



VOL. I.—NO. 5.

TORONTO, ONT., DECEMBER 15, 1880.

\$2 PER ANNUM.

### THE KEEWATIN TERRITORY.

The following interesting particulars have been furnished by Mr. John Mather, Manager of the Keewatin Lumber Company's Mills, at Keewatin, Lake of the Woods. Mr. Mather, who was for a number of years manager of Messrs. Gilmour's mills at the Gatineau, is well qualified to form a correct opinion of the country and its resources. He arrived at Ottawa recently, where he remained on business for a short time.

#### ITS RAPID DEVELOPMENT.

Keewatin the site of the Keewatin Lumbering and Manufacturing Company is situated at the western outlet of the Lake of the Woods, and about three miles distant from Rat Portage. It is about 125 miles east of Winnipeg, 100 miles east of Selkirk, and 300 miles west of Thunder Bay. This new village is a rival to the older settlement of Rat Portage, which has gained its principal importance, according to Mr. Mather's statement, from having been made the district headquarters of the Pacific railroad construction staff. There is a station of the Pacific railway at Keewatin, and already it has become an important shipping point. Here, Mr. Mather says, is the greatest water-power along the whole line of the Pacific Railroad in the North-west Territories. The head of water is, on the average, twenty-one feet, and the quantity which passes is possibly slightly in excess of the volume which dashes over the Chaudiere Falls at Ottawa. There are large and important water-powers in the North-west Territories, but they are all remote from the Pacific Railroad.

#### WHAT FOR THE WORLD'S MARKETS.

This is the point where a large portion of the wheat grown in the North-West will be ground before shipment to the Canadian and European markets, just as American wheat is ground at Minneapolis. Already negotiations have been opened with the Hudson Bay Company for the purchase of a site and water-power at the eastern outlet of the Lake of the Woods for the erection of a large grist mill, not to carry on a mere local trade, but to grind for the world's markets, as soon as the Thunder Bay branch is open for through traffic. Keewatin has already become the centre of lumber manufacturing, and soon will obtain a more than local celebrity. The Keewatin Lumbering Company's mills have been in operation all the summer, and the Company have cut and built five large per-

manent trestle bridges for the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Messrs. Brandenburg & Co., who have large lumber mills at Knife Falls, on the St. Louis River, near Duluth, on the American side of the boundary line, and have entered into partnership with Mr. W. J. Macaulay, of Winnipeg, for the purpose of erecting and operating a lumber mill on the site of the old Rat Portage. The capacity of this mill, which is now in course of erection, will be five million feet per season. The capacity of the mill at Keewatin is about twenty million feet. It is rumored that the Pacific Railway Syndicate will establish district workshops at Keewatin for the Pacific Railroad.

#### MANUFACTURING AND MINING.

The development of the territory around the Lake of the Woods promises to be very rapid as soon as through trains are running over the Thunder Bay Branch Railroad. Already the railroad construction has given an impetus to Rat Portage, where fifteen or twenty houses are being erected at the present time; and a similar number at Keewatin village, needed for the workpeople congregating around the mills. There is no agricultural land of an extent throughout the district—it resembles very much the township of Wakefield on the Gatineau River. What land there is is fertile, but the maximum extent of each patch is two or three acres. It can never sustain an agricultural population. The future of the territory depends upon its supporting a large manufacturing and mining population.

#### TIMBER AND RAILROAD TIES.

A few questions relative to the rumored want of economic timber in the territory led Mr. Mather's conversation to a subject with which he is familiar. "Whoever says that the timber in the Keewatin Territory possesses no economic value," he replied, "speaks without warrant. The supply of timber will last for a period much longer than I should like to say. The red pine is much finer than any I have ever seen on the Ottawa; the white pine is similar to that on the Coulonge and Black River tributaries of the Ottawa. There is no maple or beech in the territory, but there is a large quantity of very fine cedar and tamarac, and what is called jack pine. These last three woods are all suitable for railroad ties, which will be so much required in the North-West Territories. In fact, in a few years, this will be the only district for eight hundred miles along the Pacific Railroad where ties can be obtained. This section of the road will require two

million ties at first landing, and an average annual supply of four hundred thousand ties for repairs thereafter. The district producing this wood suitable for ties is a tributary to the Lake of the Woods, and the timber can easily be floated to the crossing of the railroad.

#### ABUNDANCE OF ECONOMIC MINERALS.

The abundance of the economic minerals found in this district has already been made the subject of considerable observation by the *Globe's* special correspondent, who recently traversed that district, and Mr. Mather had little to add in the subject. The gold excitement still continues, and discoveries of gold in quartz rock are daily recorded. Capital at the present moment is the great desideratum for the development of this industry. It is not forthcoming as yet. Besides gold, iron and copper are found in large quantities. A soapstone of considerable economic value is also abundant. Large deposits of this stone are found at a place on the Lake of the Woods called Pipe Stone Point, to be used by the Indians from Minnesota and other Western States in the past reserved here to obtain stone for making pipes. Another stone, an excellent substitute for the oil stones used by carpenters to sharpen edge tools, is abundant, and will command ready sale. Lignite, too, has been found, but generally in bulkers brought from a distance by glacial action. The indications are that the true bed of lignite will be found on the Minnesota side of the boundary or watershed of the Lake of the Woods.

#### CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILROAD.

A large body of men are still at work upon the Section 15, and work is being prosecuted as fast as possible.

The approach of winter has necessitated the discontinuance of work in the gravel pits, and consequently the discharge of a large body of men. The rails on the road are laid, and trains will be able to run without any difficulty till next spring. There is already one "lift" of ballast on the road from Cross Lake to Keewatin, 36 miles. On a portion of this distance the work is entirely finished, as also it is from Selkirk to Cross Lake.

#### ERECTION OF STEEL BRIDGES.

The Toronto Bridge Company have their foreman, Mr. Danvers, at the Lake of the Woods waiting to superintend the erection of two steel bridges across the two outlets of the lake. It was, by some unaccountable means, delayed in Duluth for six weeks. The masonry has already been built, and is waiting for the superstructure.

#### SALE OF FORT FRANCES STORES.

Recently the Government stores at Fort Frances Lake were taken to Keewatin and sold by auction. The steamer *Lady of the Lake*, used on the works, was also sold, and purchased by Mr. W. J. Macaulay, lumberman, for \$1,500; she originally cost considerably over one hundred thousand dollars, and was purchased by the Macdonald-Carter Government to ply in connection with the Dawson route. She has since the sale,

met with an accident, but will be at work again next summer, towing logs, &c. The Keewatin Lumbering Company have also built a small steamer for similar purposes.

#### THE BOUNDARY DISPUTE.

Much inconvenience is caused to settlers in this district by the non settlement of the boundary question; and they are as much isolated from the exercise of their civil rights and the protection of the law as if they were residing in the heart of the "Dark" Continent. There is no Court where a man can sue or be sued, or where he can collect a debt or seek restitution for losses sustained. The only persons who obtain the benefits of the law are the whiskey smugglers, who, if captured, are introduced to the Stipendiary Magistrate appointed under the Act for the better preservation of order in the vicinity of public works. No school system can be established until this unfortunate dispute has been settled. The education of the children—and there are many in the settlement—is provided by private education. The Keewatin Lumbering Company are about erecting a school-house at Keewatin for the convenience of their employees' children. There is no system, and there can be none until the matter is definitely settled.

#### "WET GROCERIES," WHICH PAY NO DUTY.

An enterprising Yankee has cut a road through the bush from Hallock's Station on the St. Paul and Manitoba Railroad, to a point near the boundary line at the Lake of the Woods. At this place he has established a store or "whiskey shanty," where all kinds of "wet groceries" are dispensed to visitors from Rat Portage, in Canada. All kinds of goods are smuggled into Canada from this man's shanty, and a considerable loss is inflicted upon the revenue of the Dominion. During the past season he is said to have carted along this road, from Hallock's to his store, over eighty thousand dollars worth of goods. An effort should be made to stop this illicit traffic.

#### A WET SEASON.

In this district, as throughout the North-West Territories, the season has been an unusually wet one. The earliest settler does not remember the like.

#### AN UNFAVOURABLE VIEW OF MINNESOTA.

Mr. Mather, advertent to the absurd stories published of the floods in Manitoba and the swampy character of the country, characterized them as much exaggerated. "Why," he said, "about a month ago last I had occasion to go from Winnipeg to Minneapolis. On leaving Manitoba the weather was fine, and the whole country along the railroad high and dry. The crops could be everywhere seen growing and thriving. But a considerable distance along the St. Paul and Manitoba Railroad in Minnesota I noticed that long stretches of country were covered completely over with water as if there were lakes there. The wheat was completely under water, and all farm field work suspended. This was the very territory a few months previous I had admired, because it was so dry and high."