

REPORT

OF

THE HONORABLE THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

To His Excellency, the Honorable Adams George Archibald, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba and the North West Territories, on the Immigration Conference held at Ottawa, on the 18th of September, 1871.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY :

On the 29th of August last I received a copy of the Minutes of Council, appointing me "a Delegate to the Immigration Conference to be held at Ottawa on the 18th of September," (see Appendix I.), together with your Excellency's letter therewith, (II.)

In compliance with the desire therein expressed, I lost no time in setting out on my way to Ottawa, and wishing to see for myself (that I might be able to report thereon) the Canadian, or "Dawson Route," I started with Mr. James F. Graham, the very energetic assistant of the Honorable James McKay, Superintendent of the road, on the 30th of September, and although the season for travel had almost closed, I am happy to be able to say that we arrived at Thunder Bay in seven travelling days from Fort Garry, the whole time occupied by the journey being ten days, three of which were lost on account of storms on the lakes.

I must declare that I had a pre-conceived prejudice against this route, but was agreeably disappointed on finding by experience that my prejudice was ill-founded, for from the beginning of the road to the end of it, I never travelled over a finer one. From Fort Garry to the North-West Angle of the Lake of the Woods it is impossible to find a better road. We made the whole distance, 110 miles, with one horse only, in less than two days; and when the great difficulties that had to be surmounted are taken into consideration, it is not saying too much to declare that Mr. Dawson has achieved a very great victory over all kinds of difficulties, and made a magnificent road through a wilderness of swamps and muskegs, one of which, the "Cariboo Muskeg," is a floating bog over two miles in length, and yet it is so perfectly bridged that it is a real pleasure to drive over it.

I may here remark that Canada is very much indebted to the Honorable James McKay for the present state of the road from Fort Garry to the Lake of the Woods, and it was most fortunate for Mr. Dawson that he succeeded in inducing Mr. McKay to undertake the superintendence of the construction of the road and bridges, as there is no other man in the North West who could have done it as well. Mr. McKay is a thoroughly practical man, knows the country from the Height of Land to the Rocky Mountains, is personally known and greatly respected by all the Indian tribes in the country, and speaks with the greatest purity most of the Indian languages of the North-West, and above all he is a man who never was known to be deterred by