

the Indians would attack them ; it is a buffalo-hunting country. The greater portion of the Indians are warlike in that part ; I should believe that that would be the consequence ; I only speak from supposition, because I have never been in the Saskatchewan ; but I know that the habits of the Indians are rather warlike.

*J. Rae, Esq., M.D.*

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371. Your opinion seems to be, that if there was nothing to prevent it, settlement in that district of the country would not be immediate, but would be gradual, and would be certain?—Quite so ; when the country gradually settles up to it ; the produce cannot be carried out to Hudson's Bay, the difficulty of road is so great ; that is my impression.

372. You have stated that you were in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company?—For 23 years.

373. Are you still in their service?—No ; I left their service last year.

374. You are now quite independent of them?—Yes.

375. What is your opinion of the system pursued by that Company, so far as relates to the Indian population?—The system pursued is as fair, I think, towards the Indian as possible ; the Company's tariff with the Indians is one of the principal things I wish to mention ; the tariff is formed in a peculiar way, and necessarily so ; the sums given for furs do not coincide with the value of the furs traded for with them, because the musk-rat, or the less valuable furs, are paid for at a higher rate ; were the Company to pay for the finer furs at the same rate, the Indians would hunt up the finer furs and destroy them off, as has been done all along the frontier, and we should then require to reduce the price for the musk-rat and the inferior furs, and the Indians would not hunt them at all ; the Indians would never understand our varying the prices of the furs according to the prices here ; the consequence would be that the Indian would not be a bit better off, and he would kill up all the finer animals and leave the musk-rat and ordinary furs unaffected.

376. You have stated that, in your opinion there is a portion of the territory now belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company to the south, which may be at no distant period available for the purposes of settlement ; what is your opinion, in that respect, with regard to that vast district of country which lies to the north of the region which you have referred to?—As far as I can answer, we could not grow wheat. At Moose Factory, in latitude 51°, barley would not ripen ; you could not depend upon it. Potatoes were very variable ; sometimes they would give five or six fold ; that was the highest I saw, I think, during 10 years ; sometimes the crop yielded scarcely the seed.

377. Do you believe that, under any circumstances, there would be the slightest probability of settlement taking place in that great district of country within the next 20 years, for instance?—I think decidedly not ; it must be pushed up from the south ; I mean, not to pay ; people might settle. No person would go there to settle unless he was paid for it, and paid well. I apply my answer to the wooded country.

378. You think there would be no inducement for persons to go there except for the purposes of fur trading?—Only that ; and then they would require to have the exclusive right to trade ; any opposition would do away with any profits or advantages from it to a great extent.

379. What, in your opinion, would be the consequences of throwing open the present exclusive system of fur trading to the public generally, and letting anybody who chose go and trade for furs there, and kill the fur-bearing animals?—The effect would be, the introduction of spirits among the Indians again, and the demoralization of the Indians.

380. Do you think that the effect would be the extirpation of the fur-bearing animal?—In a great measure ; it would lead to that, because trappers would be sent in. People would come up and kill the animals themselves instead of leaving the Indians to hunt over the grounds ; they would kill them at all seasons, whereas the Hudson's Bay Company discourage the killing them in the summer time ; they discourage the Indians from killing them in the breeding season.

381. Do you consider the fur trade in its very nature to be necessarily and essentially a monopoly?—I think that to continue it regularly it requires to be a monopoly in some hands something similar to what it is now.

382. Would not the effect of throwing it open be that it would give a great stimulus to it for the next few years, and absolutely destroy it afterwards?—