

north coming from the Southeast, most likely from Fondu Lac on Lake Athabasca. They could not cross there on account of late frosts and swung around towards Great Slave Lake. They say the animals are scattered over hundreds of miles, and literally in millions; the farther east one goes, so they say, the more there are and the buffalo on the plains in the long ago is not a patch on this for numbers. Eventually they land in the barren grounds where nobody bothers them until they take another trek. I sent the Sargeant out on a patrol to see and he reported that the snow is tramped down for miles as close as ice by the animals feet where they passed in great numbers. It is most wonderful!

It is cold up here now and has been for about twenty days, always from 20° to 36° below zero and sometimes blowing.*

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) K. F. Anderson.

It appears from Inspector Anderson's letter than an important element in directing the course followed by the caribou in their winter wanderings is the date of the freezing of the narrows of Lake Athabasca at Fondu Lac. The early coming of ice there permits the herds to cross and winter farther to the south, so that they would be likely to pass at a great distance to the east of Fort Fitzgerald. When the lake remains open at that point till late, as happened this season, the migrating columns seem to be diverted in a northwesterly direction.

Preble** reports that "During the winter of 1900 the caribou approached the Slave river within a half day's journey east of Fort Smith (sixteen miles north of Fort Fitzgerald) for the first time in many years."

Mr. W. J. McLean,§ a former chief factor of the Hudson Bay Company who observed the arrival in late summer of the caribou in the region north of Lake Athabasca several years ago, described their movements as follows: "It was very interesting to watch these animals which were then marching in their annual tour. They scarcely appeared to take any rest, or halt, excepting for three or four hours in the middle of the night. They kept travelling in continuous bands along the lake towards its north-east extremity and appeared to be impelled by some mighty power over which they had no control. They have regular and well trodden paths which they keep without deviation even when fleeing from their enemy."

With reference to the extraordinary number of the caribou reported by Inspector Anderson it may be noted that his estimates are in accord with those which have been recorded by various other observers.

*A letter from W. G. A. McNeil Wood, Buffalo Range, dated Jan. 18, reports a maximum temperature to that date of 71½° at Fort Smith.

**North Amer. Fauna No. 27, p. 137.

§Man. Hist. and Sci. Soc., Trans. No. 58, Feb. 12, 1901, p. 6.