

## WARBURTON PIKE.

Hence we read, page 170, of 'The Barren Grounds' by Warburton Pike, 1892 :—  
'Why has all exploration in the barren grounds ceased? No more is known of the country than was discovered by Franklin and Back sixty years ago in their short summer journeys, and the expeditions sent out in search of the former in the fifties. There are many thousands of square miles on which the foot of white man has never stepped.'

Upon his return journey from the Back river in 1890, Pike obtained the following information from an Indian, known as 'Pierre the Fool,' in regard to the country to the eastward of Clinton-Colden lake :—'He told us that there were fewer lakes in that direction than in any other part of the barren grounds that he had visited, but he was always obliged to take a small canoe with him to cross a big stream running in a southerly direction, three days easy travel from Clinton-Colden lake.

'Once when he had pushed out farther than usual, he had seen smoke in the distance, and came upon a camp that the Esquimaux from Hudson bay had just left; they had been cutting wood for their sleighs in a clump of well grown pines, and Pierre, who shared the dread which every Yellow Knife has of the coast tribes, had been afraid to follow them.' From his own observations, Pike further writes :—'Lockhart river, on leaving Artillery lake, becomes a wild torrent, falling several hundred feet in twenty miles and is quite useless for navigation, so we had to make use of a chain of lakes, eight in number, lying to the south of the stream.

'This is by far the prettiest part of the country that I saw in the north, and it was looking its best under the bright sunshine that continued until we reached the fort. Scattered timber, spruce and birch clothed the sloping banks down to the sandy shores of the lakes; berries of many kinds grew in profusion; the portages were short and down hill; and caribou were walking the ridges and swimming the lakes in every direction. A perfect northern fairyland it was, and it seemed hard to believe that winter and want could ever penetrate here.'

## J. BURR TYRRELL.

No sooner had Pike given expression to his query : 'Why has all exploration in the barren grounds ceased?' than the work was resumed by the Geological Survey Department, and J. Burr Tyrrell, accompanied by the writer, was commissioned to explore the territory to the north-east of Lake Athabasca. This work was carried on during the year 1893 and 1894, and has been fully reported in the Annual Report of Geological Survey of Canada, 1896, so that without quoting extracts, it will suffice to state that the unexplored territory of over two hundred thousand square miles west of Hudson bay, was in those two years reduced by more than one-half, viz., from the valley of the Doobaunt river to the coast of Hudson bay. The country lying to the west of the Doobaunt, and comprising an area of about ninety thousand miles, remained shrouded in mystery.

## OUR JOURNEY OUT.

Arrangements having been completed for our expedition, on January 31, 1900, I was joined by my two assistants, C. C. Fairchild, O.L.S., of Simcoe, Ont., and Archdeacon Lofthouse, formerly of Fort Churchill, Hudson bay, and we proceeded to the west. At Winnipeg we picked up two half-breed voyageurs, named Robert Bear and John Kipling, from the St. Peter's reserve; and as train dogs were reported scarce in the north country, eight of them were also procured here, and shipped to Edmonton, where we ourselves arrived at 11.30 on the night of February 8, in a temperature of 45° below zero.

At Edmonton we were joined by three more of our men, Percy Acres, cook, and Pierre French and Harry Monette, expert Iroquois canoe-men.