

INTRODUCTORY REPORT.

THE HON. ADAMS G. ARCHIBALD,
LIEUT.-GOVERNOR,
Manitoba.

SIR,

Before entering into the questions contained in the written instructions, under which I acted, and before attempting to state an opinion upon the existing situation of affairs in the Saskatchewan, I will briefly allude to the time occupied in travel, to the route followed, and to the general circumstances attending my journey.

Starting from Fort Garry on the 25th October, I reached Fort Ellice at junction of Qu'Appelle and Assiniboine Rivers on the 30th of the same month. On the following day I continued my journey towards Carlton, which place was reached on the 9th November, a detention of two days having occurred upon the banks of the South Saskatchewan River, the waters of which were only partially frozen. After a delay of five days in Carlton, the North Branch of the Saskatchewan was reported fit for the passage of horses, and on the morning of the 14th November I proceeded on my western journey towards Edmonton. By this time snow had fallen to the depth of about two inches over the country, which rendered it necessary to abandon the use of wheels for the transport of baggage, substituting a light sled in place of the cart which had hitherto been used, although I still retained the same mode of conveyance, namely the saddle, for personal use. Passing the Hudson Bay Company Posts of Battle River, Fort Pitt and Victoria, I reached Edmonton on the night of the 26th November. For the last 200 miles the country had become clear of snow, and the frost notwithstanding the high altitude of the region, had decreased in severity. Starting again on the afternoon of the 1st December I recrossed the Saskatchewan River below Edmonton and continued in a South-Westerly direction towards the Rocky Mountain House, passing through a country which even at that advanced period of the year, still retained many of its summer beauty. At mid-day on the 4th December had entered the gorges of the Three Medicine Hills, I came in sight of the mountains, which rose from the Western extremity of the range, and stretched their great snow-clad peaks to the Southern horizons.

Finding it impossible to procure guides for my return journey South to Montana, I left the Rocky Mountains on the 10th of December and commenced my return journey towards the mouth of the Saskatchewan. Snow had now fallen to a depth of several inches, and the cold had of late begun to show symptoms of its severity.