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fertile belt, in a valley averaging from one-fourth of a mile to one mile in breadth, and excavated to the depth of 200 to 300 feet below the level of the prairie or plains, until it reaches the low country, some miles east of Fort à la Corne. The area of this extraordinary belt of rich soil and pasturage is about forty million acres. It was formerly a wooded country, but by successive fires it has been partially cleared of its forest growth, but abounds with the most luxuriant herbage, and generally possesses a deep rich soil of vegetable mould."

In addition to the testimony of Captain Pallisser and Professor Hind, respectively, on the character and extent of the said territory, Your Committee submit the following quotation from the appendix to an official report by Mr. James W. Taylor, of St. Pauls, Minnesota, under date of 2nd March 1858 to the Governor of Minnesota:—"There is, in the heart of North America, a distinct sub-division, of which Lake Winipeg may be regarded as the centre. This sub-division, like the valley of the Mississippi, is distinguished for the fertility of its soil, and for the extent and gentle slope of its great plains, watered by rivers of great length, and admirably adapted for steam navigation. It has a climate not exceeding in severity that of many portions of Canada and the Eastern States. It will, in all respects, compare favorably with some of the most densely peopled portions of the continent of Europe. In other words, it is admirably fitted to become the seat of a numerous, hardy and prosperous community. It has an area equal to eight or ten first-class American States. Its great river, the Saskatchewan, carries a navigable water-line to the very base of the Rocky Mountains. It is not at all improbable that the valley of this river may yet offer the best route for a railroad to the Pacific. The navigable waters of this great sub-division interlock with those of the Mississippi. The Red River of the North, in connection with Lake Winipeg, into which it falls, forms a navigable water-line, extending directly north and south nearly eight hundred miles."

Mons. E. Bourgeau, who accompanied Captain Pallisser in his explorations, addressed the following remarks to the late Sir William Hooker in reference to Hudson's Bay Territory:—"But it remains for me to call the attention of the English Government to the advantage there would be in establishing agricultural districts in the vast plains of Rupert's Land, and particularly in the Saskatchewan. This district is much more adapted to the cultivation of staple crops of temperate climates, wheat, rye, barley, oats, &c., than one would have been inclined to believe from this high latitude."

On the question of climate, to which an allusion is made in the last paragraph, Professor Maury, in a letter from the Observatory, Washington, January 4, 1859, says:—"Most men of our age were educated under the belief that parallels of latitude and terrestrial climates are correlatives; that we might tell the temperature of any unknown country, or region of country, if we knew its latitude. Humboldt and Dove exploded this idea with their isothermal lines. For example, they show that the mean annual temperature of North Cape, lat. 70° in Europe, is the same as that along the north shore of Lake Superior, in lat. 50°. Here is a difference of 20° of latitude without any difference in the average annual temperature of the two places."

An important feature in the commercial geography of this north-western country is the extent of its navigable water-line. Captain Blakeston, another of the colleagues of Captain Pallisser, says, "Taking either branch of the Saskatchewan River, it is navigable for boats from Lake Winipeg to near the base of the Rocky Mountains, a distance of 1200 miles. I am glad to say I was fortunate enough to travel on it from its mouth to Fort Edmonston, 1000 miles up, at a time of year when I saw the water at its lowest."

The next, and not the least important consideration in view of the settlement of the North-Western territory by Canada, is brought with great distinctness to the notice of Capt. Pallisser by the under Secretary of State for the Colonies, in the following question:—"What means of access exist for British Emigrants to reach this settlement?" Answer, the direct route from England *via* York Factory, and also that from Canada *via* Lake Superior, are too tedious, difficult, and expensive for the generality of settlers. The manner in which natural obstacles have isolated the Country from all other British possessions in the East is a matter of considerable weight; indeed, it is the obstacle of the country, and one, I fear, almost beyond the remedies of art. The egress and ingress to the settlement from the East is obviously by the Red River Valley and through the States."

The reply of Captain Pallisser, though of a slightly discouraging kind, can by no means