

Fort McLeod. Scabby Butte was also re-visited, and a large and interesting collection was made there of reptilian bones, probably of Dinosaurs, some of which are now exhibited in the Museum. It is hoped that further research may lead to the discovery of enough of these bones to reconstruct the entire skeleton of one of those gigantic extinct reptiles, compared to which the mammoth would be a dwarf.

The most important coal seam in the region examined and described in the preliminary notes by Dr. G. M. Dawson, above referred to, occurs near the base of the Pierre shale formation. This seam has now been traced, varying in thickness from one and a half to five feet, from the international boundary to the Red Deer River—a distance of 175 miles. Several other seams were examined on the Red Deer River. The thickest, shewing six feet of coal, occurs not far above the summit of the Pierre shales, and is probably on the same horizon as the seam at the Blackfoot Crossing and at the Scabby Butte. A sketch survey was made of the Red Deer River, for about 100 miles, from the mouth of Rose-bud Creek down to Hunter's Hill; and, on the return eastward at the close of the season, all the formations cut by the South Saskatchewan River from the mouth of Bow River to Swift Current Creek were examined, the most important feature here being the occurrence of a thick coal seam exposed at intervals from Medicine Hat up the river for forty miles. This seam is supposed to be at a lower horizon than any of those observed further west, and may underlie them throughout the region examined. In any case, the evidence of the past season's work tends still further to confirm the opinion that the coal fields of the North-West may be regarded as practically inexhaustible. The measurements made by Mr. McConnell during the season were:—

1,000 miles by odometer,  
275 miles by pacing,  
450 miles by river (estimated.)

Total.....1,725 miles.

The season's operations extended from 1st May to 3rd November, the latter being the date of Mr. McConnell's return to Ottawa. Cost—\$1,599.64. The equipment, consisting of one waggon, seven horses, three saddles, harness, tents, two carts, canvas canoes, buckboard, &c., were left in charge of Mr. James Scott, Fort McLeod, and will, for the most part, be available for another season's work.

Dr. Bell was requested to proceed to the Athabaska-Mackenzie region, and to there examine and survey that portion of the Athabaska River hitherto unsurveyed between the confluence of Lake la Biche River and the Clear Water River; and further to examine as much as possible of the great, wholly unexplored, region south of Athabaska Lake, and lying between the Athabaska River and the 108th degree of longitude.

The first part of the programme was successfully carried out, and some interesting details were obtained in relation to the lignite coal-bearing strata of the upper part, and the petroleum and salt deposits of the lower part, of the Athabaska River, all tending to confirm the opinion of previous explorers as to the great prospective importance of this region in connection with these valuable mineral deposits.

A track survey was made of Lake La Biche, and thence of the La Biche River and of the Athabaska, from the confluence of the latter to its mouth in Athabaska Lake, a distance of about 270 miles in a straight line.

Of the investigation indicated in the second part of the instructions, namely, that of the region south of Athabaska Lake, Dr. Bell states: "That, after consulting the officers of the H. B. C. and others at Fort Chippewyan, I found that there was no route known across this region; and, even if a route had been found, it would have been impossible to explore it, owing to the impossibility of obtaining supplies and reliable Indians." Dr. Bell therefore returned on the old route, by Methy Portage, Isle à la Crosse, and Green Lakes, to Carleton. At Isle à la Crosse a copy of a sketch map was obtained from Mr. Walter Francklyn, which he had made of his route from the Churchill River to Cree Lake, situate in the region in question. Mr. Francklyn also