

the whole course of that great river, and to the north of it in the wide strip belting its banks and extending up to the Peace River, there will be room for a great population whose opportunities for profitable cultivation of the soil will be most enviable. The netting of wood, of which I have spoken as covering all the prairie between Winnipeg and Battleford, is beyond that point drawn up upon the shores of the prairie sea, and lies in masses of fine forest in the gigantic half circle formed by the Saskatchewan and the Rockies. It is only in secluded valleys, on the banks of large lakes, and in river bottoms that much wood is found in the Far West, probably owing to the prevalence of fires. These are easily preventable, and there is no reason why plantations should not flourish there in good situations as well as elsewhere. Before I leave the Saskatchewan let me advert to the ease with which the steam navigation of that river can be vastly improved. At present there is only one boat at all worthy of the name of a river steamer upon it, and this steamer lies up during the night. A new company is, I am informed, now being organized, and there is no reason why, if the new vessels are properly equipped and furnished with electric lights, which may now be cheaply provided, they should not keep up a night and day service, so that the settlers at Prince Albert, Edmonton, and elsewhere may not have, during another season, to suffer great privations incident to the wants of transportation which has loaded the banks of Grand Rapids during the present year with freight, awaiting steam transport. The great cretaceous coal seams at the headwaters of the rivers rising in the Rocky Mountains or in the neighborhood of streams flowing towards your doors, should not be forgotten. Although you have some coal in districts nearer to you, we should remember that on the headwaters of these streams there is plenty of the same, which can be floated down to you before you have a complete railway system. Want of time as well as a wish to see the less vaunted parts of the country took me south-westward from Battleford, over land which in many of the maps is variously marked as consisting of arid plains or as a continuation of the "American Desert." The newer maps, especially those containing the explorations of Prof. Macoun, have corrected this wholly erroneous idea. For two days' march—that is to say for about sixty or seventy miles south of Battleford we passed over land whose excellence could not be excelled for agricultural purposes. Thence to the neighborhood of the Red Deer Valley the soil is lighter, but still in my opinion in most places good for grain—in any case most admirable for summer pasturage, and it will certainly be good also for stock in winter as soon as it shall pay to have some hay stored in the valleys. The whole of it has been the favourite feeding ground of the buffalo. Their tracks from watering place to watering place, never too far apart from each other, were everywhere to