

accompanied by a valuable map, in relation to it. The report of the Minister of the Interior for 1878 contains an appendix by myself on the practicability of building a railway from Lake Winnipeg to Hudson's Bay. In the session of 1878-79, and again the following year, the Hon. Thomas Ryan, a gentleman of great enterprise, has brought the matter under notice of the Dominion Senate.

In 1880 the Parliament of Canada granted charters to two companies for constructing railways, and otherwise opening a route of commerce, from the North-West Territories to Europe *via* Hudson's Bay; and during the past summer one of them, the Nelson Valley Company, caused a survey to be made of part of the distance between Lake Winnipeg and the harbour of Churchill. The chief engineer has reported the route to be an easy and inexpensive one for a railway. This company had also the power of connecting with the Canadian Pacific Railway; but the main line will form a connecting link between the great system of inland navigation, with centres in Lake Winnipeg, and the sea. When constructed, the Nelson Valley Railway may carry to the seaboard not only the surplus grain and cattle of our own North-West, but also those of Minnesota and Dakota. Sir J. H. Lefroy, President of the Geographical Section of the British Association, in the able address which he delivered at the Swansea meeting (1880), said: "Hudson's Bay itself cannot fail at no distant day to challenge more attention. Dr. Bell reports that the land is rising at the rate of five to ten feet in a century, that is, possibly, an inch a year. Not, however, on this account will the hydrographer notice it; but because the natural seaports of that vast interior, now thrown open to settlement, Keewatin, Manitoba, and other provinces unborn, must be sought there. York Factory, which is nearer Liverpool than New York, has been happily called by Professor H. Y. Hind the Archangel of the West. The mouth of the Churchill, however, although somewhat further north, offers far superior natural advantages, and may more fitly challenge the title. It will, undoubtedly, be the future shipping port for the agricultural products of the vast North-West Territory, and the route by which emigrants will enter the country." Sir Henry Lefroy knows whereof he writes, being personally well acquainted with Hudson's Bay and the North-West Territories.

It has been shown that the Canadian North-West Territories, embracing hundreds of millions of acres of fine land, are capable of becoming the greatest wheatfield in the world. The centre of this immense agricultural region lies to the north of the Saskatchewan. If we look at the map of the northern hemisphere we shall see at a glance that the shortest route between these territories and England is through Hudson's Bay. Mr. Lindsay Russell, the Surveyor-General of Canada, has recently made a close calculation of relative distances, and found that even the city of Winnipeg, which is near the south-eastern extremity of these territories, is at least 800 miles nearer to Liverpool by the Hudson's Bay route than by the St. Lawrence, while the difference in favour of the former will be increased continually as we advance northward into the interior. Now let us consider the relative progress of two persons travelling to Liverpool from the centre of this vast region, the one going by Winnipeg and the valley of the St. Lawrence, and the other by the Nelson valley and the Churchill Harbour. In about the same time which the former requires to reach the city of Winnipeg, the latter arrives at the sea coast at Churchill. From Winnipeg our first traveller has still to go 1,291 miles by the Lake Superior route, or 1,698 miles if he prefers the all-rail journey through American territory, *via* Chicago, before he reaches Montreal, where