

A PLEA FOR AN INLAND ROUTE.

PRINCE ALBERT'S RIGHT TO A SHARE OF THE TRAVEL.

TWO STRONG ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF AN INEXPENSIVE WATER ROUTE—IT RUNS THROUGH ALL BRITISH TERRITORY AND WILL HELP SETTLEMENT IN THE PEACE RIVER DISTRICT.

Written for The Dry Goods Review by Mr. Alex. McNabb, Secretary Prince Albert Board of Trade.

IN SETTING forth the advantages of the water route to the Yukon gold mines via Prince Albert, Green Lake, the Athabasca and Mackenzie rivers, it must not be forgotten that one great element of superiority possessed by this line of travel, and which is shared by all routes having their starting point on the Saskatchewan, lies in the circumstance that the entire distance traversed is in British territory. This fact, the importance of which is obvious, cannot be too widely made known in the interest not only of the travelers themselves, who thus escape the harassing exactions of the Customs houses on the United States frontier, but of the Canadian people at large, and more especially of the mercantile community east of the Rocky Mountains, who, by the adoption of either of these routes will be the recipients of a considerable portion of trade profits which are now diverted into other channels.

The amount of business which has already been so diverted has attained such large proportions simply because immense numbers of people journeying to the Klondyke from the eastward, being unaware of the fact that the gold region could be reached by a safe, easy, and inexpensive water route commencing far east of the mountains, went in by the Alaska coast and the Chilcoot and other passes.

This renders it imperative that, in view of the great rush which may be expected next spring, the merchants of Montreal, Toronto,

and, in fact, all the great trading centres of eastern Canada should, in their own interest and for the general benefit of the country, leave no stone unturned to keep the Yukon traffic within the Canadian boundary, and to that end should unite in their endeavors to make known by all means in their power the existence and practical value of the river route through the Northwest Territories above indicated, but the iron must be struck while hot, and energetic measures at once initiated. Should this be done promptly the result will doubtless quickly be made apparent during the coming summer in the steady flow through Canada of the stream of Klondyke immigration, and the retention in this country of the large amount of trade which is now falling into the hands of Americans and others on the western side of the Rocky Mountains.

Another important feature to be taken into consideration, in estimating the general benefit which must accrue to all that portion of Canada east of the mountains by the adoption of the N.W. Territorial water route to the Klondyke, is the probable opening up for settlement of the vast tract of land known as the Peace River country.

It is by no means universally known that, in addition to the gold signs which are reported by surveyors and prospectors to exist in many places along the Peace river and its tributaries, a very large proportion of the adjacent country is well adapted for agriculture and ranching, and would probably long ago have been so exploited had there been any means at hand by which the produce could be disposed of.

If, as there seems every reason to predict, the mining industry continues to spread far and wide in the Yukon territory, and extends to the Liard and Peace rivers as well, a ready and most extensive market will be created for grain, cattle and every product that a farmer can supply, as, by following the great waterways which nature has provided, such produce can be readily freighted



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