

judiciously directed to those regions. Undoubtedly there are the attractions of a wild, romantic mode of life. There is an abundance of the necessities of life at the Red River Settlement, but there is no trade, or next to none, because its interior position and its want of communication with the ocean add so much to the freight upon all articles that they cannot be exported at a profit. But persons who will be content with sufficient for the passing hour, and who have a turn for wild semi-civilised life, will enjoy themselves there very much.

Lieut.-Colonel
J. H. Lefroy, R. A.
23 February 1857.

313. *Chairman.*] It is a pretty healthy country, is it not?—Very healthy.

314. During your residence in that country had you any opportunities of forming an opinion of the general character of the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, so far as relates to their conduct towards the Indians and their mode of preserving the peace of the country?—The best preservative for the peace of the country was taken by the Hudson's Bay Company about the year 1832, when they entirely discontinued sending spirits into it, or, I believe, not entirely, but almost entirely. Since that time blood feuds and quarrels among the Indians have diminished very much indeed. The white population is so very small that there is very little crime, necessarily. What crime does occur there, is, I believe, treated at the Red River Settlement by a recorder, the law officer there, and he told me that the gaol was generally empty. I believe there is very little crime there.

315. Is there security of travelling there?—Perfect security, except at the head of the Saskatchewan, and among the warlike tribes, who are sometimes no respecters of persons, and who will pillage their best friends.

316. *Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.*] What do you call the warlike tribes?—The Blackfeet, mostly.

317. *Mr. Edward Ellice.*] Those which are nearest the frontiers?—Yes.

318. *Chairman.*] Do you apprehend that there has been a very effectual check to the use of ardent spirits among the Indians, by the measures taken by the Hudson's Bay Company?—I am confident that there has, over the whole region except the Saskatchewan, where the necessity of meeting the Americans in some degree with their own weapons had obliged a very limited use of spirits; but the rule, if I am not misinformed, was, that for one gallon of rum they put seven gallons of water; the spirit issued was so much diluted that it had not much effect.

319. *Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.*] Is it not true that Americans trading in liquor are subject to a very severe fine?—I believe there is that law in the United States, but it is evaded constantly.

320. Have you not heard of a trader being sent down in chains from the post to the United States?—No; I know that Americans do trade largely in liquor on the Missouri.

321. *Mr. Roebuck.*] You know nothing, you say, of Minesota?—Not personally.

322. I suppose you know from its position on the map, that there are no further means for going to Minesota than to Lake Winnepeg?—Minesota has a dense, industrious, enterprising population to the south and east of it, constantly pressing in that direction, but the Hudson's Bay territory is not quite in that condition; you come down to the lower parts of the Missouri, where you get into a comparatively dense population.

323. Iowa comes between?—I include all that. There is no physical reason why the people there should not press onwards; and they are perpetually pressing onwards into Minesota.

324. Is there any physical reason why they should not press across the border, and come from Minesota to Lake Winnipeg?—None at all. They do not do so from the United States, which fact I think shows that the inducements are not very great.

325. Would not the fact of its being British territory be a reason why they should not come across the border?—I do not think that that would have any influence; if they found it advantageous I think they would do it.

326. *Sir John Pakington.*] Is the Indian population supposed to be decreasing in those regions?—I fear there is no doubt that it is decreasing very rapidly.

327. From natural causes, not from the effect of European encroachment?—I apprehend that European encroachment has had a great deal to do with it, but