

seaboard of the Northwest Territories. It is of itself a great inland Sea, and by means of the Canals of the Dominion, and the Sault St. Marie Canal of the United States, it is accessible during the season of navigation to vessels from the ocean.

It is from this great Lake that routes available, or susceptible of being made so, as lines of communication with the vast unpeopled Territories which have fallen to the lot of the Dominion must, in the first instance, be sought for, and any information regarding these from travellers or others will, doubtless, be acceptable to Canadians.

In looking for a route to the interior, in any country, regard must be had to a harbor which, if such can be found, should be in a place naturally safe and easy of access from the sea on one side, and practicable as a starting point to roads on the other.

These conditions seem to be met with at Thunder Bay, formerly the grand emporium of the Fur Companies, and now the starting point of the road to Manitoba—commonly known as the "Dawson Route."

The magnificent Bay is well sheltered, having the peninsula with the high promontory of Thunder Cape to the east, Pie Island to the south, and further out Isle Royale guarding it from the surge of the great Lake. The Bay itself is, however, of such dimensions that a surf rather uncomfortable to small boats sometimes rises within it; but at Prince Arthur's Landing, the place from which the road starts, perfect shelter has been obtained by means of a fine dock recently constructed by the Dominion Government.

Thunder Bay, however, has a rival in Nipigon Bay, a land-locked sheet of water at the northern extremity of Lake Superior, which has also been spoken of as a starting point for a route to the West. It is claimed for it that it is completely sheltered, as it no doubt is, but it is

objected to, on the other hand, that it is shallow (the *Paye Plat* of the Voyageurs) so intricate as to be impracticable of navigation to sailing vessels without the aid of a Tug, and so completely land-locked as to assume the character of a small inland lake, freezing a month earlier than Thunder Bay in the fall, and remaining a fortnight or three weeks longer covered with ice in the spring. Last spring was an unusually cold one, and it is claimed for Thunder Bay that it was open the first week in May, while Nipigon was locked up with ice till the 23rd.

The Steamers, it is said, navigate Thunder Bay all through November, while Nipigon Bay is closed with the first cold weather—and finally, that Thunder Bay is easy of access to sailing vessels at all times.

On the other hand, it is claimed for Nipigon Bay, that it is 30 miles further east, and that the Railroad route from it to Manitoba is no longer than from Thunder Bay. There is a diversity of opinion as to the best route for the main line—some advocate the Lake shores to Nipigon Bay, others the same line continued to Thunder Bay, while a third favor the route to the north of those in question, along the English River and Lake water system, stretching east and west between Lake Nipigon and old Fort Garry at the head of deep water on the Red River, 30 miles from Lake Winnipeg, and thence west to the southwest angle of Lake Manitoba; others mariners, &c., from Ottawa to the Georgian Bay, thence by boat to Thunder Bay, and by rail straight to Garry.

Thunder Bay has, at least, an advantage in the fact that it has warm advocates in the population of Prince Arthur's Landing, who do not fail to sound its praises while Nipigon Bay still reposes amid its unbroken forests in the silence of nature.

A little to the west of Prince Arthur's Landing is the Valley of the Kaministiquia.