

taken from "Prairie du Chien" by this route, passing from the Minnesota to the Red River with but very slight difficulty; whenever the time does come, therefore, for placing steamers upon the latter river it will be comparatively an easy matter to transfer them from the Minnesota River.

Should the gold discoveries on the Fraser, Bridge, and Thompson Rivers prove to be of much value, the movement of the British Government will doubtless be accelerated with respect to organizing governments for its north-western possessions. The easiest and, if improved, the cheapest route to that region, either from Great Britain or from Canada and the United States, lies directly through British territory. The Red River, Lake Winnipeg, and the Saskatchewan River furnish a navigable water line of about 1,400 miles of the distance. If the gold of Fraser River proves abundant the immigration for some years will be large, and it only requires the organization of a provincial government over the valleys of the Red and Saskatchewan Rivers, the presence of a sufficient force to hold the Indians in subordination, and the planting of settlements along the course of these streams, to make the route indicated the great thoroughfare of travel.

While on Red River Captain Blakely had repeated opportunities to make inquiries touching the navigability of the Saskatchewan, of those who had for years been familiar with it, and he is entirely satisfied that steamers may ply upon it a distance of 700 miles above Lake Winnipeg. He says the reports which he obtained upon this subject are not half so discouraging as those he received from the trappers and traders respecting the navigability of the Upper Mississippi before he took the first boat up the latter river. It is expected, however, that an experienced steamboat man will pass over the entire length of the river, from the lake to the Rocky Mountain House, next season, with the view of testing the matter thoroughly. We have the utmost confidence that the result will be in the highest degree satisfactory. If the British Government should pursue a wise and comprehensive policy in the management of her north-western possessions, within less than ten years this will become a great trans-continental thoroughfare, along which will collect prosperous and populous communities, and a new world be made to subservise the purposes of humanity and of civilization.

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