

DOMINION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

(To the Editors of the Globe.)

SIR—There are a few points connected with the proposed telegraph line, about this undertaking, that require a little discussion and as you have published several articles on the subject no doubt the public would like to have a little more information. This I do not propose to furnish myself, but to ask from the Directors, and as one of the original subscribers who has hitherto had confidence in them, I think I am entitled to ask for it. Firstly, amid so many and so diverse opinions about the cost of a good telegraph line thoroughly equipped including all the preliminary expenses, we might expect our Directors to discover from outside sources the actual facts of the case, and lay them before the public. On the one hand we are asked to believe that the line lately built in the United States have cost from \$300 to \$450 per mile, (see Dominion Telegrapher,) whilst the opponents of the Company confidently affirm that the outside figure should be \$125, and that Mr. Reeve would make more than \$200,000 out of the operation. If this is not the case, then I think the Directors owe it to us, the shareholders who are expected to pay up the remaining calls, and to the public who are asked to subscribe, to call evidence from some other source than Mr. Reeve or Mr. Dwight, and make it known to us through your columns. Perhaps they could learn what the People's Telegraph Company in Quebec are going to pay for their line, as the contract for a portion has been already awarded. Secondly if it should appear that Mr. Reeve will clear anything like so enormous a sum as \$200,000, would it not be advisable to try and get rid of him, and give out the rest of the line to tender? Ungrateful, do they say? We could afford to give him \$50,000 for his share of connection, the value of which does not seem to be sufficiently recognized in the Trade Review articles. If that would not satisfy the man, I don't know what would. He could pay up all his debts in the States, and begin life anew with the remainder. Failing that, however, the shareholders might still be satisfied if they could be assured that the profits would pay fair dividends on the capital of \$500,000. Let us hear what the results of operation have been already between Toronto and Buffalo, and any other figures obtained from disinterested parties. Lastly, attention has been drawn to the alleged fact, that the mileage between Hamilton and Wellington Square has been unnecessarily increased, and the Spectator refuses to accept the future extension westward as a sufficient reason for it. This is a point which I am most anxious to see cleared up as soon as possible. Believing, as I do, that the whole enterprise may yet be successful, if public confidence can be restored, but at the same time this cannot be unless the Directors vouchsafe clearer and fuller information. I have written this letter to indicate to them just the doubts and difficulties that have arisen in the mind of

A SHAREHOLDER.

Hamilton, 25th March, 1863.

THE NOR'-WEST.

USEFUL INFORMATION RESPECTING THE SOIL, THE PRAIRIE, OR WILD LAND, AND BEST LOCALITIES

THE *Nor'-Wester* of the 20th ult., has been received. It contains another instalment of answers to a series of questions asked respecting the qualities of the soil for farming, &c. Our contemporary is doing a good work, and deserves commendation and support.

1st. What kind of soil prevails?

The general character of our soil is a very rich black loam, varying from 18 inches to 3 feet in depth, resting upon a sandy clay. This is the character of the soil in the vicinity of Red River, but up on the Assiniboine the loam becomes intermixed with sand, the intermixture varying with the locality, thus affording, in the opinion of some, a soil more adapted for cultivation, especially of root crops than the pure black loam. This is, however, a matter of opinion, as a crop of all kinds of vegetable and grain have been raised upon the banks of the Red River for the last half century, without the application, in most cases, of the least particle of manure. Forty bushels of wheat to an acre is not an unusual crop in a good season, and the wheat weighs 65 pounds to the bushel on an average.

2nd. Is it rolling or flat?

In the immediate vicinity of this place the country is as flat as a lake, but it becomes more rolling as we advance up the Assiniboine River towards the interior.

3rd. Is it all prairie, or is wood interspersed?

While there is any quantity of land ready for the plough, still along the points and bays of the river there is a sufficiency of wood for a long time to come. Except in the old settled districts the wood is scarce and building timber is close at hand. Whilst over the prairies the bluffs or groves of poplars of every size are interspersed.

4th. How can it be got, by pre-emption or purchase? Can occupied lands be got, and upon what conditions?

New lands are being constantly taken up by the people of this country and by emigrants, with no other title than that of occupancy. They have it by a pre-emptive right, and without doubt that right will be recognized, and their titles made good by patent when our new Government gets into working order. Until then, there is no other method adopted with wild lands.

Improved farms can, undoubtedly, be purchased at rates which would be called very reasonable to an emigrant. The prices of such farms will vary from

\$100 to \$1,000, according to situation and amount of improvement.

Farms now occupied by many of our people who wish to go out to the buffalo hunt during the summer, can be hired, worked on shares, or bought, according to circumstances.

Neither rental, shares or prices will be thought extravagant by Canadians. If you could succeed in getting such farms to work for the first year or two, it would enable you to look about, and at the same time you would be getting a start in the country.

5th. Where is the best land situated? In what quantity can it be taken up? Is the land surveyed?

The land is all of the very best quality along the Red and Assiniboine rivers. There is very good land between the Red River and the Lake of the Woods.

In fact, with the exception of an occasional swamp and a few spots of salty soil, the land is unequalled for fertility everywhere. Nutritious grasses cover the prairie with a luxuriant growth, and across the prairie fires are kept back for a few years, groves of poplars spring up and grow with remarkable rapidity. The land along the river is mostly taken up, but at Portage and beyond, there is land for thousands of settlers. The land is surveyed along the rivers, and as far up as the Portage. It is laid out in lots with a frontage along the river and extending back to a mile, with a privilege of cutting hay in the rear. Except at the Portage no back tier of lots is surveyed. Lots are taken up varying from two chains to twelve chains in width, and there will be no difficulty in getting as much land as one needs, always within the bounds of reason. It would be bad policy to allow any one to take up a very large quantity, as nothing deters settlement so much as to allow speculators to hold large tracts of valuable land, to lie idle in order to get a large price through rise in the value. At the same time we can assure all intending emigrants, that they can get as much land as they need for themselves and their sons and daughters.

6th. Is the Indian title extinct?

Upon this point we would say that while the Indians are willing to come to an agreement with the settlers and having made tacit arrangements, still the Indian title is not extinct, neither will it be until the Government arranges with them by treaty. There will never be any trouble with them. Of course they must not be humbugged with unscrupulous agents. Such racecraft was the cause of all the difficulty which the Americans have to contend with. The Indian is perfectly open to fair treatment, and will always stand by it.

This small settlement has existed in the heart of this continent for about sixty years past, and could have been cut off to a man, when in its incipency, still they have been unmolested, and we do not see why it should not always be so.

The *Nor'-Wester* also says:—

By late correspondence from the Saskatchewan it seems that the winter has been even milder in that region than has been here. There is little or no snow upon the ground, and the prairies are on fire the same as usual in the fall. Buffalo are very scarce and distant, and many of the hunters are living upon bear and beaver meat. The traders have good reason to believe that the Hudson Bay Company have incited the Indians to forbid catching fish for their subsistence.

LUMBERING IN THE OTTAWA VALLEY.

A CORRESPONDENT in the Ottawa Valley refers to the effect of the snow-storm on lumbering operations in that part of the country as follows:—

"We are again in the midst of a very severe snow-storm, which I fear will block up all travel for some time, and no doubt the next change may be a thaw, which will be as bad as a storm, as the great depth of snow on the roads will get quite soft, and it will be almost impossible for horses to travel. A great deal of inconvenience and cost is caused to the lumberers on the distant streams by the storm, in many places supplies cannot be got in, and men and teams are leaving on that account, while those who are doing a little have as many or more men on the roads than are in the shanties doing the work. On the South side of the Upper Ottawa there is not so much snow, and no doubt the work would get on in the woods if the roads were passable to get in supplies. I have heard of \$2 being given per ton for hay at Temiscamingue Lake, on the Upper Ottawa, and other articles in proportion—and \$30 per ton has been paid for hay within one hundred miles of Ottawa City—so that it may not be a bad thing after all if there should be a small supply of square timber. I think, however, there will be at least an average quantity—old and new—got out of the small streams. There was a fine season for work in the fall and early winter, bringing in a great deal, and every one had as many teams as they could employ, more than made up for the present delay. So far as I know, all the mills about Ottawa will have more logs than they can saw as well as a large quantity of old on hand. Everything goes well there will be the largest production of sawn timber at Ottawa of any previous season, as besides the additions made to the capacity of all the old mills, there are at least six new mills going into operation early in spring. How the lumber is all to pass the Carrillon and Grenville Canals is more than I can see, as they have been constantly filled at the old rate of production. Clearly something must be done to enlarge them. I fear the Dominion Government seems unwilling to do anything, except dredging out the mills and laying out the banks to be dragged in immediately again by the low waters, instead of at once setting to work and enlarging it, even at a slow rate, to the size of the St. Lawrence Canal. Were this done, there is no doubt we could then get freight at least one dollar per M feet less than at present, as there would then be competi-

tion from the St. Lawrence, and the larger craft would carry so much more cargo, they could afford to reduce the rates. Upward freight would also be reduced in proportion. I estimate the saving at 23 per M on two hundred millions or two hundred thousand dollars per annum, which would soon pay the lumberers even to do the work themselves. And, of course, this they would not be allowed to do, and they will have to come on sending to Prescott by rail, which will be more costly still. I hear that some of the Ottawa men have made contracts for deals for Quebec and that the merchants there are offering big prices for bright. I do not know the exact figure at which they have been brought here, but I think over \$18 per M delivered at Quebec. If the logs are good there is money in them at that price, but that is now the great difficulty in the way of making mills pay, the good timber on man, limits being all cut."

ANNEXATION RESOLUTIONS.

THE *St. John (N. B.) News*, speaking of the notice of Mr. Cudlip, member for that County, in the Local Legislature, that he would move a resolution in favor of the annexation of that Province to the United States, says:—

"As the news goes abroad this morning, and spreads all over the Dominion, every true and loyal subject of Her Majesty must feel that a blot and a stain has been cast upon this City and County, by this treasonable act on the part of one of our representatives. It is no wonder that the House indignantly refused to allow the motion to go upon the Notice Book. The wonder is that the Sergeant at Arms was not instructed to take charge of Mr. Cudlip until such time as his treasonable passions had cooled, and he had regained his senses. Could it have been that the defeat suffered by the Opposition had for the time crazed his brain, and rendered him irresponsible for his actions? It would be charitable to suppose so; if we did not know that Mr. Cudlip, though of a very nervous and excitable temperament, is always sufficiently himself to know what he is about. We see by despatches from Washington that there is a delegation in that city from Nova Scotia asking for the appointment of a commission to decide upon the terms upon which that Province might become a member of the Union. Has Mr. Cudlip's move in our House of Assembly anything to do with that? Is it desirable to show the Americans that not only in Nova Scotia but in New Brunswick there is a desire to sever the ties which bind them to England and contract others with the Federal Republic—a desire expressed by the representative of the Commercial Metropolis of this country, and therefore by the people themselves. If this is not what is intended, then we would like to know what the man is at?"

REFORM IN THE GRAIN TRADE

THE question of a reduction in the elevator charges at New York, Buffalo and Chicago, is a question of much interest to shippers and dealers, as well as to consumers throughout the country. The meeting held a few days ago in Buffalo to consider this matter, was an important one, and we trust will be productive of desirable reductions in the cost of handling grain at the principal points along its regular route from the West to the seaboard. A Committee of the New York Produce Exchange met the Buffalo Board of Trade, and the whole subject of handling grain was ably and exhaustively discussed. The reforms proposed cover the entire system of receiving, storing, delivering and collecting for the grain that is shipped from the West for New York. It is proposed that on the arrival of grain from the West, instead of being from three to fifteen days, it shall go immediately to the storehouse, and the storehouse shall be the distributing point and not the canal boats. It is then proposed to cut down rates just one-half for the first ten days. Of the 40,000,000 bushels of grain that are received in New York about 20,000,000 being distributed from the canal boats. That half which goes into the warehouses pays two cents tax for the first ten days, and it is proposed to store the 40,000,000 of grain, and that the tax shall only be one cent. This plan of handling grain will enable the canal boatmen to carry it at one cent less a bushel, and the total saving on the handling of the number of bushels above named would be \$200,000. One of the speakers showed, in a humorous strain, which seemed to be highly appreciated by his auditors, how the mode of selling grain by the cargo, the rejecting of damaged cargoes, with re-storing and delay of payments operated, intending to illustrate the point that the West has furnished the capital for New York grain merchants to conduct their business with. The interest on these delayed payments, and the abolition of the quantity of a cent a bushel surcharge, it is contended, will show a total saving of \$750,000 to the advantage of the West under the new system. One trouble at Buffalo seems to be a super-abundance of elevators. Including floating elevators, there are thirty-two elevators in Buffalo harbor. In the season of 1863 four of these elevators handled within a fraction of one half of all the grain which was received at that port during the entire year, and only twelve were at any time in use. In order to prevent the natural cheapening of rates that would result from competition the elevators are associated into one concern, which, without competition, has made the most oppressive charges. Last year this combination earned good dividends on twenty idle elevators, none of which handled a bushel of grain. Of course each a state of things cannot always be maintained. The Association will break down of its own weight at no distant period.