

be rendered unnecessary; the number of portages will be considerably reduced, so that in a navigation of about 300 miles, namely, to the west side of the Lake of the Woods, we may not have more than nine or ten short portages. Until it is deemed necessary to place steamboats upon the several reaches of water navigation, it is proposed to employ boats suitable for the trade, and constructed so as to be easily hauled across the portages without unloading; a wooden rail or tramway from the head of the portage to the next clear water, would suffice thus effecting an immense saving in time and labour.

Where the distances are long, such as from Lake Superior to the first water, good waggon roads will be constructed. It also should be borne in mind that on the River Ohio, at certain seasons of the year, loaded boats navigate that river with passengers and freight drawing from 24 to 30 inches water, propelled by a stern wheel whose dip does not exceed 18 inches.

It is obvious, that in the early stages of working a transportation Company, it is all-important to use water communication wherever it can be made available. It requires but comparatively small outlay, a most important feature, as the increased force need only be taken on as the demand for traffic and transport expands.

One of the most notable features of the country under consideration, is the great multiplicity of lakes and water courses with which it is provided. It contains within it the water sheds from which nearly all the great river systems of this continent derive their sources.

It is a curious fact that there are numerous routes of communication, with occasional portages, from twenty yards to not beyond eight or ten miles in length, through the whole extent of country from Lake Superior, across the continent to the Pacific Ocean. Instances are upon record in which the servants and partners of the North West Company of Montreal, have passed from that city to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and *vice versa*, with merchandize or with furs, performing the entire distance in the same canoe.

The next question which suggests itself is, as to the cheapest and most direct route to the Pacific shores. This will be found in the old travelled routes used by the North West Company of Montreal, and the course would appear to be after availing ourselves of such lakes and rivers as may be suitable for steamers, to strike into the Saskatchewan, which is navigable for such vessels to its sources in the Rocky Mountains, affording a steam navigation from the Red River to a distance of 1,800 miles; ample evidence having been furnished that abundance of coal exists along its banks. From the head waters of that river perhaps the greatest difficulty in the whole route will be found to exist. Nevertheless, when we know that in 1842, a body of two hundred settlers from the Red River, passed over and through the gorges of the Rocky Mountains with ox teams, it is not likely that with the superior facilities for transportation, any serious obstruction will be encountered by us.

In 1846, Sir George Simpson travelled from the Red River Settlement with a large party, taking carts the greater part of the way, and some 46 horses, to the mouth of the Columbia, within the space of 47 days, the distance being 2000 miles, averaging about 43 miles per day. Is there any part of Canada still in a state of nature, without roads or the facilities of travel where such a speed can be attained? It affords a strong proof that the route cannot be much broken or difficult to pass over.

A very small portion of the route proposed forbids the use of steam navigation, and when once a communication is opened, the route will immediately become most important in a commercial point of view. It would soon be estab-