

of the Saskatchewan, ninety miles of waggon transport from Edmonton to Athabasca Landing, thence by steamer and flatboat to Fort Smith on the Great Slave River, where twenty miles of waggon road connects the shallow with deep water navigation, and the steamer "Wrigley" distributes them to the various posts down to the mouth of the Mackenzie just above its estuary, where the river is said to be six miles wide, and up Peel River which joins the Mackenzie near that point to Fort Macpherson on that gold-bearing stream. The great lakes which receive the drainage of this vast region and give an equal flow to the Mackenzie, all have deep water navigation, and like most lakes of the Laurentian formation are studded with islands.

The most southern source of the Great Mackenzie River is a stream fed by the glaciers of Mounts Hooker and Brown, two of the highest of the Rocky Mountain chain, in latitude  $52^{\circ} 30'$ , and this soon becomes a navigable stream, preserving that character except at the breaks mentioned, during the nearly 2,500 miles of its course to the Polar Sea. As already mentioned these western affluents will form valuable links as a means of taking in machinery and mining supplies to the upper waters of the Peace and Liard Rivers which are now inaccessible for heavy machinery from the west coast, and the cost of taking in provisions, makes in mining and prospecting efforts a serious desideratum. The navigation upon the Liard River also will be an important factor in the future food supply to the great mining region of the upper Yukon and Peel Rivers.

A reference to the valuable evidence obtained by your Committee will show that navigation from Behring Straits to the mouth of the Mackenzie, and probably as far east as Wollaston Land, may be had for three months in each year, the soundings given on the Admiralty Chart of that portion of the Arctic Sea revealing an average depth of about 20 fathoms, which is a considerable depth in what is known to be generally a shallow sea. The western branch of the estuary of the Mackenzie is said to be the outlet which has the deepest waters and it is respectfully submitted that much good might accrue were the Dominion Government party now working its way from the Yukon towards Peel River and the Mackenzie, to descend either of these streams and examine the western and other branches of the estuary of the Mackenzie.

To convey to your Honorable House the distances which separates the navigable waters of the Mackenzie Basin from the eastern and western sea coasts and from navigable rivers and railways to the south and south-east the following table of distances has been taken from the evidence. The lengths are in straight lines as follows:—

From the head of Great Slave Lake to head of Chesterfield Inlet, 320 miles; from the head of Athabasca Lake to the harbor of Churchill, 440 miles; from Fort McMurray at the junction of the Clearwater with the Athabasca below the 70 miles of questionable navigation to the following places on the Saskatchewan: Prince Albert, 300 miles; Fort Pitt, 220 miles; Victoria, 179 miles; Edmonton, 225 miles; from Calgary, on the Canadian Pacific Railway, to Athabasca Landing, on the Athabasca River, 250 miles; from head of Little Slave Lake to Peace River Landing in the Peace River, 65 miles; from Hazleton, on the Skeena River, to Peace River in the Pass, 150 miles; from Fort Mumford on the Stikeen River to Fort Liard on the Liard River, 370 miles.

A good deal of difficulty has been experienced by the Committee in endeavoring to obtain the exact catch of furs in the region under consideration, and no definite or direct information has been obtained; they have, however, obtained lists of furs offered for sale in 1887, in London, by the Hudson's Bay Company and C. M. Lampson & Co., the consignee of many of the furs of British North America, and from these lists they find the following to be a summary of one year's catch:—

Otter.....	14,439
Fisher.....	7,192
Fox (silver).....	1,967
Fox (cross).....	6,785
Fox (red).....	85,022