th of May; then about the 1st of June the mountain snows melt, and there is a freshet in the river.

790. From the 1st of June to what time would the navigation of the river continue good?—Until the month of September tolerably good; the water falling off about the middle of July.

791. On the southern branch of the Saskatchewan to what extent would it be navigable, supposing those improvements were effected?—I cannot speak so distinctly with regard to the southern branch; I have merely seen it in parts; I have not gone up the southern branch to any great distance. There is no timber on the southern branch, and there is very little timber on the northern branch.

792. There have been no attempts, I suppose, to effect those improvements?—None at all; there is no commerce to justify any outlay.

793. What is the distance from the southern part of Lake Winnipeg to Fort William on Lake Superior?—About 500 miles, I think; from Lake Superior to Lake Winnipeg is about 500 miles of bad canoe navigation with 66 portages, varying in length from 100 yards to 3½ miles.

794. Do you know a gentleman of the name of Captain Kennedy who made a speech at a meeting of the Toronto Board of Trade?—I do.

795. He states there that the distance would not exceed 200 miles?—Yes; he does not know the country; he never was in the country.

796. What may be the state of the river going through Rainy Lake and from the Lake of the Woods down to Fort William; is it navigable for boats, or rafts, or anything?—Between the Rainy Lake and Fort William it is navigable only by canoes; I have passed through that country about forty times; it is passed only by canoes, and in many places with very great difficulty.

797. Is that from want of water?—From want of water and shoals in the navigation, and the wretched character of the country altogether; many of the rivers are embarrassed with timber constantly falling every year; there is one river which is one continuous mass of timber, requiring to be removed every season.

798. Mr. *Edward Ellice*.] Is that what is called the Savanne portage?—Yes; that is a river from the Savanne portage to Mille Lac.

799. Mr. *Grogan*.] Do you consider that obstruction so material as to impede the navigation of that river?—Yes.

800. Could not it be removed?—It could not; in the autumn of the year, or rather in the month of August, I have been obliged to get out of a light canoe and wade in the water, hauling the canoe along this river.

801. Has any attempt ever been made to remove those obstructions?—The obstructions are removed every season, so as to enable the canoes to pass.

802. You mentioned, with regard to the Red River Settlement, that the climate was so unfavourable for the growth of corn, and that there was so much uncertainty as to the ripening of the corn, that at times you were obliged to import corn for the supply of the residents there?—We imported corn some years ago; there was a failure of the crops; I was apprehensive of famine, and imported flour from St. Paul's, in the Minnesota territory, and from Canada.

803. Is that an exceptional case, or does it occur every year?—It does not occur every year; it is an exceptional case; but the crops very frequently fail. We have been obliged to send for seed grain; we have not had sufficient grain to sow the ground in the following season.

804. Can you say, during the 37 years that you have been Governor, how often you have been under the necessity of importing corn for the supply of the people at the Red River Settlement?—We had never imported any large quantity of grain for the support of the people until that season, in the year 1847, I think; but the crops have been entirely destroyed, from the country having been overflowed with water. The country was entirely overflowed with water in the year 1826; the habitations were swept away, and the people were obliged to remove to high grounds for the purpose of saving themselves.

805. Am I to understand that the occasion to which you refer was an entirely exceptional one, and owing to the flooding of the water?—It did not arise on that occasion from the flooding of the water, but from an apprehended scarcity owing to the presence of troops. In 1826 the country was flooded and the

Sir G. Simpson.
26 February 1857.

crops were destroyed. Several years previously to that the crops were destroyed three years in succession by locusts; myriads of locusts ate up every particle of grass.

806. In what year was that?—In the years 1818, 1819, and 1820.

807. You have mentioned one instance in which corn was imported in some quantities, you say not considerable?—Flour was imported.

808. For the supply of the inhabitants at the Red River Settlement?—Yes.

809. Is that the only instance?—That is the only instance where we have imported; it was especially for the garrison. We had a wing of a regiment there, and were apprehensive that the crops would be insufficient for their maintenance.

810. In other years has there been a sufficiency of corn grown in that district in general for the supply of the locality?—Certainly not; two-thirds or fully half of the population live by hunting and fishing.

811. Are the settlers there encouraged in regard to hunting and fishing pursuits generally, to follow those pursuits rather than agriculture?—No; we are very anxious that they should follow their agricultural pursuits.

812. Does the Company purchase their flour?—Yes.

813. The Company purchase flour at the Red River Settlement, from the farmers in the neighbourhood?—We purchase all their surplus agricultural produce.

814. Do you mean that the farmers have no more to sell than what you purchase, or do you only purchase what you want?—They have no more to sell: they have only 8,000 acres of land under cultivation at the present time, although the country has been settled upwards of 40 years.

815. I suppose it was during the time that you were Governor that a certain Mr. John McLean, who has published "Notes of a Twenty-five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Service," was a servant of the Company?—Yes, he was so a part of the time.

816. I will read you an extract as taken from his book, and you can say how far it is correct. "A single Scotch farmer," says Mr. McLean, "could be found in the colony able alone to supply the greater part of the produce the Company require; there is one in fact who offered to do it; if a sure market were secured to the colonists of Red River they would speedily become the wealthiest yeomanry in the world; their barns and granaries are always full to overflowing; the Company purchase from six to eight bushels of wheat from each farmer, at the rate of 3s. per bushel, and the sum total of their yearly purchases from the whole settlement amounts to 600 cwt. flour, first and second qualities; 33 bushels rough barley; 10 half firkins butter, 28 lbs. each; 10 bushels Indian corn; 200 cwt. best kiln-dried flour; 60 firkins butter, 56 lbs. each; 240 lbs. cheese; 60 hams. Where he (the Red River farmer) finds a sure market for the remainder of his produce, Heaven only knows, I do not; this much, however, I do know, that the incomparable advantages this delightful country possesses are not only in a great measure lost to the inhabitants, but also the world, so long as it remains under the dominion of its fur-trading rulers." Do you agree in the comment of Mr. McLean there?—Certainly not.

817. In point of fact, do the Company purchase from the farmers settled in the neighbourhood of the Red River Settlement, all the corn the farmers are able to sell?—We are not able to get the quantity of corn to be held in dépôt that we require. I have written over and over again to the person in charge, to get all the grain he could for the purpose of being held in dépôt, and we can never get our quantity.

818. Mr. Gordon.] Will you allow me to remind you of one other sentence in your interesting work. It is at page 55 of volume 1: "The soil of Red River Settlement is a black mould of considerable depth, which, when first tilled, produces extraordinary crops, as much, on some occasions, as 40 returns of wheat; and even after 20 successive years of cultivation, without the relief of manure or of fallow, or of green crop, it still yields from 15 to 25 bushels an acre. The wheat produced is plump and heavy; there are also large quantities of grain of all kinds, besides beef, mutton, pork, butter, cheese, and wool in abundance." Do you adhere to that statement?—I do.

819. And yet you think it unfavourable for cultivation?—Yes. I there referred to merely a few small alluvial points occupied by the Scotch farmers.

820. Mr.

820. Mr. *Adderley*.] What is the nature of the wood growing in the woody district?—There has been elm at Red River. It is now quite denuded of wood about the Red River Settlement by fire.

821. I refer to the higher part about James's Bay; what is the nature of the wood there?—Small stunted pines.

822. What is the highest latitude at which fine timber grows?—I cannot tell precisely; there is very little timber on the shores of the Bay to the north, 100 miles north of Churchill. On the eastern side of the Bay there is very little timber north of Big River, or Fort George on James's Bay.

823. When you get to those fine elm forests, is it not very fine timber?—That is in the prairie country. There was some very good timber about Red River at one time.

824. Is the natural wild growth of the prairie country good?—In some parts.

825. Is it very luxuriant?—In some parts; in other parts the soil is exceedingly thin, and there is very little herbage.

826. What should prevent cultivated produce growing equally luxuriantly on the same spot?—Immediately behind Red River, about a mile from the banks of the river, there is merely a thin skin of soil.

827. Is there any luxuriant herbage, either grass, herbs, or fruit of any kind, at a greater distance from the river than you have mentioned?—I think not, except in detached spots. There has never been any cultivation a mile from the river.

828. Would not many of the impediments which you have alluded to be got rid of by art and cultivation?—Certainly not.

829. It is impossible?—It is impossible; I have paddled over the roofs of some of the houses in my canoe.

830. Do you say that you never knew any wild country in which the climate was softened by drainage?—I have heard of the climate of countries being improved by drainage, and settlement and cultivation, but I have not experienced it myself.

831. Are you aware that Europe was once as much frozen as Rupert's Land now is?—I am not aware that it was; I have heard of some historical facts.

832. Can you state the present population of Red River, and the increase in the last 10 years?—The population of Red River is about 8,000.

833. In what time has it doubled?—The settlement has been established 40 years.

834. We had a statement from a former witness that, 10 years ago, the population was 5,000; can you state whether that is correct?—It may have been; the population is now about 8,000. It is not from natural increase, but from the migration of some Indians from other parts of the country.

835. Is there not always emigration in the shape of a squatting population from the United States?—Not from the United States.

836. Where from?—The neighbouring districts; Indian migration.

837. Should you say that there was much difference between the climate of Minnesota and that of the Red River?—Decidedly, the further south you go the better the climate is.

838. And do you state that there is no overflow of population from Minnesota to Red River?—I am not aware of any; I believe two or three Americans have gone from St. Paul's, who have seated themselves down as small dealers and opened shops.

839. Is there any barrier to their doing so from the nature of the Red River Settlement regulation?—None.

840. Mr. *Kinnaird*.] Are there not westward from the Red River colony several hundred miles of level country towards the Rocky Mountains?—Yes, a very fine country.

841. And, comparatively speaking, a railway might easily be made along there?—Yes, from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains.

842. How far are the large rivers from the settlement of York navigable up the interior?—They are navigable by boats from York Factory to Lake Winnipeg; boats carrying about three tons.

843. Without much portage?—There are a great many portages; there are from 40 to 45 portages, I think.

844. Could they easily be removed?—No.

Mr. G. Simpson.
26 February 1857.

845. Mr. *Edmond Elliot*.] I think that at those portages every thing is literally carried on men's backs?—Yes.

846. Mr. *Kinnaird*.] Did you not, after that interesting extract from your book, recommend to the Company the establishment of a settlement somewhere between the Lake of the Woods and the Rainy Lake?—No; I suggested that a missionary establishment might be formed there.

847. Which would attract settlement?—Merely for the improvement of the Indian population.

848. You recommended it as a place adapted for a missionary station, which, in other words, would be adapted for a settlement?—A missionary settlement would live by fishing in a great degree; they could not only raise produce but fish, and give their time and attention to hunting during the winter.

849. Are you not aware that the whole of the manure which is made in the Red River Settlement is wasted, because it is not required for the improvement of the land, it being so fertile?—Some improvident, careless people, who know very little about cultivation, rather than take the trouble of collecting their manure, throw it over the side.

850. I believe it is not required?—In some parts it is required; in the low alluvial points it is not required; the low alluvial points which are improved year by year, or every second or third year, from the overflowing of the river, require no manure.

851. Mr. *Bell*.] What communication is there on the shores of the Saskatchewan towards Edmonton; what is the nature of the country?—The country is level; it is a rolling prairie.

852. It is a practicable country?—Yes; I have travelled on horseback through the whole of that prairie country. I have travelled from the Red River to the Columbia on horseback.

853. Mr. *Gurney*.] I understand you to have spoken of the right bank of the river of the Rainy Lake; by the right bank, do you mean the southern bank or the northern bank?—Going down the stream; the north-eastern bank.

854. Going down the stream would be rather the southern bank?—No, north-east; the opposite side is south-west, the American bank.

855. Does not that bank belong to the United States?—No, the right bank of the Rainy Lake River is British territory; the river divides the territory; the right bank, going down the stream from the Rainy Lake to the Lake of the Woods, is British territory.

856. The opposite bank is American?—Yes.

857. Then the right bank is what would rather be the northern bank on this map?—The north-eastern.

858. Opposite the southern part of Vancouver's Island there is a place on the maps marked Fort Langley?—That is at the mouth of Fraser River.

859. I believe you mentioned that there was no very good land between Fraser River and the coast; but how is the land immediately inland from Fort Langley, between Fraser River and the American boundary?—The boundary is Fraser River, or very nearly so.

860. Mr. *Charles Fitzwilliam*.] Does not Fraser River run north and south?—I think the boundary is very near Fraser River, at the mouth of Fraser River.

861. Mr. *Gurney*.] My object was rather to inquire whether Fort Langley was in any way the centre of a small district of good land?—No, it is near the southern boundary of the British territory.

862. What is the character of that district?—All the way down Fraser River to within about 50 miles of Fort Langley, it is an exceedingly rapid river.

863. What is the nature of the land eastward from Fort Langley, inland?—A short distance to the eastward is level; there is a mountainous country higher up the stream.

864. Therefore there is a space of level land immediately inland from Fort Langley?—Yes.

865. Is the mouth of the Fraser River at all available as a port or outlet?—No; there is a bar at the mouth of the river; vessels with a small draught of water would take the ground.

866. That bar could not be easily removed?—It would fill up again immediately.

867. Mr.

867. Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.] Do you know what the water on the bar is? —I think about eight or nine feet. —Sir G. Simpson.

868. Mr. Love.] Which do you consider the best way to the Red River Settlement from Europe?—Through the United States, by Minnesota. 26 February 1857.

869. By St. Paul's?—By St. Paul's.

870. From Canada, which do you consider the best way?—By Lake Superior, Fort William and Rainy Lake, into Lake Winnipeg, and then on the southern side of Lake Winnipeg.

871. Is that the way you went yourself?—Forty times I passed over that ground.

872. Mr. Bell.] Is there any other practicable route from Canada to the Red River?—No other.

873. North of Lake Superior inland?—There is no other practicable route.

874. What has induced you to change your opinion since you wrote that passage in your journey with regard to the nature of the climate and the soil, and its applicability for cultivation, because I observe that you had been 20 years in the country when you wrote that passage?—I had never given particular attention to the climate of the country, nor to the fact of the country being one continued morass behind, until after my narrative was written: the Company have a farm at the outlet of the Rainy Lake at the commencement of the river, and our crops very frequently fail.

875. Mr. Edward Ellice.] At Red River Settlement, owing to the great uncertainty of the crops, do not the Company keep two years' consumption of grain on hand in case of accident?—Yes, that has been our object; we never can get up a stock of grain.

876. With regard to those floods which you have spoken of, are you not aware that they have happened repeatedly on former occasions?—Yes; there was a flood upon one occasion, a few years previous to 1820, on my first visiting the country. In 1826 the whole country was one continued sea.

877. And in 1848, I think?—Yes, about 1850 or 1851 there was another flood.

878. To give the Committee an idea of those floods, what did the breadth of the river increase to?—There was no river; it was a continued sea for hundreds and hundreds of square miles.

879. With regard to the farming at Red River, do you consider it the interest of the Company to promote agriculture there?—It is very desirable, for the purpose of furnishing ourselves with the means of living.

880. Have the Company been in the habit of giving encouragement to agriculture at Red River?—We have promoted agriculture by every means in our power.

881. Have the Company established model farms?—We did establish a model farm.

882. Have the Company taken out stock on purpose to promote and improve the breeds?—Yes; the most improved breeds of cattle and horses and sheep.

883. You told us about the character of the territory in Rupert's Land and in Oregon, but you have said nothing of the character of the land in the part of Canada occupied by your posts, and more especially the part between Sault St. Mary and Fort William; what is the character of the country on the north side of Lake Superior between those points?—It is a very craggy, barren, rugged country; a surface of rock.

884. Viscount Sessé.] You are well acquainted, I imagine, with the Assiniboine branch of the Red River?—Yes.

885. Will you state to the Committee how far it is navigable?—There are shoals and rapids at the very commencement of the stream.

886. For what distance?—From the Forks where it unites with the Red River, I think about three miles, there is the first rapid; and 20 or 30 miles higher up a further rapid, and above that there are very frequent rapids.

887. So that it is in fact unfitted for navigation?—Quite so.

888. What is the character of the land along the banks of that river?—The land is pretty good immediately along the banks.

889. I think the land is cultivable nearly to the sources of the Assiniboine river; immediately upon the banks.

890. That is for a distance of about 150 miles?—Yes.

Sir G. Simpson.

26 February 1857.

891. A former witness has stated that the Americans are extending their settlements very rapidly towards the Red River, and that numbers have crossed the boundary; do you imagine that fact to be correct?—I am not aware of any American settlers having crossed the boundary.

892. Would you have the means of knowing?—Yes, decidedly; I think the nearest settlement of the Americans is at the Crow Wing River, one of the branches of the Mississippi.

893. *Chairman.*] How far is that off?—I think perhaps 350 to 400 miles.

894. *Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.*] Does the Crow Wing run below St. Peter's River or above it?—It falls into the Mississippi above St. Peter's; above the falls of St. Anthony; the Crow Wing River is above St. Paul's.

895. *Mr. Gladstone.*] Is St. Paul's near the junction of the St. Peter's with the Mississippi?—Yes.

896. Where is the Crow Wing?—The Crow Wing is about 100 miles nearer Red River, I think; it is not marked on this map.

897. *Mr. Kinross.*] Is there not a settlement at Pembina?—Yes. I call the settlement of Pembina an offshoot from Red River; it is principally inhabited by half-breeds from the settlement of Red River.

898. It is in the United States territory?—It is on the frontier.

899. Therefore, in fact, there is an American settlement nearer than you have stated?—No; I think they are settled within the British territory. I am not aware that they are outside the line.

900. Does not Fort Pembina belong to the Americans?—There is no fort at Pembina. Fort Pembina is an old trading establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company.

901. *Mr. Grogan.*] But does Fort Pembina belong to the Hudson's Bay Company or to the Americans?—Fort Pembina did belong to us.

902. To whom does it belong now?—There is no Fort Pembina now.

903. I mean the settlement, or the station, or whatever you please to call it?—I think the settlers are upon both sides of the line.

904. *Viscount Sarsfield.*] You imagine that the nearest American settlement is on the Crow Wing River?—I consider that an American settlement because there is an American population. I consider it the nearest American settlement.

905. If it was proved that there were American settlers coming in considerable numbers to the British boundary you would think that a considerable argument in favour of the goodness of that territory, would you not?—I do not think they would go to the Red River from the United States or anywhere else for the purpose of settlement.

906. I only asked you whether, supposing that was proved, you would not regard it as a considerable argument in favour of the character of the territory?—Yes; but I should not agree in that fact.

907. *Mr. Blackburn.*] Provided that they settled for the purpose of agriculture?—Yes; but I am satisfied that they will not do so.

908. *Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.*] You say that the north shore of Lake Superior is barren and rocky?—It is, except at the outlets of the rivers; the general character is rugged and barren, and a surface of rock and water and swamp.

909. Is there any timber immediately on the shore of Lake Superior?—Very little; scarcely any; it is all burnt; it is a burnt wood country.

910. Burnt by what?—By fires having overrun the country; the greater part of the thick-wood country is overrun by fires.

911. Of what wood are those the remains; is it a fir wood?—It is a small description of fir.

912. What is the breadth of that belt of timber?—It extends from the shores of Lake Superior to the shores of Hudson's Bay.

913. Without any intermission?—Yes; except by lakes. I think there is a larger surface of water than of land in the whole of that thick-wood country.

914. When you get from Lake Superior, and travel north, do not you come to any country which is timbered with maple and oak; soft wood?—At the River Kaministiquia falling into Lake Superior at Fort William, for 20 miles, I think there is a good deal of maple, and perhaps a small quantity of oak; I have not noticed oak.

915. That

915. That wood grows on the valley of the Kamenistiquoin?—Yes; that is Sor, barely 20 miles. Sir G. Simpson.
916. I do not mean so far to the west as that; there is a place called the Pic?—Yes, it is a perfectly barren post; it is sand upon the beach and rock behind. 26 February 1827.
917. It is a mineral country, though, is it not?—Yes; all along the eastern shore of Lake Superior is a mineral country.
918. There is copper?—Copper.
919. And iron?—Yes.
920. And the vegetation is pine wood?—Yes.
921. When you go through a belt, say of two miles of that country from the shores of the lake, do you not then come to a maple and oak vegetation?—Certainly not. There may be patches here and there on the banks of the river of maple, but in a very small quantity.
922. The country rises from the bank of the shore of Lake Superior, does it not?—Yes; to the watershed.
923. You come into a country filled with small lakes and morasses?—Yes.
924. How are those lakes formed?—They have been lakes from the beginning of time, I believe. These basins are formed by large quantities of snow, and the morasses are very deep, and the season is not sufficiently long to dry them up.
925. Are there not some artificial reasons for that, as there are on the south shore of Lake Superior?—No; I am not aware of any.
926. Dams of different sorts?—No.
927. Then it is not of the same nature as the shore on the southern side of Lake Superior?—I am not aware that the waters are dammed on the southern shore.
928. With regard to Frazer River, you said that the country on the mainland was generally unfavourable for cultivation?—Yes.
929. But there are farms at Fort Langley, I think?—There is a farm at Fort Langley.
930. Mr. Edward Ellice.] To what extent; how many acres?—Perhaps about 20 acres.
931. Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.] But there is plenty of room for more?—Yes.
932. Chairman.] There is some extent of ground there fit for cultivation?—Yes, at Fort Langley.
933. What extent should you say?—Perhaps several hundred square miles.
934. What sort of cultivation; would it grow wheat?—It might grow wheat.
935. Is it as good as the southern portion of Vancouver's Island?—Not so good, I should think; it is a more moist climate.
936. It is not so good in point of climate?—I should think not.
937. Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.] Is not the drought at the southern end of Vancouver's Island, rather a drawback to cultivation in the summer time?—I am not able to speak to Vancouver's Island.
938. Is the country round Fort Langley of the same character as that between Nisqually and Frazer River?—No, it is a more thick-wood country; from Nisqually to very near Frazer River, is a prairie country, with patches of wood.
939. Or rather a woody country with patches of prairie?—Yes.
940. Is the country to the north of the British line like the country about Nisqually?—No; it is a thick-wood country.
941. Still, with small prairies?—No; I think the prairies are not so frequent.
942. Mr. Grogan.] You have described to us the countries as having been visited by very severe floods; was there any particular cause, such as an early spring, or the sudden melting of the mountain snows, which occasioned it?—Yes; there was severe weather until the season was far advanced, and the sun burst out with great power.
943. And this great extent of flood was the overflow of the rivers?—Yes.
944. To which of the rivers do you principally attribute the flooding?—It was all over, not only Red River, but the whole of the country.
945. Generally through the whole district?—Yes, the York River and Moose River; they were obliged to get their goods out of the stores and put them on stages, for the purpose of being saved from the flood.

Sir G. Simpson.

26 February 1857.

946. Then those particular floods were not local, in fact, in the neighbourhood of the Red River?—No.

947. They were general through the country?—Yes.

948. With regard to the Red River Settlement, was that settlement more damaged or more exposed to flood than any other part?—It was; it was more exposed and more injured, because there was a larger population.

949. The Red River discharges itself into Lake Winnipeg?—Yes.

950. Is there any obstruction to the river going into the lake?—No.

951. Or to the waters of the lake finding their way into the sea?—No. The lake was overflowed, which rendered it necessary to remove our establishments from the lower end of the lake.

952. Would the existence of those 47 portages which you described as on York River, up to Lake Winnipeg, in any way conduce to damming up the waters, and flooding the country?—Lake Winnipeg empties itself into Nelson River, a little way to the northward.

953. Are there any obstructions on that river which would tend to dam up the waters of Lake Winnipeg?—None at all.

954. Mr. Edward Ellice.] Is it not the general flat nature of the country which causes the flood?—Yes.

955. There is not declivity enough to carry off the water?—Just so.

956. Mr. Bell.] The same as in the neighbourhood of Lyons, in France?—Yes.

957. Mr. Gordon.] When did the last great flood occur?—In 1851.

958. Mr. Bell.] Do you know the neighbourhood of Fort Alexander?—I do.

959. What sort of country is it?—The back country is thick wood country; the timber is pine, and there is a great deal of swamp; it is a swampy country.

960. Mr. Gladstone.] With respect to the wheat at the Red River Settlement, at what period do they sow?—They sow in the early part of May, I think.

961. And when do they reap?—In August.

962. Is the harvest pretty good, or is it overtaken by the winter, without having sufficient sun to ripen the corn?—The crops are usually, or always, secured before the winter sets in.

963. From whence did the Hudson's Bay Company bring the corn and other provisions for its servants before the Red River Settlement was founded?—Very little grain was used in the country previously to that time. The provisions used in transport were pemican, a compound of buffalo meat and tallow; the buffalo meat dried upon staves, and ground down, and mixed up with the fat of the animal.

964. Then it was almost entirely animal food?—Animal food and fish.

965. Mr. Edward Ellice.] Is it not in a great measure so now?—Yes, in travelling to the northward.

966. Mr. Gladstone.] Was there no regular import of grain or other vegetable produce into the Hudson's Bay territory before the Red River Settlement was founded?—Merely for the use of the establishments upon the coast, and for the Indians near those establishments.

967. From whence was that grain brought?—From England.

968. By the Hudson's Bay Company?—Yes, through Hudson's Bay.

969. You do not consider that the Hudson's Bay route is the most economical or convenient route, in a commercial sense, for connecting the Hudson's Bay country with England, do you?—No great extent of traffic can be carried on through Hudson's Bay, inasmuch as the season is exceedingly short; the Bay is never free of ice.

970. How long is it open?—About two months.

971. With regard to the Saskatchewan River, are the banks of it tolerably timbered?—There is very little timber on the banks of the Saskatchewan.

972. Is there such a deficiency of timber both on the Upper and Lower Saskatchewan that that of itself would, in your view, constitute a serious impediment to settlement?—Decidedly; throughout the whole of that prairie country, from parallel 49° northwards, I think the want of fuel would be a great drawback to settlement.

973. Is not the Red River country pretty well timbered?—It was pretty well timbered, but people are now under the necessity of going further for timber; they go up the river and raft it down 40 or 50 or 60 miles.

974. Are