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OPENING OF THE RED RIVER OF THE NORTH TO COMMERCE AND CIVILIZATION.*

BY CAPTAIN RUSSELL BLAKELEY.

On May 8th, 1857, the House of Commons ordered that a select committee be appointed to consider the state of those British Possessions in North America which are under the administration of the Hudson Bay Company, or over which they possess a license to trade. On May 12th it was ordered that the committee consist of nineteen members. The committee was appointed as follows:

Mr. Secretary Labouchere,	Sir John Pakington,
Lord John Russell,	Mr. Gladstone,
Lord Stanley,	Mr. Roebuck,
Mr. Edward Ellice,	Mr. Lowe,
Viscount Sandon,	Mr. Grogan,
Mr. Kinnaird,	Mr. Gregson,
Mr. Blackburn,	Mr. Chas. Fitzwilliam,
Mr. Alexander Matheson,	Mr. Gurney,
Mr. Percy Herbert,	Viscount Goderich.

It was ordered that they have the power to send for persons, papers and records; and that five be a quorum. On May 13th it was ordered that Mr. Christy be added to the committee. On July 31st it was ordered that the committee have power to report their observations, together with the minutes of evidence taken before them, to the House.

The minutes and evidence were reported to the House and ordered printed July 31st and August 11th, 1857. This report contains 547 pages, with three maps, and may be found in

* An Address at the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Historical Society, Jan. 13, 1896.

Case No. 20 of this Society. Those who would like to know the history of the Hudson Bay Company should read it.

The recommendations and findings of the committee are quite too long to be repeated here, but I may say they recommend that the license to trade be terminated at the expiration of the present term of twenty-one years (in 1859) in such districts of the territory claimed under their charter as Canada may wish to open up and colonize, that these districts be ceded to Canada, and that the rights of the Hudson Bay Company wholly cease as to that part so surrendered. This was supposed to be about the end of the company's control of the region adjoining the Red river of the North and the Saskatchewan; and every one in Canada and Minnesota anticipated early action of the Imperial and Dominion Governments in opening up the country to settlement.

In the winter of 1857, at Washington, D. C., by the kind offices of Hon. H. M. Rice, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Ramsay Crooks, the New York agent of the Hudson Bay Company, who told me that he had just effected an arrangement with the Secretary of the Treasury, by which the goods of the Hudson Bay Company would be carried in bond through the United States, to Fort Garry, by way of Saint Paul. He wished to make an arrangement with some one to act as agent for the company in Saint Paul. I informed him that in the spring Messrs. J. C. & H. C. Burbank would succeed Blakeley & Burbank in the forwarding business in Saint Paul, and that I would recommend him to correspond with them in regard to what he wished done.

In the summer of 1858 two or three shipments of goods were received in Saint Paul and were taken by the brigade of the Hudson Bay Company's carts, under the charge and direction of Mr. James McKey, a most efficient man to handle this kind of transportation in the prairie country.

It is not possible to convey to you the impression made upon our business men by this evident good faith and determination of the Hudson Bay Company to abandon York Factory as their route of transportation, together with the determination of the Imperial Government to terminate the exclusive jurisdiction of the Hudson Bay Company in Northwest British America.

You will remember that this country was suffering from the great financial collapse of 1857, and any possible change for the better was hailed with the earnestness of drowning men. In addition to this good hope for the future came the discovery of gold on Fraser and Thompson rivers in British Columbia, which made our people wild. Congratulations were exchanged between our citizens as they met on the street and in their business offices; our papers, at once, took hold of the matter and began to discuss the question, how to avail ourselves of this good fortune, which had come to relieve us of our calamity; public meetings were called; resolutions were passed; each one who had any information that would help to elucidate and make plain the way of how to get there was pressed into service. Among others who were called upon, I was advised that the business public hoped that I would visit the Red river and report whether it was navigable or not, Mr. John R. Irvine volunteering to accompany me.

In October I got ready for this voyage of discovery and with Mr. Irvine left Saint Paul, by way of St. Peter's, Fort Ridgely, Yellow Medicine, Lac qui Parle, and the Kittson trail, to Fort Abercrombie, where we found Capt. Nelson H. Davis and Lieutenant P. Hawkins, with their company of the Second Infantry, and Jesse M. Stone, the sutler of the fort. The fort had been hastily built and consisted mostly of log cabins on the bottomland of the river.

After enjoying the welcome hospitality of the officer of the post for several days, we resumed our journey, by crossing at the ford at Graham's point, about three miles south of the fort, to the east side, and passed down the banks of the river, camping on its bottomlands and viewing the stream as opportunity occurred. After passing two or three claim locations for the head of navigation on the river, among which I remember Sintominie and Burlington, we arrived at the claim of Mr. Irvine, which he had named Lafayette, oposite the mouth of the Sheyenne-Oju, about three miles above Georgetown, where we stayed until our horses were rested for our return trip by way of Old Crossing, Lightning lake, White Bear lake, and Richmond, to St. Cloud, and thence by the stage road to St. Paul. On this return we met Mr. Albert Evans, the mail-carrier between St. Cloud and Fort Aber-

crombie, on foot, with his mail upon his back, near the Old Crossing.

My report to the Chamber of Commerce was, that there should be three or four months of navigation and there ought to be a boat built next year. The Chamber immediately offered a bonus of \$1,000 to any one who would build a boat ready to run next season. This bid came to the knowledge of Mr. Anson Northup, who proposed to build a boat, ready for navigation next year, for \$2,000, which offer was accepted. Northup had bought the "North Star" in Minneapolis, and had taken her up over Sauk Rapids and Little Falls to run on the upper river, to carry the lumbermen's supplies. She passed Sauk Rapids June 7th, and soon after made a pleasure trip to Grand Rapids, at the present town of this name, about three miles below Pokegama falls. Capt. J. B. Young was master, and among the passengers on the excursion were Anson Northup, Baldwin Olmsted, O. B. Day, Lewis Stone, Jeff Perkins, David Gilman, and their wives, besides many others. They were about two weeks making the trip. In the fall the boat was laid up, in the mouth of Crow Wing river.

The machinery of the "North Star" had originally been brought to Minneapolis from Bangor, Maine, and was put on the "Gov. Ramsey," built in 1851 by Capt. John Rollins. After Northup made the contract to build the boat, he went to Crow Wing river, sawed the lumber, and probably framed the timbers for the hull. He loaded the machinery, cabin and furniture, and lumber to build the boat, on thirty-four teams, and with sixty men started for Lafayette on the Red river. Among the men who made this winter trip were Baldwin Olmsted, Mr. Morse, master builder Lewis Stone, J. B. Young, and A. R. Young, most resolute and reliable men for such work. The distance, probably one hundred and fifty miles, was in a country unknown, without roads; and the winter was the coldest on record.

About six weeks after they arrived, they had built the boat, which received the name of the builder, "Anson Northup," had run her up to Abercrombie, and started for Fort Garry on May 17, arriving there June 5. Soon afterward, this boat took a large number of passengers to lake Winnipeg on an excursion. She returned to Fort Abercrombie with twenty



passengers on her up trip, where the boat was tied up. Northup and the crew started for St. Paul, taking their passengers, with the teams that had been kept since the winter.

The great interest had, during the summer and fall of 1858, gathered strength daily. The contract with Northup for the boat proved to be a great card in starting the ball. The Chamber of Commerce had to raise the money to pay the bonus for building the boat. Some preparation to open the road to the gold fields in British Columbia had to be made. Foremost among the workers on these absorbing questions were Messrs. James W. Taylor, Joseph A. Wheelock, Col. W. H. Nobles, Martin McLeod, and Henry McKentey. The writings of the two first named gentlemen would fill a volume, and I may say that the speeches of Mr. Taylor would fill two. The earnestness with which he advocated the opening up of these different routes, to Garry and the Pacific, cannot be realized by those who did not have the good fortune to hear him. I remember the closing sentence of an appeal he made, while engaged in raising the money for the bonus; after having presented all the inducements that he could think of, he said, "When the whistle shall sound the advent of this boat in Garry, Archbishop Taché, who has prayed so earnestly and waited so long, will spring instantly to his feet and, raising his hands reverently above his head, exclaim, 'In the name of God, let the bells of St. Boniface ring, for civilization has come!'" He was more especially the friend of the water route, by way of the Red and Saskatchewan rivers to the gold fields, and advocated this route so constantly that he was in later times known as "Saskatchewan" Taylor.

On the 7th of December, 1858, the Common Council of the city of St. Paul, of which C. L. Emerson was president, asked Mr. Taylor to prepare a report upon the settlement of the area northwest of Minnesota and the extension of steamer, railroad, and telegraph communication west from the navigable waters of the Mississippi and St. Lawrence, with the relations of Minnesota to the American and Asiatic coasts of the Pacific ocean. He prepared a large map of the territory to the west and northwest, which was hung on the wall of the Council Chamber to illustrate the matter of his report. They appointed a meeting on an evening to listen to the reading of

this report. It may be found, with others, in the appendix to the journals of the Senate and House for 1858-'59, together with a report of a committee from the House, in all about 100 pages.

In the mail letting of 1858, the service on the route from La Crosse to St. Paul for the winter months had been awarded to J. C. Burbank and R. Blakeley, under the firm name of J. C. Burbank & Co. In preparation for this service we had bought what we had believed to be sufficient wheel, horse, and harness stock for our work; but our business exceeded our anticipation, and we made arrangements with Messrs. Allen & Chase, who had been engaged in running the stage service above St. Paul to the north, and the Minnesota Stage Company was organized with J. C. Burbank, manager, and Alvaren Allen, route agent. When the spring opened we found we had a large amount of stage stock, but no place for it to run. Allen & Chase had been awarded the service on the several routes north from St. Paul to St. Cloud and Crow Wing, and from St. Cloud to Fort Abercrombie. We entered into partnership with them and moved our stock from the river road to their routes, and operated the new service in the name of the Minnesota Stage Company, under the same management as during the winter. The information that I had got from Mr. Ramsay Crooks in Washington in the winter of 1857, and the expectation that the steamer would be ready in the spring for service on the Red river, with the conviction that the Hudson Bay Company would vacate the territory south of the Saskatchewan river at an early day, induced us to stock the route from St. Cloud to Abercrombie for three times a week. As I had been out to see the country, my partners voted that I would be the best one to put the service in operation.

The route advertised was an entirely new one and probably located in the interest of some new town sites, whose claim stakes had been driven in anticipation that they would have the benefit of the bridges and the road which the stage company would have to build. The road to be fitted for service ran from St. Cloud, by way of Cold Spring, New Munich, Melrose, Winnebago Crossing, Sauk Rapids, Kandota, Osakis, Alexandria, Dayton, and Breckenridge, to Fort Abercrombie.

Early in June, at St. Cloud, I gathered the stock and general outfit for operating the road, together with a working party to make the road and build the bridges and stations. When this collection of horses, hack drivers, station keepers, and working party, moved out to build the road, bridges, and stations over these one hundred and sixty miles of road, the people of St. Cloud, beginning to realize what it meant for them, gave us their hearty cheers and Godspeed. The passengers who accompanied us on this expedition were Misses Ellenora and Christina Sterling, from Scotland; Sir Francis Sykes, Sheffield, Peters, and a servant, all bound for Fort Garry. Mr. James W. Taylor, who had worked so hard, accompanied us by invitation to see the steamboat and Fort Garry, and for the purpose of deciding for himself the practicability of steam navigation, by way of the Saskatchewan river, toward the British Columbia gold fields. After three weeks of hard work the road was ready for travel.

When I left St. Paul the Col. Nobles expedition for locating the road from Abercrombie to the Fraser and Thompson gold fields was being prepared for its start. We had the great gratification of meeting them at the ford at Graham's Point; and with them was another party, going to Fort Garry, among whom we found Messrs. Joseph A. Wheelock, of Saint Paul, and Manton Marble, proprietor and editor of the *New York World*. On our arrival at the fort, we found the steamboat tied up, as mentioned above. We had seen Northup with his crew, on his way home, at Alexandria, when I at once commenced to scold him for tying up his boat and abandoning her with his crew. His answer was, "If you want her to run, you will have to buy her." This was not pleasant under the circumstances.

Capt. Davis and Lieut. Hawkins were greatly surprised to see such an arrival and heartily welcomed us. Col. Nobles stayed long enough to overhaul his outfit, and again started for the gold fields. Mr. Taylor joined the Wheelock and Marble party. The mail started the next morning for St. Paul, and I was left to make some provision for my passengers. I said to the ladies that, if agreeable to them, I would ask Sir Francis Sykes to join in the expense of building a flat boat to take them all to Garry. They, with pleasure, consented.

Sir Francis' party was very glad to accept this solution of their situation. Capt. Davis and Lieut. Hawkins said, "Anything we have is at your service."

Mr. Claghorn, who was left in charge of the steamboat, was a carpenter, and with his assistance my men very soon produced a more cheerful outlook for all by their progress with their work. While our boat was being built, Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson Bay Company, came up from Garry, accompanied by Mr. James McKey and a dozen soldiers. After an introduction, he asked to see the steamboat. He expressed himself much gratified at seeing the boat, and at once said that J. C. Burbank & Co. ought to buy her. I said I had already as much steamboat property as I wanted, on the Mississippi. He called upon the ladies and informed them that Mr. Campbell, whom they were going to meet, was at the Norway House, waiting for them. He assured Sir Francis and party that they would find plenty of guides ready to go with them, and that there was no doubt of their getting down the river all right. The flatboat was soon completed, with a nice awning to keep the sun off the ladies. After inspection, all hands expressed themselves delighted with the accommodation for their voyage. The provisions were furnished by the sutler store, with such other preparations for their comfort as could be supplied by the soldiers of the post. They declared themselves ready, and with their baggage, tents, etc., on board, they took their seats, and I cast off the lines of the first passenger boat on Red river. With cheers from all, they bid me good-bye.

Mr. George W. Northrup was the captain and with two other men of my employees worked the boat to its destination in safety. They were twenty-two days on the river to Garry, where they arrived all well. The first inquiry of the ladies was for Mr. Campbell. Gov. McTavish answered, "He is at Norway House, waiting for you, and the last brigade of boats starts at four o'clock to-morrow morning. Will you go?" "Yes," without hesitation, was their answer.

The two ladies embarked in the Mackinaw boats before daylight, without knowing a single person in the crew, for a voyage through lake Winnipeg, a distance of three hundred miles, and were joyfully welcomed by Mr. Campbell on their

safe arrival. Miss Ellenora Sterling and Mr. Campbell were married in the evening. The next day Mr. Campbell suggested that Indian women's short clothes would be more comfortable for the remainder of the voyage. The ladies at Norway House soon had them fitted out in the fashion of the country, and they again changed their mode of conveyance by taking their seats in a large birch bark canoe with twelve paddles, under the care of chief trader Campbell, for Fort Chipewyan, on lake Athabasca, eight hundred miles away, where they arrived just as winter set in.

These ladies were of large, hearty, robust make-up, admirably pleasing in their presence and address, intelligent and ladylike. Mr. Taylor and I highly respected them, and, in recognition of their heroic courage in making this journey, six thousand miles from home, through our state into the wild inhospitable regions of the Hudson Bay Company, we proposed, while we were in camp on the west shore of Pelican lake, that we would see that the lake upon which we were encamped should be marked on the map of the survey as Ellenora, and that the one to the east of it should be named Christina. They were so named on the state map of 1860, but I regret to learn that the later maps have again changed the former name back to Pelican. I am sorry they do not know why the lake was called after this lady, Ellenora, or they would have the grace to restore her name to the lake and so help to keep her in memory for all coming time.

Sir Francis Sykes' party, when they started on their hunt, took George W. Northrup with them. Edward Eggleston has written the story of Northrup's life in *Harper's Magazine* (vol. 88). There is a copy in this society's scrap book for 1894, page 83. Major Brackett, in his report of the fight with the Indians July 28, 1864, gives the account of his death in that action. (See vol. 2, page 535, of *Minnesota in the Civil War and Indian War*.)

After I had bid adieu to the flatboat party, I took the first stage for home, meeting on the way a large train of carts with Hudson Bay Company's goods. The next day I was surprised to meet the up stage with a full load of passengers, who saluted me with great cordiality, informing me that Mr. Burbank had bought the "Anson Northrup," that they were

on their way to load the goods that were on the train that I had met and to take them to Garry, and that the train would return for another load for the second trip of the boat. They also informed me that Mr. McKey would return from St. Paul, to select a point on Red river for the head of navigation and a town site. This crew were Capt. Edwin Bell, Dudley Kelly, clerk, J. B. Young, pilot, A. R. Young, engineer, and others to make up the crew. This information was a little more than I had bargained for, and I did not want for thought for the balance of the way to St. Paul. Sir George Simpson had offered us a contract to transport five hundred tons from St. Paul to Garry per annum for five years at what was thought to be a very good price per ton, and it was expected I would be delighted to go over to the river and take personal charge of the business. To this part of the bargain I at once objected, but said that after I had visited my family at Galena I would return and go down on the second trip of the boat and inspect this "land of promise."

On my return to the Red river I heard that McKey had made a selection of a place for the town site, below the mouth of the Buffalo and about three miles below Lafayette, the place where the boat had been built. On my arrival Mr. Atwater, who was engaged in a government survey and saw the stage drive in, came to call upon me and asked whether I had come over to go down on the boat. I said, "Yes." "Do you know where she is?" I said, "No; where is she?" "At Goose rapids. Her freight has been unloaded, and Mr. McKey starts to-morrow morning with a train to take the freight to Garry." I asked him to ride down to Georgetown, Mr. McKey's town-site, and ask him to send a cart up for me, and I would go down to the rapids with him. He sent for myself and baggage and furnished me with a saddle horse, and I joined the cart brigade for the rapids. We found the freight at the head of the rapids, and the boat was about half way down this now well known place.

Riding down the bank until we were opposite the boat, I called with more than my usual tone of voice, "Boat ahoy!" Capt. Bell, recognizing my voice, exclaimed, "Thank God! The man I have prayed to see for three weeks." He invited me to ride out to the boat, which I did, and, as I got off my

horse, was received by the crew with hearty greeting. In the morning each man was furnished an ax, for the purpose of cutting some of the nice timber on the shores to build a dam. Stakes were driven across the river, leaving a water way about the middle of the stream, sufficient to pass the boat; the bodies of the trees that we had cut were rolled into the river from each side and floated down to the stakes; the willows on the bottoms were piled under the bodies of the trees, which had been placed across the river above the stakes, and the boat floated into deep water below the rapids before sunset. The water was very low, but we worked our way to Garry without material detention.

Our welcome was hearty by the people of the settlement, some of whom had begun to almost doubt whether the steamboat had come from the south in the spring, as she was so long delayed in her return. Gov. William McTavish, Archbishop Taché, our Mr. J. W. Taylor, who had come with the Wheelock party, and Charles Cavalier, formerly of St. Paul and Pembina, were very kind to us and made us at home among them.

The boat was taken down to Indian river to be laid up for the winter in safe harbor. Mr. Lillie, the gentleman in charge of Lower Fort Garry, made us comfortable at his post, and with others went on down to the head of lake Winnipeg and back, after the boat had been laid up for the winter. Gov. McTavish also invited me to make his house my home while in Garry, which offer I gratefully accepted.

There did not seem to be any practicable way of getting the crew back to St. Paul, excepting to wait until the brigade of carts that had to be sent for the second lot of goods was ready to move, which detained us for three weeks. With our baggage and supplies for the home journey on the carts, we started for Pembina, where I had the pleasure of the hospitality of Major H. S. Donaldson and others over night. We resumed our journey by way of the old Kittson trail, the location of which can be found on the map of Capt. John Pope, in his report of his topographical survey of the territory in 1849. There were many incidents connected with these two hundred and fifty miles of cart transportation which might interest friends of the party, but I refrain from indulging myself in relating them.

During the winter of 1859-'60, Mr. J. C. Burbank visited La Chine and Sir George Simpson, and completed the contract for five years' transportation, as intimated above. The steamboat was transferred to J. C. & H. C. Burbank, I retaining my interest in the stage and express business.

In my trip down the river on the boat, I had become painfully aware of many imperfections in this new boat; the hull was new, but it was made of pine; the machinery was eight years old; the furniture was very limited; the boiler was of locomotive kind, and the head was cracked clear across and leaked so badly that it was not possible to get up a sufficient head of steam to be called seaworthy or bear inspection, so that it became necessary to have a new head. The Gates Foundry Company, of Chicago, sent a man out to take the measurements; and he returned to Chicago to make the head, and again returned to the boat to put it in and make such other repairs as were needed.

I had advised that time should be taken to have a dog train come up to Crow Wing, over the mail route by the woods road, and that they travel with the mail carrier, Monkiman, who knew the country and was a good train man; but the persons at Georgetown were of the opinion that they knew how to manage the transportation of the boilermaker and had him come to Georgetown, where one of their employers, James McKenzie, took him in charge and started out for the trip. I am not sure whether it was on the first or second journey, but as they came to the vicinity of Two Rivers, not far from Pembina, there came on one of the terrific storms that sometimes occurred in those days, and the party had to stop; the reason why, I am not able to state, but McKenzie started to find the road or to go to Pembina for help, and left the foundry man with the team. In McKenzie's attempt to get to Pembina, he lost his way, and, not having the proper means of protection, became exhausted and perished in the terrible storm. I am not able to say what were all the circumstances of this unfortunate result, but many hearts were made sad by the loss of this brave young man, who, in his great ambition to do his duty, was sacrificed in his effort to save those who had been placed in his keeping for care and safe conveyance.

In the spring, after the boat had been repaired, she was named the "Pioneer" and started out under the charge of

Capt. Sam Painter and Alden Bryant, clerk, and did a good business.

The mail contracts of Allen & Chase had been transferred to J. C. Burbank & Co. The mail route from Fort Abercrombie extended to Pembina and was carried by William Tarbell and George W. Northrup, in carts during the summer, and with dog trains in winter.

Among the agreeable events that were so full of hope for the future of St. Paul, in 1860, was the interview between Rt. Rev. David Anderson, Bishop of Rupert's Land, and the Hon. Senator William H. Seward. Mr. James W. Taylor has furnished this Society with the only report which is extant of the incidents of that occasion, and it seems so appropriate to be included in this paper that I have inserted it here.

St. Paul, Jan. 29th, 1862.

To the Editor of the St. Paul Press:

* * * It is an address of David Anderson, Bishop of the Church of England in the immense Diocese of Rupert's Land or Central British America, to William H. Seward, then Senator, and now Secretary of State. The meeting of the two men had been arranged by mutual friends—it occurred at twelve o'clock m., of September 18, 1860, in the room of the Minnesota Historical Society. The Bishop adopted the English custom of such occasions, and read his remarks from a manuscript: Seward's response was less premeditated. I copy from the autograph of His Reverend Lordship:

"GOVERNOR SEWARD: It is with no little pleasure that I embrace the opportunity of being presented to you on this occasion. From the position that I occupy in the Diocese of Rupert's Land, I cannot but feel a deep and growing interest in the welfare of the United States, and more especially in that of Minnesota, which immediately adjoins our own territory. Whatever tends to advance your prosperity, would at the same time, I am convinced, advance also our own, and I trust that the bonds which unite us together may be drawn closer year by year.

"The visit of His Royal Highness to the possessions of the British Crown on this continent, and his approaching visit to the United States, may be hailed as an event which is calculated to cement most happily the union between the two countries. On the establishment and continuance of such peaceful relations, the progress of civilization through the world and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom would materially depend.

"I would gratefully acknowledge the very great benefits already received from your Government by our own distant and isolated land.

Much has been done during the last eleven years, of which alone I can speak, to diminish the distance which separates us from the home of our fathers. On my first arrival, thrice only a year could we expect to hear from England. We are now indebted to yourselves for a double mail each month. For this, in the name of every member of our community, I would express our deep and lasting gratitude.

"We would look beyond this to the opening, at no very remote period, of a Highway toward the Western Sea. I trust that, both in your own possessions and the British Territory, a route toward the Pacific may ere long be completed, and a direct communication thus opened from Sea to Sea. In such enterprises, I would at the present time ask you to use whatever of weight and influence you may possess in your own Legislature, and would, in return, assure you that any such efforts would meet with the earnest and hearty co-operation of those over whom the Providence of God has placed me.

"In conclusion, I would only pray that this spirit of harmony and peace may ever exist between Britain and the United States, and, with the continuance of such peace I would anticipate a bright and blessed spread of the Gospel of Peace among the nations of the Earth."

With the last sentence, uttered in the excellent prelate's most impressive manner, all eyes turned upon the statesman of New York. His first words of response startled the expectant circle:

"Bishop," said he, "two hundred years ago there was an irrepressible conflict in England. One party contended for a Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King; another party was certain that there could be *no* Church without a Bishop and no well ordered State without a King."

A pause. The Bishop of Rupert's Land was not comfortable. An uneasy suspense of breath ran round the room. So did the gray eye of the speaker. He was evidently in the humor, which his Grace of New-castle afterwards failed so signally to appreciate. We were soon relieved, however. The Senator resumed: "This conflict of opinion, with its immediate issues of civil war, largely contributed to the emigration of Englishmen to this Continent, and the organization of diverse communities. With successive generations, the bitterness of the seventeenth century has been succeeded by new relations—by peace and good will—until we have, on this occasion, an interesting proof that the remote settlements of Selkirk and Rupert's Land respond to the 'spirit of harmony,' which is alike the cause and effect of Modern Civilization."

His Lordship's muscles relaxed. A half smile succeeded among the auditors—the speaker only retaining an imperturbable expression of gravity. In a few words, fitly chosen but unluckily not preserved by a reporter, the Senator cordially reciprocated the sentiments of Dr. Anderson, closing the formalities of the interview by the Anglo-Saxon ceremony of shaking hands.

The proceedings were of "admirable length"—certainly not exceeding fifteen minutes. And yet, as I recall them, I have seldom witnessed a more striking *tableau vivant*. Neill, as Secretary of the Society, first

received the Bishop and his friends. Among the latter were Captain (since General) R. B. Marcy, Judge Nelson, Dr. Van Ingen, and Captain Russell Blakeley. By common consent Captain Blakeley was requested to execute the ceremony of presentation. As Seward entered with Gov. Ramsey, a large following of Republican politicians, State and National, filled the apartment. Hon. C. F. Adams, now Minister to England, was a prominent and deeply interested spectator. North, now of Nevada, Benson, Baker, Morrison, and many others of Minnesota celebrity, were present. The occasion deserved much more notice than it received in the excitement and crowd of events that followed, and which is imperfectly supplied by this tardy record.

This new route, to be opened for steamboat navigation across the continent, challenged the attention of the steamboat men at once. Capt. John B. Davis, who was later Major of the Second Minnesota Regiment in the rebellion, believed that in high water a steamboat could be taken up the Minnesota river and, by the way of the Big Stone lake, to lake Traverse and the Red river. He resolved to make the attempt with his steamboat "Freighter," and, leaving St. Paul in the high water, got within about eight miles of Big Stone lake, but found the water quite too low and had to leave his boat for the winter, with the hope of doing better the next season, but finally abandoned the project. The boat was sold to J. C. & H. C. Burbank & Co. C. P. V. Lull went over to the boat in the winter, took out her machinery, taking it to Georgetown to be put in a new boat, to be built for the Red river business to succeed the "Pioneer."

In 1861 Mr. McConnell and his two sons came from Beaver, Penn., to build this boat, which was quite appropriately named "International." The timber was selected from the bottomlands of the Red and Buffalo rivers; the sawing was done by Mr. A. W. Kelly, now of Jamestown, North Dakota; and she was finished in the fall of 1861. The engines were put in by Mr. Edwin R. Abell. She measured 137 feet long, 26 feet beam, and was rated about 133 tons. C. P. V. Lull ran her for a trip or two, when Mr. N. W. Kittson was employed to take charge of her, as he could talk to the Indians, who had become very troublesome, complaining that the boat drove away all the game and killed the fish, and that the whistle made such an unearthly noise that the spirits of their fathers could not rest in their graves on the banks of the river. They had written a letter to the Burbanks, demand-

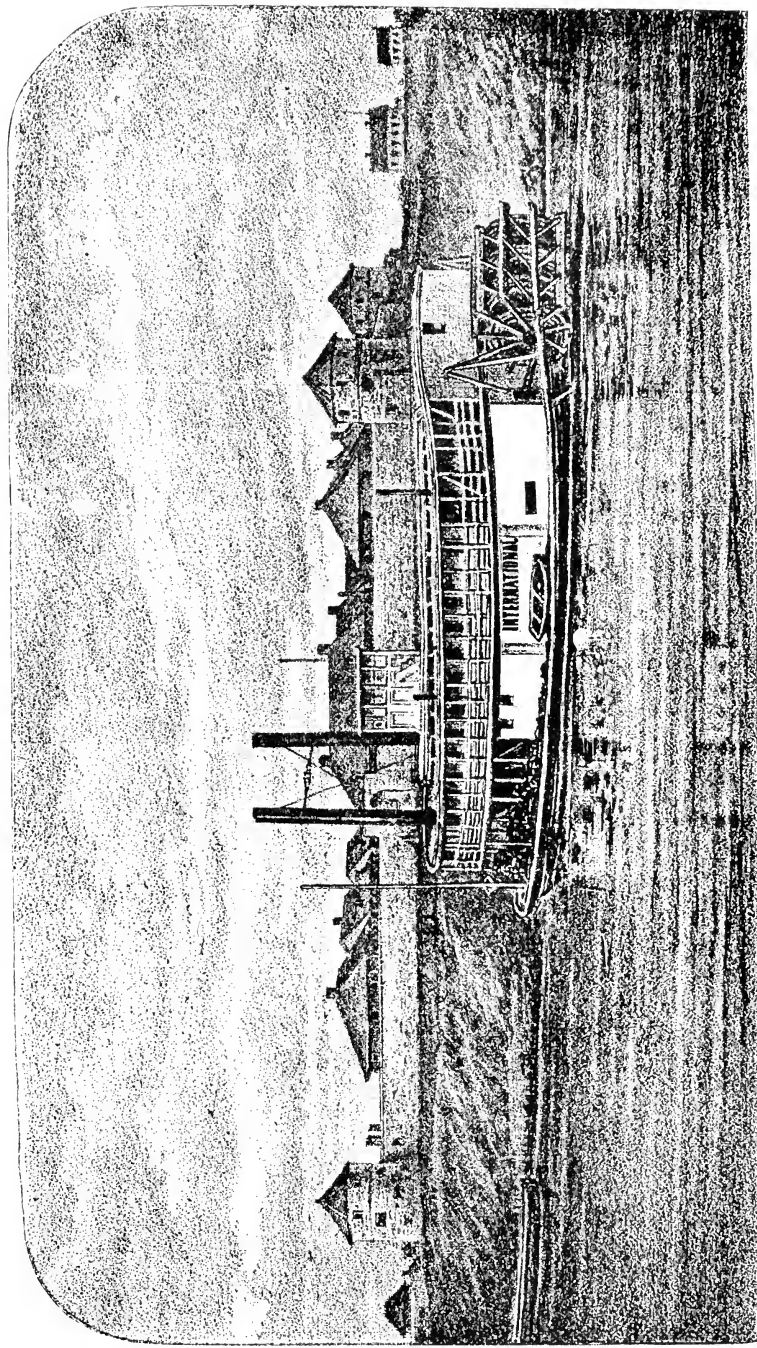
ing that they send four kegs of yellow money to quiet the spirits of their fathers, or stop running the boats. The money had not been sent, but Indian Commissioner Dole and Superintendent C. W. Thomson were on their way to hold a treaty with them at the mouth of the Red Lake river, opposite what is now Grand Forks, when the Sioux Indian outbreak occurred.

The teams with the goods and a military guard had left Fort Abercrombie for the treaty grounds, when a dispatch came from Commissioner Dole for the train to return at once, also informing the officers at Abercrombie that the Sioux were on the war path. Orders were sent to the detachment of troops at Georgetown, to return to the fort, and advising Messrs. Kittson and Murray that they must prepare to defend themselves.

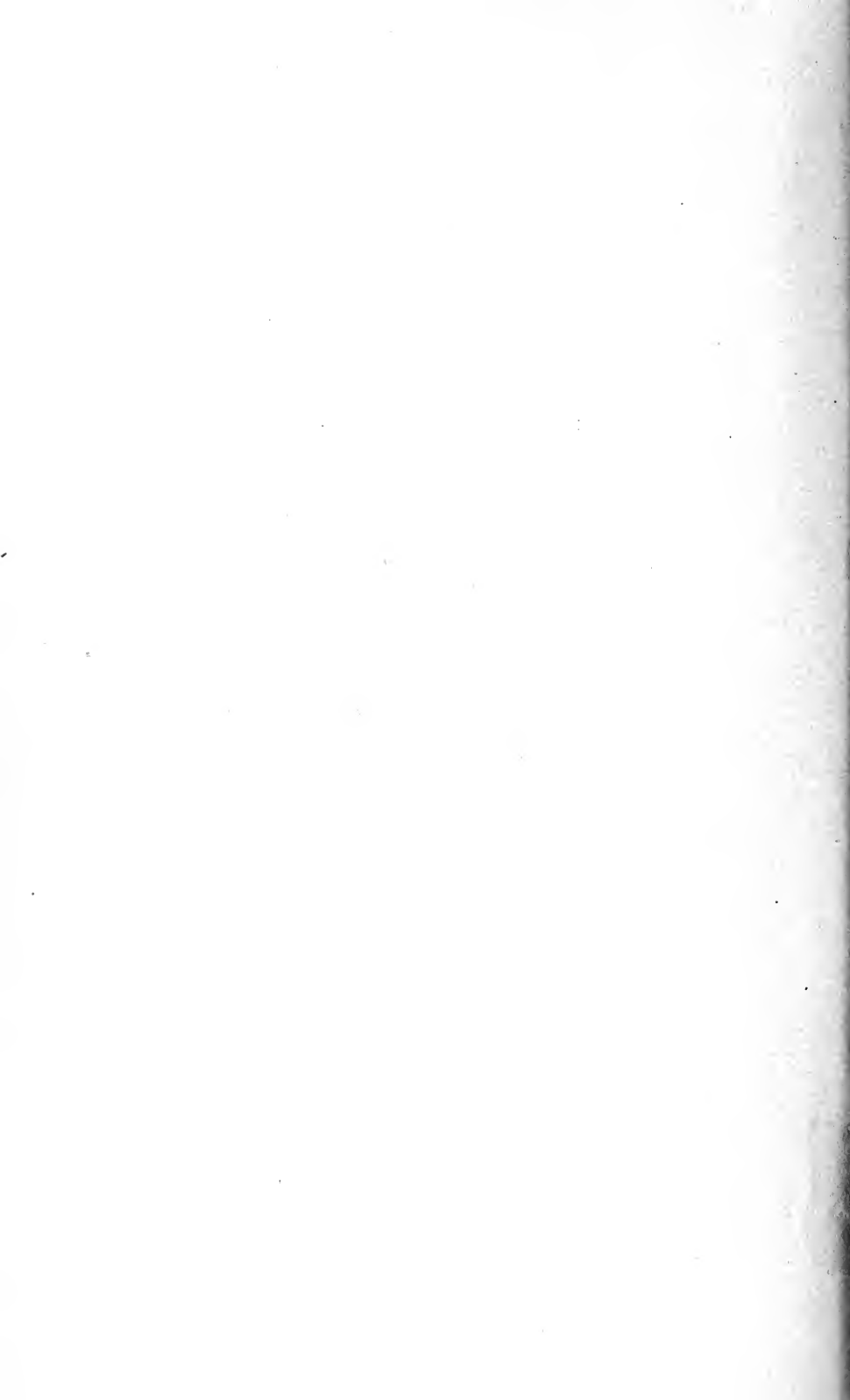
On the 22d of August, the Sioux appeared at Dayton and Old Crossing, killing all they could find. At Breckenridge they killed all persons in the hotel and burned the house; overtook a stage driver, whom they killed; and took his team with about twenty-five hundred pounds of express freight.

A train load of goods had just arrived at Georgetown, and Messrs. Kittson and Murray prepared to defend themselves and property. After many days waiting for the Indians or advice from the fort, they concluded to load their goods on the "International" and a barge, and to abandon the place and go to Garry. The boat was overloaded, the water was very low, she got aground, and they were compelled to reload the goods on the train, and, with their passengers, started by land, abandoning the boat. When the train arrived at the treaty grounds, they found the Indians waiting for the commissioner and half starved. They at once demanded of Mr. Kittson and Mr. Murray that they should deliver them the goods on the train. This, of course, they refused to do, saying that they belonged to the settlers at Garry. The chiefs replied that they did not doubt what they said, but that their wives and children were starving; and, notwithstanding the threats of Kittson and Murray, helped themselves to nearly everything on the train, before they would allow it to proceed.

The barge, under the charge of Capt. Noble, and the boat crew, got by the Indian camp in the night and arrived safe, ahead of the train. Gov. Alex. Ramsey and Major A. C. Mor-



FORT GARRY AND THE STEAMER "INTERNATIONAL," LOOKING NORTHWARD FROM THE ASSINIBOINE RIVER.
(From Alex. J. Russell's Red River Country, etc., 1870.)



rell made a treaty with the Red Lake and Pembina bands, on October 3, 1863, in which provision was made to pay for this depredation. March 2, 1862, Congress increased the mail service to twice a week and extended the contract for three years.

The settlers, on the route from St. Cloud, built small stockades at Sauk Center, Alexandria, and Pomme de Terre, and the road was guarded by companies of troops, through to the fort. In 1863, Capt. Barrett, who was engaged in scouting in the vicinity of the fort, sent a detachment down to the abandoned steamboat and brought her to the fort, where she remained until 1864.

The mails to Pembina were carried with some difficulty, but usually with regularity.

The year 1864 found the Red river relieved of all Indian troubles, but by no means in a satisfactory condition. It had become apparent to J. C. Burbank & Co. that the interest of the Hudson Bay Company and their own interest were not identical. We wanted immigration and trade; they did not want immigration nor mails nor any one to trade in the Hudson Bay Company's territory but themselves. The expectation that the country would be opened proved a delusion. For five years we had followed the contest between the Dominion Government and the Hudson Bay Company, for possession of the country that the Imperial Government had, by resolutions, said should be surrendered to the Imperial Government for Canada.

This delay had proved a serious disappointment to us both, and for all that we could see it would continue. J. C. & H. C. Burbank & Co. took the shortest way to get out, and sold their interest in the steamboat business to Mr. Kittson for the Hudson Bay Company and gave up the fight. The stage company put things under short sail and intended to bide their time. The boat that was tied up at Fort Abercrombie, on account of low water, made but one trip during the season. The cart brigades again made their appearance upon the road between the railroad terminus and Garry; and, to make it still more interesting, that terrible scourge, the grasshoppers, came in immense quantities, destroying all the vegetation in

the valley, and large contributions were made to keep the people from starvation.

In order to make a better fight for their hold of the country, the Hudson Bay Company sold their rights, under the charter, to the "International Financial Association" in the summer of 1862. This company made great professions of their readiness to open up their lands to settlement and build lines of communication from Canada to the Pacific, but did nothing. This kind of procrastination continued until March 9, 1869, when Earl Granville sent them a proposition and notified them, if it was not accepted, that he would ask the Judiciary Committee of the Privy Council to say what were the rights of the Hudson Bay Company under their charter. The company evidently had a high opinion and respect for this committee, and did not like to have them take the trouble to express an opinion about their rights, and, on March 12th, informed Earl Granville that they accepted his proposition. This ended a twelve years' contest between the Hudson Bay Company and the Imperial Government.

The Dominion Government of Canada provided for the organization of a Crown Colony. On the 23d of August, 1870, Col. Wolseley, at the head of the 60th Regiment of Canadian Rifles, entered Fort Garry; and on September 2d, Lieut. Gov. Archibald arrived, and the colony was duly organized. Our consul, Mr. James W. Taylor, arrived early in November.

At this time there was no recognized means of communication between Manitoba and the outside civilization. The only mail that came to them was carried under direction of the Hudson Bay Company, by Mr. Goulet, about once a week, by horse cart or dog train, to and from Pembina, and the cost of freight per hundred was about four dollars, from St. Cloud to Garry. In the spring of 1871, Messrs. Hill and Griggs, of St. Paul, had built and ready for business the steamboat "Selkirk," Alex. Griggs, master, which arrived at Winnipeg on the 19th of April. Notice was given that all goods that were being ordered from Canada or England should be consigned to Hill & Griggs, in St. Paul, who had made arrangements with the United States Government to carry all goods passing through Minnesota to Manitoba in bond, and that all merchandise consigned to them would be delivered without trouble

to the owners. This was a good card for the "Selkirk;" she had all that she could carry, at very good prices. Mr. Kittson had to put the "International" into general trade, and in June she was duly advertised as a common carrier.

In 1867, I had bought the interest of Messrs. Burbank and Merriam in the Minnesota Stage and Express business; and associated with me was Mr. C. W. Carpenter, who had been our confidential clerk since 1856. As soon as was practicable in 1871, I fitted out my tent and team, to inspect the route from Georgetown to Winnipeg, for the purpose of locating stations and bridges, in preparation for stage service. In Winnipeg I made a contract to carry the mail to Pembina for the Canadian Government. Our agent, Mr. Proctor, had the bridges, stations and everything in order, and the first four-horse stage arrived in Winnipeg September 11th.

Events of interest and importance continued to follow, one upon the heels of another, during this summer, among which we remember the editorial excursion, consisting of the most prominent men of the day in the newspaper world, Messrs. Bayard Taylor of the *New York Tribune*, Charles A. Dana of the *New York Sun*, J. C. Evans of the *New York World*, E. C. Bowman of the *New York Herald*, Lieut. Gov. Bross of the *Chicago Tribune*, and Mr. J. H. Harper of Harper Brothers. They went from St. Paul to Morris by the St. Paul & Pacific railroad, and thence by stage to the steamboat running to Winnipeg, where they were hospitably received and entertained, our consul doing his best to make them at home.

The telegraph line was extended to Winnipeg; the Northern Pacific railroad was completed to Moorhead; and the last brigade of Red River carts disappeared from this State. Immigration continued to pour into Manitoba, and building and trade were very largely increasing. The first Parliament was held during the winter of 1870-71. Claim settling and town building were active along the river in Minnesota and Dakota, and our hopes of twelve years ago began to be realized.

The navigation opening in 1872 disclosed the fact that all the boats were under the management of Mr. Kittson and were called the Kittson line. The large immigration made the demand so great for provisions that several of our people fitted out flatboat stores and traded down the river until their

goods were sold, then sold their boats, and returned by stage to make another venture.

Logs from the Red-Lake river pineries were run to Winnipeg and sold to saw mills. Some of our neighbors will probably remember some events that occurred while visiting Winnipeg in the log trade. The stage began running daily from Breckenridge to Winnipeg; immigration during 1873-'74 continued about as in the preceding year, although still increasing.

The only thing that occasioned remark was an intimation that the great steamboat monopoly was charging outrageous prices for transportation. This kind of feeling made itself manifest in the summer of 1874. The merchants of Winnipeg induced some gentlemen of the Red river, in Minnesota, and probably some of our fellow citizens of this vicinity, to organize a new company, to be called the "Merchants' Line." The residents of the United States were the corporate authority, as they could form a bonded line for the transportation of merchandise to Winnipeg. The management was also in the hands of American citizens, but the money to build two nice boats was mostly furnished by merchants in Winnipeg. The carpenter work, as far as possible, was done in Cincinnati, Ohio, and sent by rail to Moorhead; the machinery was built in Minneapolis; the capital was \$50,000, with authority to increase to \$100,000.

The steamer, "Manitoba," made her appearance in Winnipeg on May 21, 1875. The "Minnesota" arrived on May 23. They appeared to be very nice boats for the trade and were welcomed by the merchants in Winnipeg with great satisfaction. Red river is narrow and very crooked, and that two lines of boats could not run on it with safety was proved by an accident that happened June 11th, when the "International" and "Manitoba" came in collision and the "Manitoba" was sunk. She was soon raised and in the line again, but this accident was the beginning of trouble. Some of the stockholders did not feel satisfied with the management; and dissatisfaction continued until the steamers "Manitoba" and "Minnesota" stopped running. The "Manitoba" was seized for debt, in Winnipeg, and the "Minnesota" was taken possession of in Moorhead. A committee was sent to St. Paul to investigate

and report; upon their return, it was reported that the business was in a bad shape, and that the boats would not run again that season. Finally Mr. Kittson bought out the control of the boats, and in 1876 they were run in his line.

The grasshoppers in the summer of 1875 were perfectly terrific, but disappeared when they were big enough to go. This was the last of the scourge that had been with the people of Manitoba constantly since 1864. August 20, 1876, I was in Winnipeg. On my passage down, I had constantly watched for signs of the coming of grasshoppers, and thought I had seen some stray ones in the sunlight. I called upon Mr. A. G. B. Bannityne, and asked if there was any information about their coming this season. He said, "No," and remarked, "this is the latest date they have ever come"; but as he made the reply, he cast his eye toward the heavens and saw three large hoppers just above our heads, and they fell on the pavement at our feet, but they were the last; no more came.

The farmers had no seed to sow, and nothing to speak of was raised in 1876. In the winter of 1876-'77, Gov. Morris asked where he could get some seed wheat for the settlers to sow in the spring. I replied that the Munger Brothers, of St. Paul, had about 12,000 bushels of wheat at Caledonia on our stage road, which I had inspected on my way down, and informed him that it was the best lot of wheat I had ever seen. It weighed sixty-four pounds to the bushel. The Mungers sold him this lot of wheat; and when you hear of fine grades of wheat in Manitoba, you will remember where they got their seed. In 1876 some hay and probably about 50,000 barrels of flour were imported into Winnipeg.

The Kittson Line had been reorganized and was called the Red River Transportation Company. The principal boats of the line were the "International," Capt. Painter; the "Minnesota," Capt. Timmens; the "Manitoba," Capt. Alex. Griggs; the "Dakota," Capt. Seigers; the "Selkirk," Capt. John Griggs; and the "Alphia," Capt. Russell.

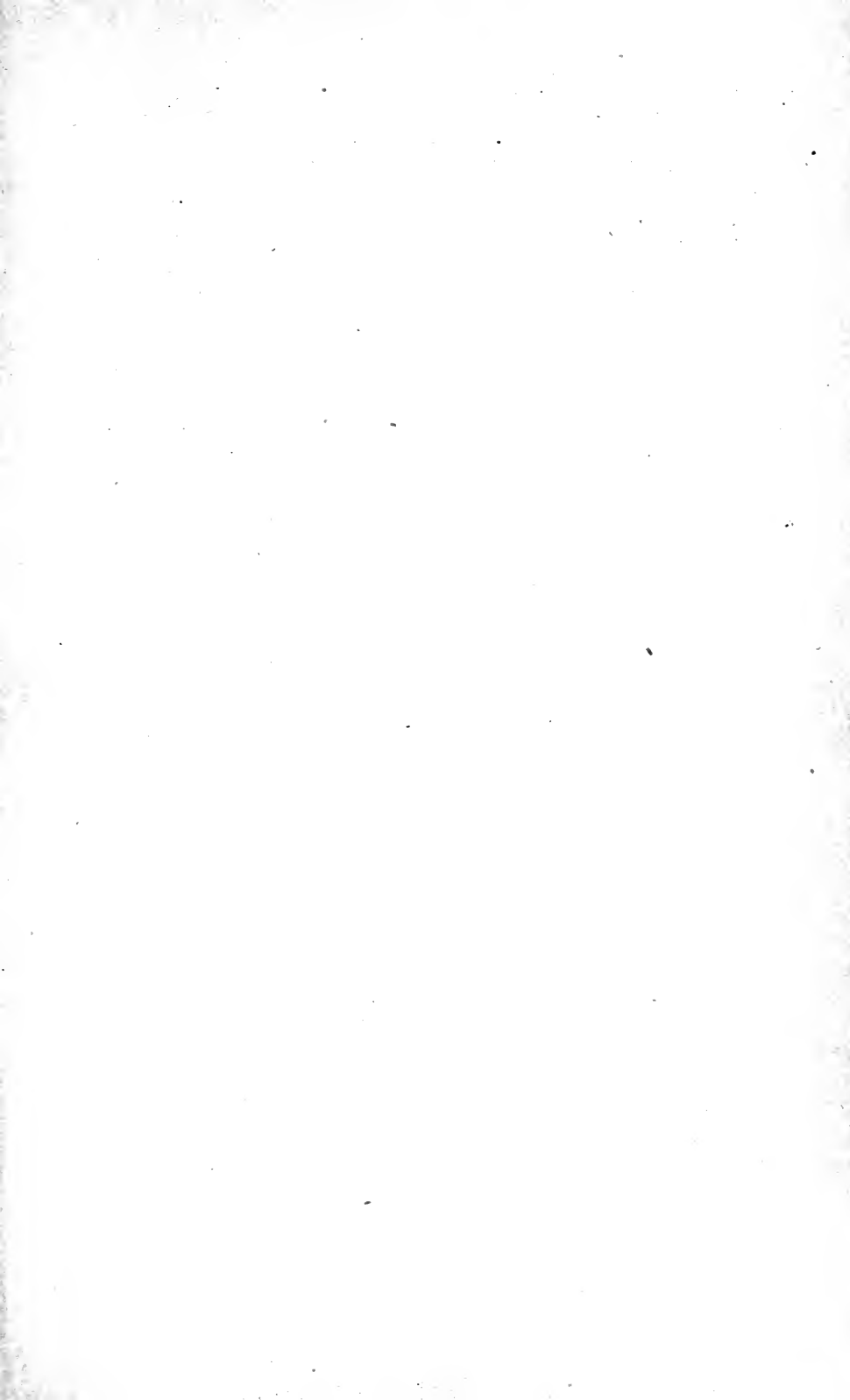
The St. Paul & Pacific Pembina branch had been extended to Crookston, and was put in operation in the summer. The steamboat freight and passenger business, and river and stage trade, were correspondingly diminished as to distance, although their volume was continually increased. In the sum-

mer of 1877 the railroad was extended to Fisher's Landing, down the Red Lake river toward Grand Forks. The ceremony of driving the first spike on the Pembina branch of the Canadian Pacific railway took place at St. Boniface station grounds, on the 29th of September, His Excellency, the Governor General of the Dominion, Lord Dufferin, taking part and being the chief spokesman of the occasion.

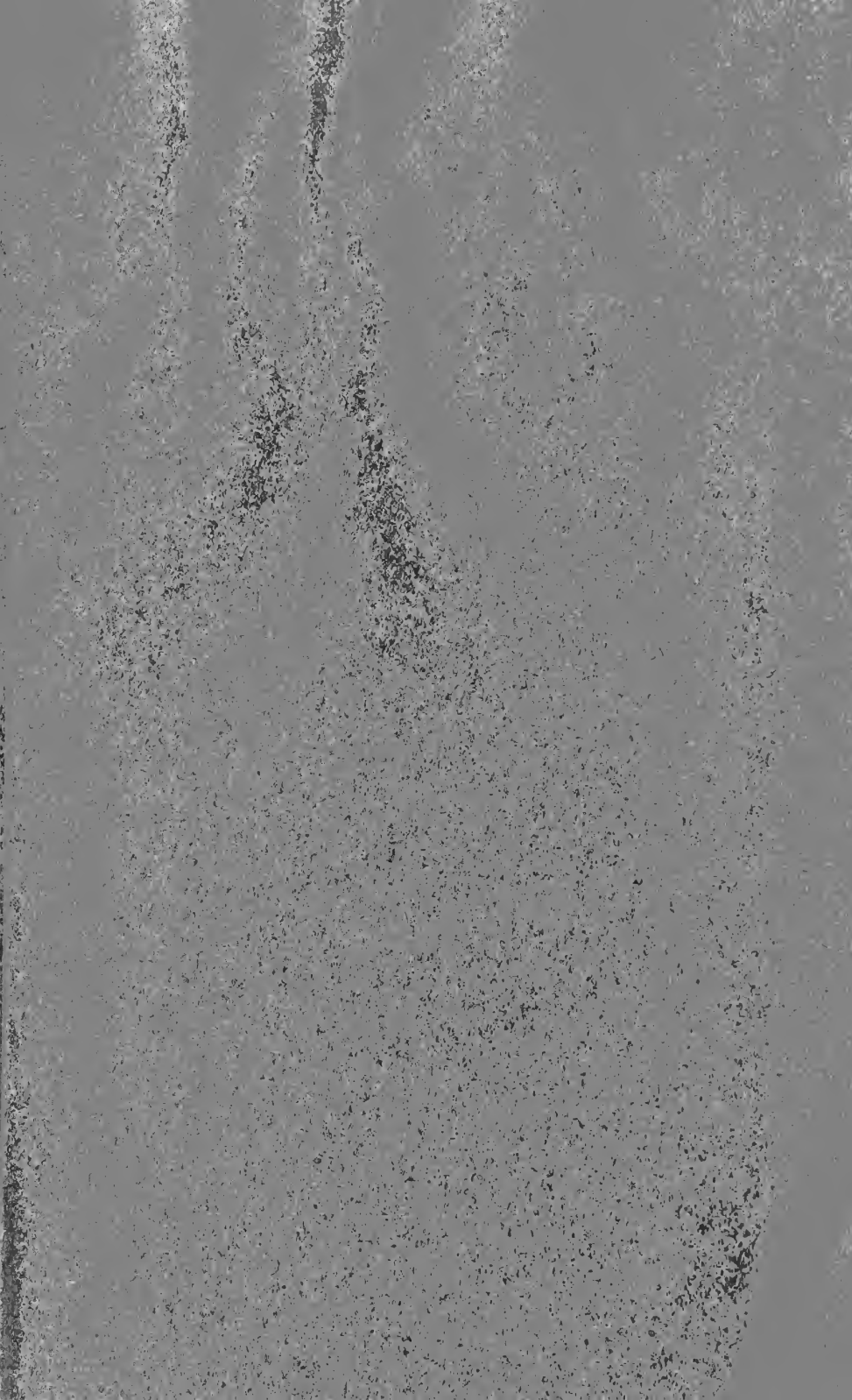
The Minnesota Stage Company had learned in the past what railroads meant for them, and early in the season had opened a new road from Bismarck to the Black Hills, building bridges and stations, again committing their fortunes to the chance of Sioux depredations, for another fifteen years of arduous service.

The immense immigration that came to the Red river, both north and south of the international boundary, and the crops that were being shipped from their very productive fields, gladdened the hearts of those who had chosen their future homes upon the banks of the river. The Indian troubles had passed away; the troops had gone west of the Missouri or had been disbanded; quiet, peace, and prosperity covered the land; and, as "all things come to those who wait," the last act to make the joy of the people in the Red river valley complete occurred on Dec. 2, 1878, when the track layers joined the rails of the St. Paul and Pacific and Canadian Pacific, at the international boundary line. This made it apparent to all that commerce and civilization had come to the valley of the Red River of the North.

NOTE—My grateful acknowledgment is due to Mr. Alexander Begg's "Ten Years in Winnipeg" for assistance in fixing many dates of incidents referred to in Manitoba.







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