

conquest, and the Scots-French movement from Montreal after Canada became British, gave promise of great vigor in making use of this truly Canadian inland line of great water stretches.

4. The direct result of this trade movement from Montreal, which was within thirty years of Verandrye's time, was to stimulate interest in Britain. Dobbs, Robson, Ellis and the Parliamentary Inquiry of 1740 leave no room for doubt on this score. As a result of this public interest and also of the effect the French discoveries were having upon their trade at the Bay itself, the Hudson's Bay Company decided to adopt a more expansive policy. Hearne became the pioneer explorer as well as fort builder of the Company. In twenty-five years the Hudson's Bay Company dotted the whole region from Hudson's Bay on the east to the Rocky Mountains on the west, and from the Red River on the southeast to Athabasca on the northwest, with the main posts still retained. Though a hundred years old at the time of this inland movement this great Company of North America showed that it yet retained the energy of youth, since within time another 100 years have passed to find it still by no means in its decrepitude, but laying its plans for another century of successful trade.

5. The energy displayed by the Hudson's Bay Company throughout the whole Northwest, enabled them to regain a good part of their lost trade, especially along the Northern watercourse from Athabasca to Churchill. The Montreal merchants felt their weakness in having to compete with one another and also with their gigantic antagonist from England. A movement among the Canadian traders we have seen, took place to unite their forces. This resulted in the formation of the "North-west Company" as we have described. With all the traditions of the French explorers as theirs, with the energy and adaptability of Colonists, and with a strong feeling of rivalry to the Hudson's Bay Company, the Canadian Company so extended their operations even with smaller resources than their antagonists, that when the two companies put an end to their serious—even bloody—struggles by a union in 1821 the Northwesters had 97 posts to 30 belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company.

6. The basin of Lake Winnipeg was found by the Hudson's Bay Company to have the currents of the fur trade converging in it, and running to the outpost at Fort York, on Hudson's Bay, while the Norwesters found the same; with their outpost at Fort William, on Lake Superior. Lake Winnipeg receives the three great rivers from east, south, and west that drain the great North-West—the Winnipeg, the Red, and the Saskatchewan. Trade has always followed these great arteries, with this alternative, that from the west the Assiniboine has outlined a land trail over the prairies, which has proved a rival to the Saskatchewan.

7. The basin of Lake Winnipeg has still the position as regards general trade and the development of a new country that it occupied under the fur trading days.

With an increase of people, it is true, new wants have arisen, and a diversion of trade into new channels might reasonably have been expected. It is surprising to find how nearly on the old lines the currents of trade seem shaping themselves. From the East we look for timber and minerals; from the West, by way of the Saskatchewan, the furs still find their outlet; while the replacing of the Assiniboine trail by the iron way, and its divergence to the south has made the Saskatchewan still more than it has been in later years, the highway of commerce. From the West we must have coal, and perhaps iron. In the Lake Winnipeg basin, at the junction of the prairie and the wood country, we have the converging point of these several forces. If these estimates be true, then the great city of the region north and west of Lake Superior will be in the basin of Lake Winnipeg.

8. Where is this great city to be situated? Had the Hudson's Bay route been the only means of reaching the North-West, as it was for the Hudson's Bay Company for a long period of its existence, as it was at the time of the immigration of the Seikirk colonists, then a point on Lake Winnipeg, probably at the mouth of the Saskatchewan, would have been the meeting place of commerce. But the Hudson's Bay route is still only a problem. The currents of trade are South to the United States, and East through our own territory to Lake Superior. Had the matter to be settled by theory rather than by actualities, the point where a straight line crosses Red River, drawn from Rat Portage to Portage la Prairie, might have been selected, although the entrance of the Assiniboine into the Red River would always have left it doubtful whether a point chosen on such an arbitrary assumption that trade follows a straight line will gain the ascendancy. But when the fact that the railway system of a country—especially a prairie country—chooses a centre from which to radiate seven separate lines, is added as a factor to the traditions of the trade of three quarters of a century, and the fact that there is a settled country to the South with vast solitudes to the north of Lake Winnipeg, it is plain that the mouth of the Saskatchewan has little ground, nor can other places on the Red River claim any indulgence in maintaining that the great city of the North-West is to be any other than the City of Winnipeg.

The reading of the paper having been concluded, the Lecturer resumed his seat amid applause, and a discussion of matters connected with the subject of the paper followed.

Rev. Prof. Hart moved a vote of thanks to the Lecturer. In expressing the pleasure which the reading of the paper had afforded him, mentioned the fact that he had himself gone over a portion of the country referred to, namely, that lying to the east of the Lake of the Woods and up Rainy River. He thought the country owed a debt of gratitude for the courage and perseverance manifested by those early explorers.

Mr. J. Hoyes Panton seconded the