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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1873.

INDIAN troubles are matters of very infrequent occurrence in Canada, thanks to the very sensible system pursued in dealing with our dependent tribes. Unfortunately, however, there have of late been rumours rife to the effect that the tribes of the North-West have become dissatisfied, and are assuming a threatening attitude. Measures should at once be taken by the Government to prevent any chance of disturbance. In the first place the military force in Manitoba—at present ridiculously insufficient to preserve order in case of trouble—should be considerably increased. Means should also be taken to employ the Indian tribes, and by turning them to good use keep them from the mischief to which idle hands are proverbially prone. Mr. Sheriff Treadwell, of L'Orignal, has devised a very feasible scheme in this connection which he has recently set forth in a petition to the Government. We trust that his proposal will meet with the attention it deserves; of its merits our readers can best judge for themselves. The following is the text of the petition:—

To the Honourable the Commons of the Dominion of Canada, in Parliament assembled:

The Memorial of Charles Platt Treadwell, of the Township of L'Orignal, Esq., Sheriff of the United Counties of Prescott and Russell,

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,

That for nearly thirty-five years your memorialist has been agitating on the subject of a railway across to the Pacific.

He took the idea from Whitney, who was the first to bring the subject under the notice of the American Government, and transferred it to the British Territory, and has availed himself of every opportunity that has since offered to bring it prominently before the Canadian and the British public.

That while the discussion was before the Honourable Executive Council of the Dominion, he laid his views before His Excellency.

That your memorialist had a correspondence with Major Carmichael Smith, one of the earliest writers on this subject. He also has had a voluminous correspondence with the Imperial and Provincial Governments on this and other subjects, and he feels no ordinary degree of pleasure that his early productions and suggestions are in progress of consummation.

Your memorialist cannot refrain from remarking that the greatest benefit to humanity which this great work should accomplish has been during the present negotiation overlooked and ignored; he refers to the civilization and evangelization of the Indians, whose labour in the construction and management of the railway has been overlooked.

There are two statements made against the red men that he wishes to contradict. The first is that they will not labour, and the second is that they are not reliable. If these remarks have, to a certain extent, reference to the Indians within the territory of the United States, it is owing to the perfidy of the white and his dealings with the natives of the forests, as all history will fully confirm; but the history of the British Indians in America shows an entirely different record. The humane and honest treatment of the native tribes in British North America by the Hudson Bay Company and the Christian missionaries, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, have made the Indians faithful allies of the Crown, and with the assistance of the parties just referred to, your memorialist feels confident that he could clear the track for the Grand Pacific Railway, Nipissing to the Pacific coast, by exclusively Indian labour, at a cost 30 per cent. less than it could be done by imported labour, and he has intimated this to the President of the Company for his consideration.

Your memorialist's plan is to clear the line at least one acre wide, and to clear a greater when the railway will be in danger from large trees that the hurricane will bring down upon the road at any future time, and that the first year after such clearing, the squaws be provided with garden seeds to sow the clearing for their own profit, and to be well paid for their labour in clearing the land. The great benefit that would be derived from such would be their immediately being taught to clear land for themselves.

Your memorialist thinks that humanity is greatly indebted to General Grant for his exertions to do justice to all the different tribes of Indians within the bounds of the United States, but he greatly fears that from the barbarous treatment of the Indians in days gone by, the disease is too chronic and deep seated to be eradicated, and he fears that the destruction of the buffalo and the extermination of the poor Indian will be the result of the perfidy of the white man. But may God grant it may be otherwise.

Your memorialist prays that your honourable body may

pass such an Act as will protect the buffalo and all other game from wanton destruction, and thereby protect the interests of the natives, and that any encouragement that can be legally extended to the natives should be included in the same Act.

Your memorialist is informed that in British Columbia much of the labour is performed by Indians; that in Oregon most of the female servants are natives. The carrying out of the policy of protection will prevent Indian wars for all future time, that have cost the United States more than their canals, and from recent reports the end is not yet reached, even with all the good intentions of the United States Government.

Your memorialist begs that a Committee be formed, and that he may be instructed to lay all his papers and correspondence before it.

And your memorialist, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

CHARLES P. TREADWELL.

L'Orignal, 13th March, 1873.

THE INTERIOR OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

(By our Newfoundland Correspondent.)

Half a century since, W. E. Cormack, Esq., a Scotchman of superior ability and well educated, set out to explore the interior of Newfoundland. In company with a single Micmac Indian, he crossed the island from Trinity Bay on the east to St. George's Bay on the west. From his narrative alone do we obtain any information regarding the interior of an island larger than Ireland; for no one has ever followed in his track. His narrative has all the charm of a romance. It has been out of print for a length of time; but I am happy to say that lately arrangements have been made for bringing out a new edition, which, owing to the wide-spread interest lately awakened in Newfoundland, will receive a large circulation, especially in Canada and the Maritime Provinces. The first portion of Cormack's journey lay through dense forests of pine, spruce, birch, and larch, and proved to be an uniform ascent, till at length he reached the summit of a mountain ridge, which served as a barrier between the sea and the interior. From this summit the vast and mysterious interior, on which the eyes of a white man had never before gazed, broke on the view of the traveller in all its magnificence. It was truly a splendid sight. Far as the eye could reach, a vast basin spread out in a succession of green plains, marbled with woods and lakes of every form and extent—a boundless emerald surface. It must have been a rapturous moment for the traveller—more than enough to repay him for all his toils and dangers—when his eyes first wandered over this splendid expanse, untrodden by the foot of man, now for the first time disclosing its beauty and sublimity to an appreciative observer. It carried the mind back to the ages when primeval man took possession of his fair heritage, and gazed with wonder and worship on the green earth and its glorious canopy of light and blue. Omnipotence, primitiveness, tranquillity were stamped on every thing. How different from what ignorance had pictured was the real scene! Instead of impassable morasses, grim rocks, stunted woods, scowling deserts, a scene of striking beauty and mysterious grandeur met the eye. The soft breezes came laden with the scent of the wild flowers. The great plain was alive with a vast variety of birds and beasts, whose movements gave animation to the landscape, and whose tameness showed how innocent they were of the designs of man, the hunter. North and south in undulating beds stretched the vast savannas—lakes, brooks and skirting woods giving variety to the scene. Here and there, for more than ten miles, a yellow green surface was spread out without a single rock or shrub or any inequality in the unbroken steppe. The deep-beaten deer paths are seen, like a vast network, seaming the surface in all directions. The courage of the adventurous traveller rose, and a passionate longing to penetrate the unknown land took possession of him. "A new world," he wrote, "seemed to invite us onward, or rather we claimed the dominion, and were impatient to proceed to take possession. Fancy carried us swiftly across the island. Obstacles of all kinds were dispelled and despised. It was manifested on every hand that this was the season of the year when the earth here offers her stores of productions. Land-birds were ripening, game birds were fledging, and beasts were emerging to prey on one another. Everything animate or inanimate seemed to be our own. There was no will but ours. Thoughts of the aborigines did not alter our determination to meet them, as well as everything living that might present itself in a country yet untrodden and before unseen by civilized man. I now adopted, as well for self-preservation as for the sake of accomplishing the object of my excursion, the self-dependent mode of life of the Indian, both in spirit and action."

Descending from this mountainous belt which encircles the coast, Cormack entered this open interior, which he found to be level plains or savannas, composed of fine, black, compact peat mould, formed by the growth and decay of mosses, and covered for the most part with wiry grass. He describes it as being in reality "magnificent, natural deer-parks, adorned by woods and water. The trees here sometimes grow to a considerable size, particularly the larch; birch is also common. The deer paths are countless, tending from park to park through the intervening woods, in lines as established and deep-beaten as cattle-paths on an old grazing farm. It is impossible to describe the grandeur and richness of the scenery, which will probably remain long undefaced by the hand of man." Not a trace of the red Indians was found in the whole route. The Brethicks, or indigenous Indians, are long since extinct.

It took the traveller a month to cross this savanna country, which appears to be about 150 miles in breadth. The progress was slow, as, in order to examine the country, he did not follow a direct course; while in order to find game, and to get round the extremities of woods and lakes, he had frequently to adopt a circuitous route. There was no deficiency of game—deer, ducks, geese, beaver, and trout from the ponds and brooks, constituted their food. Wild berries were found in prodigal abundance. Cormack says that for the first ten days after his stock was consumed, he felt a longing for bread, but after that did not miss it. The venison he found excellent, the fat upon the haunches being often two inches in thickness. He had no trouble in shooting the fattest of the herds of deer which were met. "The leading stag of a herd," says Cormack, "is generally the fattest. He is as tall as a horse, and must sometimes be shot at full speed,

sometimes by surprise. The ball having pierced him, he bounds, gallops, canters, falters, stands, tosses his antlers, his sinewy limbs quiver, unwillingly bend, and he stretches out his graceful corpse. Should the ball have passed through his heart, he falls at once, probably balanced on all fours. There is regret as well as triumph felt in taking possession of the noble vanquished." Beavers were found in great abundance; also black ducks—the finest table birds in Newfoundland. So unsophisticated were the trout, from their being unacquainted with man, that they took the artificial fly merely by holding out the line in the hand without a rod. "No country in the world," says the traveller, "can afford finer sport than the interior of this island in the midst of August and September. The beasts of the chase are of a large class, and the cover for all game excellent."

In these savannas of the interior the proportion of water to land is very great. In some directions northward one half seems to be lakes of every size and form; in other directions, one third, and seldom less. Where berries are abundant great numbers of black bears congregate, but they are harmless. Wolves, too, are common, but they fly from the approach of man. The rocks noticed were granite, quartz, chloritic greenstone, mica, and clay slates. But one solitary peak or granite top was met with, standing very conspicuous. Cormack named it Mount Sylvester, after the name of his Indian. To the north-east of this peak are displayed the features of the summit of an immense mountain mass, as if just peeping above the earth. Huge blocks of red, pink, and grey granite, coarse-grained, but compact and granular, lay around, in cumulous or confused heaps, like the ruins of a world. Quartz rocks, both granular and compact, the latter sometimes rose-colored, were often found associated with granite. Plates of mica six inches and upwards in length were found attached to the quartz when associated with granite. Rolled agates, sometimes transparent, were found on the shores of some of the lakes.

The countless deer-paths proved that the whole of the interior is amply stocked with caribou, who migrate to the north-west in spring, returning to the south on the approach of winter. No such herds of reindeer are to be met with in any part of continental America; and they are superior even to those of Norway and Lapland. It is not uncommon to meet with specimens weighing six or seven hundred pounds. Were these reindeer utilised, as they are in Lapland and Norway, vast benefits might be realised. They are easily tamed when young, and could be conducted from pasture to pasture, as in Norway, by qualified herdsmen. There can be no doubt that this savanna soil could be reclaimed by drainage and tilling, so as to yield green crops—a process which has been successfully carried out in Scotland and other countries. A vast grazing country will one day be found where now these deer-solitudes extend. The climate is far superior to that of the regions along the eastern shores. Fogs are rare, and the summer warmth is delightful. During the two months he spent in the interior, Cormack mentions that there were but eight rainy days, four foggy days, and forty-one bright days. The prevailing winds were westerly. Frosts did not set in till the second week of October.

After a month's travel over the Savanna country, Cormack at length reached a hilly ridge in the westward, which he named Jameson's Mountains, after Professor Jameson of Edinburgh. This ridge proved to be a serpentine deposit, including a variety of rocks, all lying in nearly vertical strata alternating. "The mineralogical appearance," says Cormack, "were altogether so singular that I resolved to stop a day or two to examine them. All the highest parts of the ridge were formed of this metalline rock, and were extremely sterile. The other rocks were noble serpentine, varying in colour from black green to a yellow, and from translucent to semi-transparent, in strata nearly a yard wide; steatite or soap stone, verde antique, diallage, and various other magnesian rocks. Sterile red earthy patches, entirely destitute of vegetation, were here and there on and adjacent to the ridge; and on these lay heaps of loose fragments of asbestos, rock wood, rock leather, rock horn, and stones light in the hand, resembling burnt clay, *cum multis aliis*, the whole having the appearance of heaps of rubbish from a pottery, but evidently detached from adjoining strata and veins. I could not divest myself of the feeling that we were in the vicinity of a quiescent volcano." This range is about 1,200 feet above the level of the sea. The serpentine deposits of which they are formed separate the low slate country, covered with savannas, through which the granite rocks occasionally peep in the east, from a high and granitic country that appears in the west. After crossing the latter, with great difficulty and amid many hardships, Cormack reached St. George's Bay.

In future papers I propose to give some account of the various animals found in the interior and elsewhere.

Notes and Queries.

All Communications intended for this Column must be addressed to the Editor, and endorsed "Notes and Queries."

In Queen Elizabeth's reign (1581) there were a set of rogues called *coney-catchers*; cheats and masterless vagabonds who fell upon the young and unwary, but did not use violence. Massinger alludes to them in his play of the "Renegado":—

"All's come out, Sirs!
We are smok'd for being *coney-catchers*;
My master is put in prison."

Falstaff, in "Merry Wives of Windsor," after remarking to Pistol that he is out of heels, says:—"I must *coney-catch*, I must shift."

Master Slender in the same play tells Falstaff that he has matter in his head against him and his *coney-catching* rascals, Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol, because they carried him off to a tavern, and made him drunk, and afterwards picked his pocket.

Can any of your readers give me the definition or the derivation of *coney-catcher*? I find no mention of the word in Francis Douce's Illustrations of Shakespeare.

T. K.