



LAKE NEEPIGON. FROM A SKETCH BY W. ARMSTRONG.

that one of the most singular features in the geography of this beautiful lake is the immense quantity of islands which are scattered throughout its whole extent and presenting a great variety in size, form and elevation. It appears that geological discoveries of a highly interesting and important nature have been made, and that, contrary to common belief, a large extent of level land with deep and fertile soil exists in the Neepigon country. Professor Bell had received instructions, in addition to his geological explorations, to obtain as much information as possible in regard to a route to our great Western Territory, and his discoveries in this direction are, perhaps, not the least important of the results of the expedition. If we are not mistaken he has found that this country, so far from being a difficult one, offers great facilities for railway construction. Further, he has, we believe, ascertained that the elevation of Lake Neepigon above Lake Superior is very moderate, and consequently this lake may be found useful for the purpose of navigation in the desired direction. It will, of

course, require considerable time to elaborate for publication all the geological data obtained upon this survey, but it is to be hoped that a special report on the engineering capabilities of the country will be obtained as soon as possible, since it is so desirable to have all the information available before finally adopting any route."

It is probable that more exact explorations and measurements will modify some of these statements; that, for instance, regarding the size of the lake and its elevation above Lake Superior, but the extract is of interest, as shewing how recently any real knowledge has been gathered as to this region through which our highway to the North-West must be made.

Another paper, the *New York Citizen and Round Table*, published about the same time (Dec., 1869,) the following, headed "The Neepigon":—

"We observe by a morning journal that a party of tourists, exploring that unknown region to the north of Lake Superior,

has discovered that Lake Neepigon, which is put down on the ordinary maps as a small pond or not put down at all, is a lake as large as Lake Ontario; that it is broad and shallow, and filled with islands, and should be classed among the largest inland bodies of water on our continent. This accords with information received by the writer from one of the Mission Fathers, who was for many years stationed in that portion of the Hudson's Bay Company's possessions, and who said that he had travelled for many days along its shore, and the land of one coast was entirely invisible from that of the other.

"The writer of this article, when he was exploring a portion of the northern shore of Lake Superior for sporting purposes, was struck with the utter worthlessness of the maps of that region, which had been prepared by the great fur trading company. They were absolutely unreliable, omitting important rivers, and placing others in wrong positions, and confusing names and distances grossly. The Canadian and half-breed voyageurs know little of the geography of the country; very



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