

Sir J. Richardson,
C. B.

9 March 1857.

3118. Is that on the Saskatchewan liable to the same objection?—It is liable to the same objection, but I did not visit the deposits upon the Saskatchewan; I do not know their extent.

3119. You do not know of any secondary coal formations in the Hudson's Bay territories?—None. There are coal formations in the Arctic Sea of the proper coalfield.

3120. Near the mouth of the Mackenzie River?—No, they are further north still; on Parry's Islands.

3121. Near Melville Island?—Yes, at 74 and 75 degrees. There is some also in Greenland, I understand.

3122. You have mentioned Fort Liard in your book as the northern limit of the economic cultivation of grain?—Yes.

3123. I do not quite understand what you mean by economic cultivation?—Where the return will be sufficient to induce people to sow.

3124. Supposing it was found that there was any mineral wealth in that district up as far as Fort Liard to induce settlement, the country and the soil would enable the cultivation of grain to be carried out sufficiently to support a settlement, though it would not be sufficient to induce people to go as agriculturists?—I did not visit Fort Liard, so that I cannot tell what extent of ground is available; I only know that it has been cultivated there; but at Fort Simpson, which is not far from it, a little more northerly, they cultivate barley and rear cattle, but they bring their hay 150 miles down the river to feed their stock during the winter of nine months. They actually cut their hay 150 miles distant from the post.

3125. With regard to the banks of the Peace River; have you travelled up the Peace River at all?—A little way; it crosses through a prairie country, much of it.

3126. Does the river run principally through a prairie country, or are the banks wooded?—The banks are wooded, but there is an elevated plateau of prairie land.

3127. Would you not consider that that would be a favourable agricultural country, supposing it was more accessible; that is to say, that the prairies might be used for sheep and for pasture, and the wooded portions might be cultivated?—They could cultivate grain, so far as I understand, upon the alluvial points of the Peace River; but the existence of wolves over the whole prairies completely precludes the depasturing of sheep. The wolves are too numerous for any domestic cattle to be turned out upon the prairies.

3128. Lord John Russell.] With regard to the prospects for the future, supposing that no change was made by the Government or by Parliament in the authority which the Hudson's Bay Company have hitherto had, do you think that they would be able to preserve that authority as well as they have hitherto done?—I think so. Judging from the past, I think they would be able to preserve it in the future. The only disturbance of the peace which I expect might arise would be from the Red River, from the half-caste settlers there wishing to interfere with the fur trade; I think they would be likely to give some trouble.

3129. Would not persons from the United States or from Canada be likely to wish to settle there, and settling there interfere with the fur trade?—I think the fur trade is the only thing that would bring them there; I do not think they would come as settlers for any other reason.

3130. Supposing that they settled for the reason of interfering in the fur trade, which seems very possible, would not their attempts to get possession of the fur trade or to interfere in the fur trade, a good deal disturb the authority of the Hudson's Bay Company?—As long as the Hudson's Bay Company retain their influence over the Indians, I think they can prevent the people from passing into the interior and disturbing them much, but if the trade were opened, I think that a contest would arise.

3131. Do you think that in the present state of that district, and of the neighbouring country, the trade can be kept closed?—I think so for some time, until settling advances nearer to them; at present they are at such a distance from any populous country, that they are secluded as it were from the world.

3132. Do you contemplate preventing settlement as far as possible, or allowing settlement, endeavouring to prevent that settlement being turned into interference