

Sir J. Richardson,  
C. B.

9 March 1857.

north?—I did not hear of them in the south; they are mostly amongst the northern Indians.

3003. In countries where all cultivation of the soil is impossible, and where human subsistence can only be obtained by hunting or fishing?—In a country where cultivation cannot be carried on advantageously.

3004. Mr. Grogan.] You gave us an account of your journey from Fort William towards the settlement of Assiniboine, and you described some parts of that country up as far as the Rainy Lake; you said that there were occasional parts where you thought settlement might be made?—I did not go to the Assiniboine at all; I came down the River Winnipeg, to the eastward of it.

3005. You went through Rainy Lake?—Yes.

3006. Did you descend the river from that to the Lake of the Woods?—Yes.

3007. What is the nature of the country about there?—The Rainy Lake River is more fertile than almost any other part of that district which we saw.

3008. And that would be adapted for settlement?—That would be adapted for settlement, and that is precisely the country which the tribe of Chippewas, of whom I spoke, inhabit. The Canadian missionaries have been trying to make villages there, and failed.

3009. Can you give us a description of the country from the Lake of the Woods to Lake Winnipeg?—The descent of the River Winnipeg is through a very rocky country, and full of rapids, and it is a very dangerous river to descend; no cultivation, as far as I know, can be established upon the immediate banks of that river.

3010. You passed some time at Fort Cumberland?—Yes.

3011. Have you any reason whatever to doubt that that district is capable of settlement and cultivation?—Portions of it are capable of cultivation; it is not a district which a farmer would choose.

3012. Will you explain why?—I have already mentioned that the substratum is magnesian limestone; there is very little soil over it; the soil is shallow.

3013. There has been cultivation at Fort Cumberland, at the station of the Hudson's Bay Company, I believe?—There have been fields cultivated.

3014. To any extent?—I cannot speak of the extent, probably 20 acres.

3015. Quite sufficient, however, to show that both climate and soil were suitable for cultivation?—It produced grain for the use of the post.

3016. At the time you visited it, was it on your first, second, or last expedition?—The first year that we were there was the winter of 1819 and 1820; we wintered there.

3017. Was that the only occasion on which you resided there?—It was the only occasion on which I resided there; we passed to and fro upon every other expedition.

3018. From your knowledge of the country, has any progress been made in that settlement by the Hudson's Bay Company, in the spread of cultivation?—The introduction of cattle was the only great progress that I saw; they had introduced cows in great numbers.

3019. Was not it at Fort Cumberland that Governor Williams used to reside when he was governor?—Yes.

3020. Did he not go to a good deal of trouble and expense in getting up an agricultural establishment there?—He cultivated several fields, but I do not think that he was very successful.

3021. Was it from the crops failing?—The extent was not great; I do not think that altogether he cultivated above 20 acres.

3022. Were there farm buildings and things put up?—There were no farm buildings when I was there; there was a stable for horses.

3023. In what state was it when you visited it; was the agricultural colony endeavoured to be extended, or was it retrograding?—It was not improved the last time I visited it. It was not of so great an extent, I think; but a few miles lower down, at the Pas, there was an Indian village established.

3024. Near Fort Pelly?—No, lower down the river; above Cedar Lake.

3025. Were they encouraged there?—They were encouraged. A church was built, and a school was established, and the Indians collected in the village near the church.

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