

great interest. This coal, like that in the Missouri Valley, in Dakota, is unlimited in quantity, but of doubtful quality. It is all of later date than the true coal measures, and is probably unfitted for the more important manufacturing purposes. However, it has long been used for domestic purposes at the trading posts, and it is believed deposits can be found not greatly inferior to the Vancouver's Island coal, which has a considerable commercial value. At any rate, like the Dakota lignite, it is the fuel of the country, and human ingenuity can be trusted to find some way to utilize it. There is plenty of it to waste in experimenting.

Finally, something remains to be said of means and channels of inter-communication between the different parts of this new empire of the Northwest. Nature has been so lavish in the supply of such channels that the delay of human enterprise to supplement them is almost excusable. Starting from Winnipeg as a centre, the Red River, some 300 miles long and navigable for more than half its length, opens an easy road into the United States. The Assiniboine, longer almost than its parent stream, and maintaining its size for half its length, is navigable for 500 miles of its windings west of Winnipeg to Fort Ellice, distant by a straight line some 350 miles from the Red River. The Assiniboine and its tributaries, the Qu'Appelle and Souris, drain a valley twice as long as its navigable course. There are now two or more lines of steamers on both the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, doing a thriving trade with the outlying settlements. North of Winnipeg, the lake for which it is named opens 300 miles of unbroken steamer navigation towards Hudson Bay, which is only cut off by the insurmountable falls and rapids of Nelson River. It is one of the dreams of the future to build a railroad along this river and open a short ocean route for the products of the Northwest, via Hudson Bay, to Europe. West of Lake Winnipeg its magnificent tributary, the Saskatchewan, stretches its royal length 1,500 miles to the Rocky Mountains, and, with its two branches, opens a path to almost every part of the fertile belt. Excepting the Grand Rapid close to its mouth, the Saskatchewan is navigable for 1,200 miles, to Fort Edmonton. The Hudson Bay Company has a line of steamers on both lake and river. Finally, the Peace River, through its broad water-course of 2,000 miles to the Arctic Ocean, though the Athabaska and McKenzie Rivers has