

twelve miles, I found vegetation somewhat further advanced than on the side I had just left; the soil is also better, inasmuch as that it is higher. Timber, such as maple, elm, oak, and poplar, covers the country to the water's edge. I visited several places where sugar had been made, and saw specimens of that article equal to any that I have ever seen in Eastern Canada.

The Duck Mountain, which occupies almost the entire background, commences to rise not far from the lake shore, keeping a gentle ascent for fifteen or twenty miles back, where it attains its greatest elevation, a height of 800 or 400 feet above the lake. I learned from the people who reside in Duck Bay that the entire face of the mountain is a succession of gentle slopes and flat table lands, and that the summit itself is an extensive plateau of alluvial soil, covered with a fine growth of timber.

There are three salt springs near the southern end of Lake Winnipegosis, one of which I visited, where there are works established for the manufacture of salt.

There are some forty or fifty half-breed Indians, who reside here, and at the Duck Bay, and though assured by them that all kinds of grain succeeded well here, yet they cultivated only a few potatoes, as fish and game are so plentiful and of such good quality, that they may be said to live almost without exertion.

From the Salt Springs I passed through the Dauphin River, almost sixteen miles, to Dauphin Lake. The Dauphin River is a fine stream, about forty yards broad, and having five feet of water in the shallowest places. Its banks are a strong grey clay, covered with black mould, and timbered with oak, elm, and poplar. It has two considerable tributaries rising in the Duck and Riding Mountains, which appear to drain a country well adapted for settlement. There are several places on the Dauphin River where the Indians grow potatoes, Indian corn, and melons. The wild grape, wild hop, and wild vetch are also common on the banks of the river.

Lac Dauphin is about thirty miles long from north-west to south-east, and six miles broad, its western shore is bounded by the Riding Mountain, similar in all respects to the Duck Mountain already mentioned. Its southern shore is bounded by a prairie interspersed with wooded knolls, which I was informed extended without interruption south-east to the Assiniboine and Red Rivers.

I saw fixed rock only in two places in this part of the country, viz., at Snake Island, near the lower end of Lake Winnipegosis, and at the lower part of the Dauphin River. That on the Snake Island, a whitish limestone, is full of organic remains, the other is similar to the Manitoba limestone, and nearly without organic remains.

From Lac Dauphin I returned through the north-east end of Lake Manitoba, to its discharge, the Little Saskatchewan River.

The Little Saskatchewan, as its name implies, has a very strong current, which I found, on measuring to be two and a half and three miles per hour, but it is entirely free from rapids, its average breadth is 250 yards with from eight to twelve feet of water, it appears well adapted for steamboat navigation.

The country in the vicinity of the Little Saskatchewan presents every inducement for settlement, as is proved by the flourishing state of the present settlement at Fairford, or, as it is more generally known, by the name of Partridge Cross, a mission established under the Bishop of Rupert's Land, about six years ago, by the Rev. Mr. Cowley.

The present establishment is some six miles higher up the river than the first one, which, being subject to inundations in times of high water, was abandoned. There are several well-built houses, a chapel, school, and mill at this place, with a population of about 250 souls, Indians and half-breeds.

The Rev. Mr. Stag, the missionary now in charge, informed me that the school which is attached to the mission was usually attended by from fifty to sixty children, the half of whom are Indian children. Indeed the Indians belonging to this place appear to be fast acquiring the tastes and habits of civilization, being clean and better dressed than any I have seen in the country. Mr. Stag also informed me that, notwithstanding the ease with which the ground was cultivated and the large returns of grain, that he required to use all his influence to induce the Indians to cultivate the land, as their wants are so easily supplied by fishing and hunting.

From the Little Saskatchewan I returned through Lake Winnipeg, arriving at this place on the 26th of June.

The journey through Lake Winnipeg presented no feature of essential difference from the other lakes, except that the western shore of Lake Winnipeg is low land, with occasional limestone cliff, and the eastern shore high land with granite rock.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. W. WELLS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Sir,

Fort Ellice, Rupert's Land, July 9, 1858,

In the letter I had the honour to address to you from the Red River on the 3rd June last I stated that, after making the necessary preparation, I should immediately commence the exploration of the valley of the Assiniboine River. The distrust, and even dread, with which the Sioux Indians are regarded by the Red River hunters, made it necessary to secure the services of a strong party for the exploration of the Little Souris River, where the tertiary coal was reported to exist in abundance. In consequence, however, of the failure of last year's autumn buffalo hunt, and the ravages of the grasshoppers at Prairie Portage and elsewhere in the settlements, most of the able-bodied men fitted for the exigencies of a journey into the Indian country had left the settlements a few days before my arrival, either for the Buffalo Plains or for St. Paul, and it was with some difficulty that I could procure eight men and the necessary provisions for a three month's journey, but by the 14th of June the expedition was en route for the interior.

After arriving at St. James's Church, on the Assiniboine River, I proceeded with Mr. Dickinson to ascertain the position of the Big Ridge, bounding the Valley of the Assiniboine, and follow its windings for a distance of seventy or eighty miles, until it is cut by Portage River, near Lake Manitobah, opposite Prairie Portage. Mr. Fleming proceeded with the carts and canoes by the Hunter's Road to Prairie Portage, making on his way a section of the Assiniboine River, ascertaining by numerous trials its rate of current, volume of water, &c.