

hills adjoining it. The sides are very precipitous, and the bottom quite level and all covered with beautiful grass; there is no creek flowing through it, or even the appearance of any recent one. Two miles up in it, towards the north, there is a small lake and another valley branching off from it, which we crossed four miles further on; in it there is a small creek, six feet wide, and one foot six inches deep. The track turning to the north soon comes close to "Le grand coule de la gros butte," and continues along it for nine miles.

The scenery is now very wild and beautiful; the valley, the bottom of which is eighty feet below the general level of the country, cuts through ranges of hills, many of them 150 feet high, and winds round the base of others, some bare and rugged and some covered with poplars. There are many lakes of various sizes which add considerably to the picturesque beauty of this peculiar region, the favourite haunt of the moose and red deer.

Travelling on five miles more we reached the top of a hill, where suddenly burst on our view a vast undulating prairie, stretching away to the Assiniboine and Little Souris. The track, which had been very faint for some time, here became quite invisible; it was thought advisable therefore to return to where another one had been seen branching off some six or seven miles back. Having regained it, we followed it for eighteen miles, still among the "Blue Hills," crossing the low ridges and winding through the valleys between the high hills, several of them 300 feet high, and around many pretty lakes, when we then came upon the open prairie.

From this across to the Assiniboine is thirteen miles. The prairie is thickly spread over with low willows, and is swampy in many places; there are but a few clumps of young aspens to relieve its bleak and dreary aspect.

The valley of the Assiniboine, where we crossed it, forty miles above Prairie Portage, is about one mile and a quarter wide; its sides are much broken and indented. The poplar and oaks, which it is full of, are all young, none exceeding fifteen feet in height, and there are no trees of any kind along either side for many miles. The river is at this point ten chains wide and three feet deep, and has a hard gravelly bottom, so that we forded it very easily. On the north side of the river are the sand hills through which we passed last June. The forest, whose southern limits I have ascertained, extends twenty miles above Prairie Portage along the river where, where it then dies away. I remained at Prairie Portage three days making explorations of the forest, and obtaining information concerning it from some people who were well acquainted with it. I found that the good timber grows merely along the river in width from half a mile to three miles; beyond that the wood is exactly similar to what it is on the south side. Here and there among the young poplars are solitary oaks at long intervals, many of them two feet in diameter, the remnants doubtless of a fine forest. About eight miles back from the river there is a large clump of balsam spruce, but which are all small. The following is a list of the different trees and their dimensions, which form the band of good timber along the river. Oak, 2 ft. in diameter; aspen, 2 ft.; balsam poplar, 2 ft. 9 in.; elm, 1 ft. 3 in.; bass wood, 2 ft. 6 in.; ash (very few) 1 ft. There is an abundant supply of oaks straight and tall, 1 ft. 6 in. in diameter; and of balsam poplar, 2 ft. On the "Pembina Mountain" there is some good timber, including tamarack, not found elsewhere, which only averages, I am told, 9 in. in diameter.

In my final report I hope to give a more detailed and specific account of the country that has been examined.

Professor H. Y. Hind,
&c. &c. &c.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) JAMES A. DICKENSON.

Enclosure 2 in No. 3.

Extract from Toronto "Leader," Dec. 14, 1858.

STEAMBOATS ON THE RED RIVER, THE SASKATCHEWAN, AND LAKE WINIPEG.

(From the Chicago Press.)

We had the pleasure of an interview a day or two since with Captain Blakely, the well-known pioneer of steamboating on the Upper Mississippi. During the past season Captain Blakely visited Red River of the north, to ascertain by personal examination whether that stream may be successfully navigated by steamboats. The result of his observations was highly satisfactory, there being in his opinion sufficient depth of water for easy navigation throughout the season from Lake Winipeg to the mouth of the Cheyenne River, a distance of about 350 miles.

We have observed a statement in some of the newspapers, representing that Captain Blakely will put a steamer upon Red River next season: At present we think he entertains no such purpose. Should the Hudson Bay Company be expelled from the country watered by the Red, the Assiniboine, and the Saskatchewan Rivers, a provincial government be organized, and that whole region be thrown open by the British Government to immigration—and all this within the next three months—then it would not surprise us at all if Captain Blakely's steamers should be ploughing the Red River next season. But such speedy action is not to be expected from that government. Downing Street has just begun to learn something of the real character of the British Possessions lying west of Canada; and possibly Downing Street interests are not unrepresented in the Hudson Bay Company. But whether so represented or not, the circumlocution office must take its time. Then, there is another matter to be adjusted before American steamers will be placed upon Red River. The provisions of the Reciprocity Treaty must be extended thither, and this will require more time.

We had supposed that steamers designed to navigate Red River would have to be built upon its banks, but Captain Blakely informs us that they may be taken across the Minnesota River. The portage is only about half a mile, and the expenditure of one or two thousand dollars will open a channel across sufficient deep to float a steamer in times of high water. In 1823, the crops having been destroyed in the Selkirk settlement by high water, three Mackinaw boats loaded with grain, were