

sufficiently tolerant to allow me to make it, if it goes no further, and I, therefore, say that we may seek for the main chance elsewhere than in Main Street. The future fortunes of the country beyond this Province bear directly upon your prosperity. Although you may not be able to dig for four feet through the same character of black loam that you have here when you get to the country beyond Fort Ellice, yet in its main features it is the same, right up to the forks of the Saskatchewan. I deeply regret that I was not able to visit Edmonton, which bids fair to rival any place in the North-West. Settlement is rapidly increasing there, and I met at Battleford one man who alone had commissions from ten Ontario farmers to buy for them at that place. Nothing can exceed the fertility and excellence of the land along almost the whole course of that great river, and to the north of it, in the wide strip belting its banks and extending up to the Peace River, there will be room for a great population whose opportunities for profitable cultivation of the soil will be most enviable. The netting of wood of which I have spoken as covering all the prairie between Winnipeg and Battleford is beyond that point drawn up upon the shores of the prairie sea, and lies in masses of fine forest in the gigantic half circle formed by the Saskatchewan and the Rockies. It is only in secluded valleys, on the banks of large lakes, and in river bottoms that much wood is found in the Far West, probably owing to the prevalence of fires. These are easily preventible and there is no reason why plantations should not flourish there in good situations as well as elsewhere. Before I leave the Saskatchewan let me advert to the ease with which the steam navigation of that river can be vastly improved. At present there is only one boat at all worthy of the name of a river steamer upon it, and this steamer lies up during the night. A new company is, I am informed, now being organized, and there is no reason why, if the new vessels are properly equipped and furnished with electric lights, which may now be cheaply provided, they should not keep up a night and day service, so that the settlers at Prince Albert, Edmonton, and elsewhere may not have, during another season, to suffer great privations incident to the wants of transportation which has loaded the banks of Grand Rapids during the present year with freight, awaiting steam transport. The great cretaceous coal seams at the headwaters of the rivers rising in the Rocky Mountains or in the neighbourhood of streams flowing towards your doors should not be forgotten. Although you have some coal in districts nearer to you, we should remember that on the headwaters of these streams there is plenty of the same, which can be floated down to you before you have a complete railway system. Want of time as well as a wish to see the less vaunted parts of the country took me south-westward from Battleford, over land which in many of the maps is variously marked as consisting of arid plains or as a continuation of the

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