

"The most important stretches of navigation are from Red River to the mouth of the Saskatchewan, thence to Edmonton, and even some miles beyond. This stretch might be effected without break of bulk, or at least without taking the boat out of water. From a point on the Saskatchewan, say about Victoria or below, a portage road of about sixty miles should be, and I am told is being made, to the bend of the Athabasca; thence to the mouth of the Peace River the distance is about 350 miles; thence to Mountain Falls is about 220 miles. This stretch of 570 miles is of comparatively most gentle current and of ever-abundant brimming waters. The Mountain Falls necessitate a short portage. From them to the foot of the Rocky Mountains is a splendid stretch of 500 miles, comparatively easy river navigation, without a single break for boats of any size, row, sail or steam. Here a portage (not difficult) of ten miles occurs. But beyond that, and with a semi-lacustrine course, across and through the *very heart of the Rocky Mountains* to McLeod's Lake, and Fort on the *West* side, there is, unbroken and comparatively easy navigation for boats, about 200 miles further, and by the Finlay Branch, about the same distance to the Ominica Gold Mines, a region without one bad rapid.

"The McKenzie River, from Athabasca Lake to the Arctic, has a course of about 1,400 miles, in which, in pretty close succession, not far from the Lake, there are only four rapids. The rest of the stream, with a body of water but little less than our St. Lawrence, and in current like that between Montreal and Quebec, is a thousand miles and more of ship course.

"From Norway House to York Factory, I have passed in one of the ordinary five-ton boats, and which was hauled on skids over the portages. By this route, though an arduous one, everything, from a pin to artillery, used to be brought into the country. Of late years the Pembina route has somewhat relieved it."

I think I have now answered every point of enquiry put to me by your honourable Committee, except that as to the time I was in those Territories. On this head I have simply to say, that I was scarcely ten years old when I left the country for my education in Edinburgh, Scotland, but that I have a good memory of physical features as well as of incidents and mental impressions. That my kith and kin are scattered over the old home land, and that my correspondence with them and intimate friends there, as well as business relations in Hudson's Bay Co.'s affairs, have ever been throughout life, of the closest and most confidential kind; and my own hearth in Montreal, and elsewhere in Canada, has ever been the resort of these friends from the old birth-land, from every quarter of it, and of which it has ever been a habit of life with me to speak and write, and work for its development into national existence, and to that end I have ever earnestly lent my humble service. Of my country I can but speak truth. *To be known* is all it needs. Its own intrinsic merits will, I trust, under Providence, do the rest.

CAPTAIN WALKER'S EVIDENCE.

THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.

CAPTAIN WALKER, Inspector of the Mounted Police, North-West Territory, appeared before the Committee. He stated, in reply to questions,

I have been in the North-West Territory since June, 1874. I have travelled from Fort Francis to Bow River, within eighty miles of the Rocky Mountains. The valleys of the Red River, the Little Saskatchewan, and almost all the streams I have seen, are very fertile, and so is a large portion of the prairie land, which is in every way suited for cultivation. Some of the valleys are twenty miles wide. The most of the land not suitable for cultivation will make good grazing land. We never had much difficulty in obtaining water by digging some seven or eight feet; for instance on the road from Fort Ellis to Fort Pelly there was a section of about forty miles where it was thought water could not be obtained, but which we found by digging some