

*J. Ross, Esq.*

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Canadian public, it will then be considered somewhat in the light in which I view it. It is complained that the Hudson's Bay Company occupy that territory and prevent the extension of settlement and civilisation in that part of the continent of America. I do not think they ought to be permitted to do that, but I think it would be a very great calamity if their control and power in that part of America were entirely to cease. My reason for forming that opinion is this: During all the time that I have been able to observe their proceedings there, there has been peace within the whole territory. The operations of the Company seem to have been carried on at all events in such a way as to prevent the Indian tribes within their borders from molesting the Canadian frontier; while, on the other hand, those who have turned their attention to that quarter of the world must have seen that from Oregon to Florida, for these last 30 years or more, there has been a constant Indian war going on between the natives of the American territory on the one side and the Indian tribes on the other. Now, I fear very much, that if the occupation of the Hudson's Bay Company, in what is called the Hudson's Bay Territory, were to cease, our fate in Canada might be just as it is with the Americans in the border settlements of their territory.

11. How do you propose to reconcile the two purposes which you think ought to be aimed at, namely, the power of allowing the spread of settlement in such territory as is adapted for settlement, and yet maintaining the authority of the Hudson's Bay Company in any portion of their present dominions?—I think the most desirable course, and the most convenient one, would be this: So fast as the Canadian Government might wish to open up any part of the country for settlement, which they might upon exploration find it would be advantageous to open; say that they desired to open ten, twenty, or fifty townships of land, I think the convenient course would be to give notice to the Hudson's Bay Company that in a certain space of time, say in one year, or two years, whatever period of time might be considered best and most fair, they intended to make a survey of the space of country which they thought that they could conveniently occupy for settlement, and the Hudson's Bay Company should be required to surrender that territory within the period of time indicated. If they arranged to have what is called a post within the precincts of the territory, I think a reservation ought in fairness to be made for them to settle their people upon the land so to be surrendered.

12. Do you apprehend that there is any considerable extent of country near the Canadian frontier which would be adapted for settlement and the habitation of civilised men?—As I have already stated to the Committee, I have never been within the territory myself; I have never been further westward than Lake Superior, and all that I know of it is from what I have read and from conversations with some who have been born in the territory, and have gone up there and gone across the continent several times, and from others who have travelled over it once. I believe that at the west of Lake Superior, and from that to the Red River, there are parts of the country that might be very well settled. I fancy that an impression prevails that the whole of it is good country. The information which I have received leads me to believe that the greater part of the country is not good; that is, that it is broken and intersected by swamps to a very great extent. The country round the Red River is said to be very good producing land indeed; it is chiefly prairie land; I mean in the valley of the Red River; and there is great difficulty in obtaining wood, as I am informed; and I am told that there is no coal on the Red River.

13. Do you think there would be any difficulty in establishing regular communications between the Red River settlement and the present province of Canada, if any such arrangement as you have described could be effected?—If any project were mooted and were set afloat for carrying a railway across the continent, I believe it is conceded that that portion of the continent of North America over which the Queen's Government extends is the most feasible route that can be adopted. I believe that is conceded by all the American gentlemen who have investigated the subject, and I think it is so accepted now.

14. You have heard that opinion generally expressed?—I have heard that opinion expressed by leading and influential Americans who have investigated the subject; I believe it is Mr. Whitney's opinion; at least it is the impression that that is his opinion.

15. What is about the distance from the Red River Settlement to the extreme