

429. Have you heard the statement, that south of the Saskatchewan River the English blood is so mixed up that there are no perfectly pure Indians there?—I think it is incorrect; south of the Saskatchewan the Indians are most free from cross of any kind. I understand that they are less crossed than any other with white blood from all that I have heard; I cannot speak from my own knowledge. J. Rac, Esq., M.D.
23 February 1857.

430. How far north have you travelled on the Mackenzie River?—I have been down to the mouth; I went down to the mouth with Sir John Richardson in 1848.

431. Have you been westward along the coast?—Never westward.

432. You do not know what facility there is for ships sailing round to the mouth of the Mackenzie?—The only cases of their having come round were those of Captain M'Clure and Captain Collinson; they passed there.

433. That arises from the great obstruction?—Yes, from the ice; those were the only two instances where they managed to get through.

434. Mr. Roebuck.] How far north have you ever been in Scotland?—To the Orkneys and Shetland.

435. Comparing the climate of the Orkneys with the climate at York on Hudson's Bay, where was the great difference?—The difference was, that the summer was much as our summer in Orkney is; but the winter, of course, extended over seven to eight months, when there was no navigation. The winter sets in in the beginning of November, and the ice does not get away from the river before June. I could not get across the north river at York Factory, on account of ice, before the 10th or 12th of June.

436. Can they grow wheat in the Orkneys?—It will ripen in small quantities, but it is not generally grown; barley and oats are generally grown.

437. But you can grow wheat at York?—Never.

438. The climate in the summer, I take it, is finer than at the Orkneys?—It is milder, a little; but it is more irregular because we have frosts, owing to the ice being in the Bay close off York; you can see ice in the Bay almost the whole season round.

439. Going further south, have you ever been to Lake Winnipeg?—Yes; I have passed through it several times.

440. Have you been in that part of the country through the twelve months?—No.

441. You do not know when the winter begins to the south of Lake Winnipeg?—The winter begins about November, that is to say, the ice begins to shut up the navigation by the end of October; the little rivers and lakes are impassable about the end of October.

442. When does the winter end there?—You can get through Lake Winnipeg sometimes about the 1st of June; at other times you may be stopped by ice up to the middle of June; when I went through with Sir John Richardson we were stopped in that way.

443. Agricultural operations you think would not begin before June near Lake Winnipeg?—No; not to go through the Lake.

444. You say that you went from the boundary over to the United States?—Yes.

445. Did you go through Minesota?—Yes, to St. Paul's.

446. At what time of the year was that?—In the winter.

447. So that you could not very well judge of the difference between Minesota and the country round Lake Winnipeg?—No, I could not tell further than that it is a perfectly level tract between Red River and Minesota; there are no hills or difficulties in the way of travelling.

448. On the Saskatchewan I believe you have never been?—I have never been up there.

449. What part of the territory then is it that you say is perfectly fit for agriculture?—I speak of the Saskatchewan from hearsay, not from personal knowledge.

450. Round about Lake Winnipeg is it fit for agriculture?—It is a low flat sandy place, full of marshes along the north shore of Lake Winnipeg; we sometimes had to go many miles before we could get ground to make an encampment on; sometimes we had to travel half the night before we could make an encampment.