

SESSION II. 1857.

Martin, 19^e de Mai, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Blackburn.
Mr. Christy.
Mr. Edward Ellice.
Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.
Mr. Gerguson.
Mr. J. H. Gurney.
Mr. Kinnaird.

Mr. Lowe.
Mr. Matheson.
Sir John Pakington.
Mr. Roebuck.
Lord John Russell.
Viscount Sandon.
Lord Stanley.

THE RIGHT HON. ROBERT LOWE IN THE CHAIR.

Colonel John Ffolliott Crofton, called in; and Examined.

3159. *Chairman.*] ARE you in Her Majesty's service?—I am.
3160. In what department of the service?—I am a colonel in the army, and am now employed in the War Department.
3161. Have you ever been in the Hudson's Bay territory?—I have.
3162. In what capacity?—Commanding the troops that went out in 1846.
3163. What troops were they that went out?—They consisted of a wing of the 6th Foot, a detachment of artillery, and a detachment of Royal Engineers.
3164. From whence were they despatched?—They sailed from Cork, and I received them over from General Turner by order of the Duke of Wellington, under special instructions.
3165. Where did they land in America?—At Fort York, Hudson's Bay.
3166. Where was your station with those troops?—I was destined for Red River, Fort Garry.
3167. Did you go there?—I did.
3168. From Fort York?—From Fort York.
3169. How many men had you altogether with you?—Altogether about 383 persons; viz. 18 officers, 329 men, 17 women, and 19 children.
3170. Were there guns with you; heavy stores of any kind?—We had 28 pieces of artillery with us, but we could not convey them all; we took one nine pounder, and three six pounders to Red River.
3171. How were your men and your stores conveyed to the Red River?—In boats; the stores at the portages, on the backs of the men.
3172. How were these guns conveyed?—We made a contrivance of canvass with handles and carrying straps, slung the guns in them, and we skidded them, if I may use that phrase, which is best known, all along the swamps, by taking the wheels off and carrying them.
3173. What time of the year was it when you arrived at York Factory?—I think it was the 7th of August.
3174. Did you immediately proceed to the Red River settlement?—In about 11 days.
3175. How long did the journey occupy?—It was varied: I myself arrived seven days before the troops, in order to make preparations for receiving them, but they were about 30 days.
3176. Was any of the journey performed in boats?—Altogether in boats, except in crossing the portages.
3177. What was your duty at the Red River; for what purpose were you sent there?—I went under secret instructions.

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3178. How long did you remain there?—I remained myself until the following July, but the troops remained until 1848.

3179. Had you an opportunity of making yourself acquainted with the government and administration of that colony?—I had large opportunities, and I was a member of their Council *ex officio*.

3180. Will you state to the Committee the opinion which you formed from those opportunities of the government of the Company?—The government of the Company I can only speak of as affecting the Red River colony itself, and I would there characterise it by one word, that I think it is a patriarchal government more than any other; I do not know how else to describe it.

3181. Did you travel far from the Red River yourself?—I was ordered to return *en* Canada, and I made a military report on the lakes and rivers.

3182. Which way did you return?—I returned by the ordinary canoe route, by Lake Superior, Sault Ste. Marie, and so home.

3183. From Sault Ste. Marie where did you go?—I proceeded by the ordinary steamers to Montreal through Canada, but the difficulties were in getting to Fort William.

3184. On Lake Superior?—On Lake Superior.

3185. What did those difficulties consist in?—The numerous portages.

3186. Were there many persons with you, or were you a small party?—A part of the way I proceeded with Indians in the canoe and two half-breeds. The remainder of the way I was joined by Sir George Simpson, the Governor, and came on with more comfort and ease.

3187. Was there any other difficulty in the way except the portages?—None.

3188. Was the navigation pretty simple?—Decidedly easy.

3189. Was the country difficult to cross?—I believe it is exceedingly swampy to cross; the only communication is by the rivers and lakes.

3190. You spent a winter in the Red River?—I did.

3191. What is your opinion of the climate of the settlement?—It is pretty much the same as Upper Canada.

3192. Not more severe?—Perhaps less so.

3193. Than Quebec, for instance?—The thermometer sinks to 47° below zero occasionally at Red River, as it does at Quebec; but the open season is somewhat longer at Red River, I think, than even in Upper Canada.

3194. Mr. Roebuck.] Is the climate warmer than in Lower Canada, because there is a difference between Upper and Lower Canada?—I think it more resembles Upper Canada, although I have not spent a season in Upper Canada. I found it necessary to compare the two. I have a complete account of the colony, its products, and its climate, which, if I were allowed, I would lay before the Committee.

3195. Chairman.] Has it been prepared by yourself?—It was prepared by myself, and sent to the Horse Guards.

3196. A report?—A report. That report, I should think, there can be no objection to my making public, because it is altogether of a descriptive nature.

3197. Mr. Roebuck.] Can you tell me when the spring or the summer there begins?—The season opens about the first week in April, and closes about the middle of November; that is to say, the rivers, lakes and swamps freeze in the middle of November.

3198. That is about what occurs in Lower Canada?—I thought it was about that of Upper Canada; I may be wrong.

3199. Does the summer season close as early as the middle of November?—The summer season may be said to close in August, but the finest weather is what is called the Fall, which extends from August to the middle of November.

3200. When does the permanent snow fall?—It commences at the latter part of November, and is not off the ground until the first week in April.

3201. Had you an opportunity of seeing any agriculture while you were there?—A great deal.

3202. What sort of crops did they grow?—Oats, barley, and wheat, chiefly, but all sorts of vegetables.

3203. Did the wheat ripen?—In 90 days from sowing.

3204. It ripened very perfectly?—It was the finest wheat I ever saw.

3205. Was the soil fertile?—Along the immediate banks of the rivers, and extending for, perhaps, the breadth of two miles, no finer loamy soil could be seen, with a limestone foundation.

3206. Is it geologically limestone?—All.

3207. And wherever limestone is, there is fertile land, is not there?—I think that is the consequence.

3208. Do you know how far the limestone extends; looking at that map?—I have ascertained from servants of the Hudson's Bay Company that it extends, as a base of the whole prairie land, to the Rocky Mountains.

3209. So that, in fact, that part of the territory is fit for agriculture?—Quite so.

3210. And would make a good colony?—It might maintain millions.

3211. You talked about your forming a portion of the government there; did you ever take part in the administration of justice?—In nothing, excepting in those matters which affected my troops. I entered into no municipal questions, except respecting the sale of spirits.

3212. Could you form any opinion as to the efficiency of the administration of justice there?—I think justice was well administered, under the guidance of a very able man, who advised the Company's government.

3213. He was sole judge, I suppose; there was no jury?—Yes, there was a jury always, in those cases that were referred by the magistrates from the quarterly meeting which were decided by the Governor in Council, with the legal assistance of the recorder, Mr. Thom, and by a jury of the inhabitants.

3214. Supposing A. B. had been referred as you say, and was to be tried, who sat as judge; Mr. Thom?—The magistrates sat as a session, and had a chairman.

3215. Who was the chairman?—I think he was usually the Governor of the colony.

3216. Not the recorder?—Not the recorder; he was the legal adviser; something like our own recorder here in London, who sits under an alderman.

3217. You are rather mistaken there; the recorder is the judge in London?—Then I am wrong. I am but a soldier. The seat in which the recorder sat was not the ordinary judge's place.

3218. The judge was in fact the Governor?—The Governor sat, I think, in the place that a judge would sit in Westminster Hall.

3219. Who charged the jury?—I never was present at a trial on which there was a charge made.

3220. Then your opinion of the administration of justice is, I take it, formed upon hearsay?—It is so far from being hearsay that I was present at one trial by the magistrates, but Mr. Thom happened not to be present on that occasion.

3221. Was there a jury then?—There was no jury.

3222. So that trials do take place there without a jury?—Trials by the magistrates.

3223. What offence was that?—I think it was a breach of a municipal law. The case I know was for selling some rum, which had been given for a marriage feast, to some of my soldiers, which was contrary to a municipal law.

3224. Did you ever hear of any trials taking place of people for selling peltries to any other than the Company?—I have heard of such, because there was a soldier of my own on one occasion, who bought some paltry fur or other, and he was reported to me for having done it. I said that I did not see the offence distinctly, but they pointed out to me that it was against the law of the place, and of course I punished the soldier.

3225. Did you institute any inquiry into that matter?—I did ascertain from a serjeant and corporal who were present, as well as I now remember, but it is 10 years ago, that the man did purchase the article; he gave some tobacco for it.

3226. Are you at all aware whether the person who sold it was tried and punished also?—No, I know that he was not; he was an Indian; I know that he was not punished in any way.

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3227. Why was not he punished; was it because they could not catch him?—I think they attributed it to ignorance, and that he wanted tobacco. I believe they said that he did not know exactly that he was doing wrong. I believe it is a very common thing to exchange furs for tobacco there.

3228. But it was contrary to law?—Quite so.

3229. And you punished your soldier for buying?—I punished him for it because he knew that I had cautioned the men myself not to deal with the Indians.

3230. Besides that one particular case which you saw, did you ever see any other administration of justice?—No, the crimes are so very few; I think the magistrates only sat once while I was there.

3231. Then the only time that you saw any administration of justice, it was without a jury?—Yes.

3232. When you were there, had you much communication with the half-breeds?—A good deal.

3233. Did you ever hear any complaints from them of the state of things?—Yes; they were always grumbling.

3234. About what?—Chiefly that they were not allowed to import spirits.

3235. Did they ever tell you that?—They used to tell me that; that they wished that, and to be allowed to distil them.

3236. Do you mean to say that the half-breeds told you that the chief fault which they had to find with the Government was, that they would not allow them to import spirits?—Yes; they said it was very hard that they could not take spirits from St. Peter's, or distil them themselves, and therefore they alleged that to me as a reason why they would not cultivate barley or oats.

3237. Did not the same men suggest to you as a hardship, that they were not allowed to sell peltries?—Yes, they did indeed; that was the case also; but I think that their chief objection was what I first stated.

3238. But did they say that their chief objection was that?—Yes, certainly. If you will allow me, I would state how it arose. Many of these men I took upon myself to reason with about leaving their lands utterly uncultivated, and going out into the prairies to hunt buffaloes rather than looking after their crops, which would support them in the winter. They said that there was no use in growing corn, for they had no export for it. They also said that the little which they would wish to raise beyond what would subsist them, they wished to distil into spirits, which the Company would not allow. They thought that a great hardship, and they said that the Company not only forbade them to do it with their own corn, but that they would not let them import them. This made them, they said, quite miserable in the winter; this was the thing which they all harped upon.

3239. Was the non-export of their corn considered a grievance solely or mainly because they could not buy spirits with it?—No; they said that they did not cultivate their lands for two reasons; one was, that they could not export corn which they might raise beyond that required for their mere subsistence, and that even it was better for them to purchase the means of subsistence with the produce of the plains, the pemmican which they made, than to cultivate their lands, for if they grew corn they did not know what to do with it; they could not export it and they were not allowed to distil it. That is what these poor humble men said to me; of course I do not speak of it as being a reasonable statement.

3240. In your opinion is not that a reasonable statement?—No, but I think that that is the cause of their not cultivating their lands.

3241. If you were placed in the position of a man having 100 acres of land there?—They only had 50.

3242. And if you cultivated it and grew a good deal of corn, and you were not allowed to export it, and were not allowed to use it as you pleased, should you think that a grievance?—It was not that they were not allowed to export it, but that they could not export it; there were no means of exporting it.

3243. Was not it the law that they should not have any traffic?—The law was that they should not have any traffic.

3244. Then you might say that the law did not permit it?—They did not so state it to me; they stated that they could not export their corn.

3245. Was

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3245. Was not that the fact?—It was the fact.

3246. Lord Stanley.] You say the law forbids them to have any traffic; with whom?—With the Americans, or Indians in furs.

3247. Do you know what is the nearest point to which their corn could be sent?—Pembina is the nearest point on the American territory, which is 60 miles from Red River; but they can grow as much as they want there themselves. The only place where it could be sold would be at St. Peter's, at Fort Smelling, and that is a long distance; 400 miles perhaps.

3248. Is it likely that corn grown at the Red River would bear the expense of so long a journey, and be sold at a profit afterwards?—Certainly not.

3249. Even if the communications were improved?—Unless there was uninterrupted water communication I do not think it could pay.

3250. Mr. Roebuck.] Have you ever travelled in Minnesota?—No.

3251. Or any portion of the wild parts of America?—Yes; I have travelled some of the wild parts, for I went from Red River to Fort William, on Lake Superior.

3252. I mean in the United States?—No.

3253. You do not know then how the settlers of the new territories live?—Not at all.

3254. Do you suppose that persons at Red River would find any more difficulty than persons in Minnesota to live?—I should think not.

3255. And do you suppose that the same circumstances which attach to the people in Minnesota, and increase civilisation and colonisation there, would attach to the persons living in Red River, and would there increase civilisation and colonisation if permitted?—I believe the circumstances are different, for they have the Missouri River and the St. Peter's River in that direction, and a population has crept up close to them; but at Red River the nearest point of steam navigation for the colonists is Fort William, on Lake Superior, and that is a very long distance, the itinerary of which I have here, if I am allowed to produce it.

3256. Where does your route begin?—My route begins from Red River itself, Fort Garry, 26 miles from Lake Winnipeg.

3257. And it goes from thence to Lake Superior?—This itinerary of mine carries me to Sault Ste. Marie.

3258. That is between Lake Huron and Lake Superior?—Exactly; just before the fall of 20 feet takes place.

3259. How many miles is it from that fort which you mentioned to Lake Superior?—The whole distance is about 1,126 miles to Sault Ste. Marie.

3260. That is right across the lake, but I am talking of the distance from the western border of the lake to the fort?—Then 354 miles will have to be deducted from the 1,126.

3261. Do you mean to say that it is 700 miles from the Red River to Lake Superior?—Yes.

3262. The greater part of that I suppose could be travelled by water?—All by water, with the exception of the slight portages, no one of which exceeds three or four miles; three miles I think is the longest.

3263. Mr. Edward Elliot.] What sort of boats are there?—There are two kinds used by the traders; there is what they call a bateau, or a sort of barge, which is used from Fort Garry to Fort Frances; then from Fort Frances onward they have large canoes, which will hold 26 people easily.

3264. If you had had to take a gun from Fort William to Fort Garry, what sort of work would it have been?—I think very easy. I do not see any difficulty. I limit it to nine-pounders; a man cannot carry above 180 lbs.

3265. How much of that distance would men have had to carry that gun?—I have not summed up the distances of the portages here, but in my military report they are given; it is 10 years since I wrote that, and it only came into my possession last night.

[The Witness delivered in the following Paper:]

Colonel
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Hours, by Lakes and Rivers, from Red River Colony to South of St. Marie, traversed by Colonel Crofton, 6th Foot, in 1847, the Portages and estimated Distances between each, and the several Points on the whole Water Line.

		MILES.	REMARKS.
Red River	Upper Fort Garry to	26	From Fort Garry to
	Lower Fort Garry	8	Fort Frances boats can be
	Indian Settlement	10	employed, as on the York
Lake Winnipeg	Mouth of Red River	24	Factory route. At Fort
	Pointe Grand Marais	23	Frances canoes must be
Winnipeg River	Fort Alexander, H. B. post	7	used as far as Fort Wil-
	First Eau qui coule, portage $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	8	liam; barges can then
	Second ditto ditto $\frac{1}{2}$ "	3	be employed for passing
	Third ditto ditto "	3	through Lake Superior
	Terre Blanche ditto $\frac{1}{2}$ "	4	to Saint Ste. Marie.
	Petit Roche ditto 100 yards	1	
	Roches de Bonet, 1st portage, 1 mile	1	
	Ditto 2d ditto 150 yards	1	
	Ditto 3d ditto 50 "	1	
	Lac de Bonet, 6 short portages	14	
	White River	13	
	Grand Rapid	14	
	Barrière Portage, 20 yards	7	
	Slave Falls, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	5	
	Roches Brûlé, 200 yards	1	
	Pointe aux Chenes, 150 yards	1	
	Pointe des Bois, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	9	
	Chute à Jache, 200 yards	26	
	Portage de l'Isle, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	14	
	Wabasing, Roman-catholic mission	4	
	Cave Portage, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	1	
	Croix Portage, 20 yards	1	
	Terre Blanche Portage, 200 yards	3	
	Grande Décharge	20	
	Dallas Rapid	17	
Lake of the Woods	Rat Portage, H. B. C. post	26	
	Little Portage, 50 yards	25	
	Across the Traverse	7	
Lac la Pluie River	Sandy Knolls	30	
	Rivière aux Rapides	22	
	Long Sault	9	
	Mauvais Rapid	17	
	The Forks	16	
Lac la Pluie	Fort Frances, H. B. C. post	40	Here canoes must be
	Little Creek	7	employed for troops.
Lac Macan	Portage Neuf	6	
Rivière Macan	Trois Portages	22	
Lac la Croix	Traverse	12	
Rivière Maligne	Portage de l'Isle	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	
	1st portage to 2d portage	2	
	2d ditto to 3d ditto	5	
	3d ditto to 4th ditto	1	
Staroon Lake		25	
Lac Doré	Portage des deux Rivières, 1 mile	3	
Lac des Morts	Portage des Morts, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	18	
Lake Winnipeg	Portage des Français, 2 miles	16	
	Portage Petite, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	9	
Mille Lac	Portage de Baril, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	26	
Rivière Savanne		20	
	Savanne Portage	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
	Milieu Portage	1	
Height of Land	Prairie Portage	8	
Dog River	Prairie Portage, 240 yards	10	
	Jourdain Portage, 200 yards	3	
	Barré Portage, 100 yards	27	

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		MILES.	REMARKS.
Dog Lake		15	
Kaministiquia River	Dog Portage, 9 miles	9	
	Little Dog Portage, 4 mile	4	
	Portage des Marais, 20 yards	8	
	Décharge des Pinets	6	
	Ditto des Trembles	2	
	Ditto Maurais	1	
	Ditto Belanger	4	
	Portage de Coutou, 200 yards	1	
	Ditto Recousé, 200 yards	1	
	Ditto de l'Isle, 100 yards	1	
	Décharge, 50 yards	1	
	Eouri Portage, 1/2 mile	1	
Mountain Portage, 1/2 mile	30		
Fort William	*Hudson's Bay Port	15	* If steamers shall be established on Lake Superior, the journey from Red River, by canoe or barge, will end here, and save 354 miles of dangerous navigation for small boats.
Lake Superior	Tonnere Point	60	
	Les Ecrites	15	
	Traverse	15	
	Pic Island	18	
	Pic. H. B. C. Post	20	
	Omer's Head	25	
	Les Ecours	25	
	Bear Berry River	6	
	Gros Cap, 1st	3	
	Michipicouton, H. B. C. Post	21	
	Gargantua	20	
Montreal Island	25		
Mannicou	20		
Sault Ste. Marie.	Gros Cap, 2d	6	
	Point aux Pins to Sault Ste. Marie.	9	
TOTAL DISTANCE about		1,125	

N.B.—The distance marked opposite each place in this Itinerary is that between it and the place next under it.

The journey can be performed in 28 days by this route.

3266. Mr. Roebuck.] I was asking you about the river; does the river fall into Lake Superior?—There is a height of land which divides the waters; the Kaministiquia River falls from the height of land, and it is about 36 miles from the Kakabeka Fall to Fort William. The other rivers flow westward and empty into Lake Winnipeg, which ultimately empties itself by Hayes' and other Rivers into Hudson's Bay.

3267. So that part of the way you go against stream and part of the way with stream?—The main part of the way proceeding towards Canada is up stream.

3268. Could that stream, with a little difficulty, be rendered a navigable river for boats?—Of course, by damming it up in several places you might avoid a great many small portages; but practically, for the slight intercourse which there is, it is less labour to carry over the portages.

3269. But if there were a great population to come there in time, and a great traffic, could not they very easily canal the river?—Certainly.

3270. So that the country does not hold out any obstacles to colonisation?—Quite the contrary. All that tract is a lovely country by Lac la Pluie and the Lake of the Woods.

3271. Did you at all travel towards the Rocky Mountains during the 12 months you were there?—I rode myself long distances on the plains to ascertain what they were like.

3272. And what did you find them like?—If I may say so, a kind of land sea, with undulations, but I could have driven the lightest spring gig over it all, and I believe it extends 400 miles.

3273. Then there is no difficulty in communicating with that part of the country?—I believe you may drive a waggon from Red River to the Rocky Mountains. I have heard of those who have done it.

3274. Did you pay any attention to the circumstances which prevented that country from being colonised while you were there?—Yes, I did.

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3275. Did you come to any conclusions thereupon?—Yes, I did.
3276. What were they?—They were these: that it was remoteness and utter insularity which prevented people from settling there.
3277. Is it more remote than Oregon?—Oregon is close to the sea, and therefore it may be said to be the next parish to England in that sense.
3278. Is it more remote than Minnesota?—I do not know that country at all; but I should suppose that the navigation of the Missouri, and the Mississippi, and the branch rivers, renders that country perfectly reachable, if I may so express it, by everything.
3279. I suppose you have heard of Utah?—I have.
3280. That is separated, I take it, by a desert from the rest of the world?—I believe it is; but I know nothing of its communications with the other States.
3281. I suppose you have heard that it has become a great settlement?—It has.
3282. Being separated from the rest of the world, it has become a great settlement?—I am not at all acquainted with the nature of its separation from it. There may be circumstances which may render a great tract of country desert, which yet may offer facilities of approach; for instance, you may run a railway over a dead dry flat with great facility.
3283. Would there be any great difficulty in running a railway from Lake Superior to the Red River?—There are no insuperable difficulties in these days of engineering; probably the great difficulty would be the swamps.
3284. Lord Stanley.] You spoke of the difficulties of communication between the Sault Ste. Marie and the Red River; of what nature are those difficulties?—The want of anything better than a mere foot-track, in which you go in Indian file, is the great difficulty over the portages, and having to carry everything, and divide everything into weights of 90 lbs. each.
3285. Do you know what the number of the portages is between Red River and Lake Superior?—Yes, I could tell the exact number, if I were to count them on this paper.
3286. Mr. Edward Ellice.] How many breaks are there in the navigation?—The whole distance from Sault Ste. Marie does not much exceed 1,100 miles; it can be done in 30 days. I am sorry to say that these papers only came into my hands last night, and consequently I am not so well acquainted with them as I was when I wrote them; I must count the number of portages; some of them are so exceedingly short as to be only 20 yards; I do not know that I should include them.
3287. You had better put in all the interruptions to the navigation?—They are all enumerated here, above 60.
3288. Lord Stanley.] Are any of those portages of considerable length?—The longest, I think, is 2½ miles to three miles.
3289. Over a height of land?—Over the height of land.
3290. At a considerable elevation therefore above the river?—I took the levels myself, 131 feet; I remember that distinctly, for I took the level above and below.
3291. Then at that point the navigation must necessarily be interrupted?—Yes; it is the great Kakabeka Fall; it is a little higher even than Niagara.
3292. Therefore no engineering skill and no reasonable amount of expenditure would produce an unbroken navigation between Red River and the waters of Lake Superior?—Not from that point, but there may be in the United States territory a means of doing it; from the extreme western point of Lake Superior, I believe the land slopes down there to the southward.
3293. But you are not aware of any such?—No; I have heard so; but the great difficulties in that case are in the swamps; the upper land is comparatively dry.
3294. Do you know anything of the country to the north of Lake Superior, from personal knowledge?—Nothing whatever; I merely coasted the northern side; it is full of minerals, for I knocked off silver and copper myself with an axe, cropping out.
3295. While you were at Red River did you hear much desire expressed on the part of the inhabitants for an improved communication with Canada?—Yes, I did.

3296. By what class of persons; the half-breeds or the white settlers?— I think by the Scotch settlers chiefly; I say the Scotch settlers, because I chiefly communicated with them.

3297. Was there upon their minds an impression that those communications had been neglected, and that more might have been done by the Government of the country than had been done?—I dare say that was a very general impression.

3298. You have spoken of a prohibition to trade as existing in the case of the Red River settlers; does that prohibition extend to all articles, or is it limited to the trade in furs?—I think furs and spirits.

3299. Is there any prohibition to a Red River settler to send his grain to any place to which he can transport it?—I think not; I never heard of it.

3300. Mr. J. H. Gurney.] You mentioned that the colonists at the Red River had only 50 acres of land each?—That is the limit.

3301. That is to say, the Company will not grant them any larger amount?—Since the settlement came into their possession, out of Lord Selkirk's hands, I think that has been the municipal rule; but there may have been exceptions, though I am not aware of a single one, and I knew every man's allotment.

3302. Did you meet with instances in which one person had sold his allotment to another?—Many instances of subdivision.

3303. But not of aggregation?—None that I can at all charge my memory with.

3304. Mr. Rosbeck.] Do you know the state of the law, whether a person could sell his land without permission of the Company?—I think there was a sort of formal paper put in for permission to subdivide it.

3305. I mean to sell it?—Yes, he might sell the whole lot.

3306. Without permission of the Company?—I think so.

3307. That is your impression?—That is my impression, clearly; I really never thought upon the point before; but I know that in subdividing it they had to apply.

3308. Mr. Gregson.] Are those lots generally well cultivated?—As far as regards the Scotch settlers, admirably.

3309. Are you aware that they can sell the produce of the farms to the Company?—Yes.

3310. To any extent?—That is their market, and sole market.

3311. Mr. Edward Ellice.] Do you know any case where a settler, having a lot of 50 acres, has been refused an additional lot when he has asked for it?—I do not remember a case.

3312. Your observations have chiefly, I think, applied to the territory south of 50°; the parallel of 50° runs through the Red River Settlement?—It does.

3313. I think your observations have generally been as to the territory south of that?—Yes. I came down from Fort York, in Hudson's Bay, and all that line I have a map of, which was drawn by my own hand, with all the bearings of every point on the river; therefore I know the route accurately.

3314. But I am speaking of your observations with regard to the fertility of the soil and the climate: your observations have chiefly applied to the territory south of 50°?—Yes; at actually the Red River colony itself, which is, if I may so describe it, the fork of the two rivers, the Assiniboine and the Red River. If you took a compass, with a radius of 50 miles, it would describe the whole of the Red River colony.

3315. That is the government of Assiniboia?—It is.

3316. What sort of a country is it to the north of that, on Lake Winnipeg, at Norway House, and all that territory; what sort of land is it?—You might grow corn there, but the season closes sooner.

3317. During the time you were in Red River, or in your progress down between York and Red River, did you go at all into the interior; did you see much of the country?—I went as far as a horse would take me occasionally. I have never been a night out from the fort, with one exception.

3318. With regard to the complaints that were made by the half-breeds of the restrictions on spirits, do you know their object in wanting to distil spirits and possess spirits?—I think they had two objects; one was for their own consumption, and another was, probably, to surreptitiously trade with them.

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J. F. Crofton.

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3319. That is to say, to trade in furs with them?—To trade in furs with the Indians.

3320. From the experience which you have had, is it your opinion that the trade in spirits would be very prejudicial to the Indians?—I am sure of it.

3321. You think that it would be a very unwise thing to remove the restriction upon the sale of spirits?—I do.

3322. What are your reasons for thinking so?—Because since the junction of the two companies, the North-West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, the issue of spirits in barter for furs gradually ceased, and I think, about ten years before I arrived in the colony, it had altogether ceased, and from that time the Indian race were increasing, as shown by the census; before that they had been decreasing.

3323. Mr. Roebuck.] Of what census do you speak?—A census that the Company make, I think, every five or six years, collected from the heads and chiefs of the Indians, who make a return of their numbers to them.

3324. Sir John Pakington.] Over what extent of country does that census range?—I believe from 49°, as far as they have trading posts to the north.

3325. And for the whole country, east and west?—I think so.

3326. Mr. Edward Ellice.] While you were there did you hear any complaints against the Company for bartering spirits, or giving spirits to the Indians?—I never heard of any complaint against the Company for that till I came to this country.

3327. As far as your observation went, the rule of the Company with regard to the restriction of spirits was adhered to?—Quite so, as far as I know.

3328. With regard to the administration of justice, while you were there did you hear any complaints as regarded the administration of justice under the Company?—No, I never heard a word.

3329. Do you think, from your own personal observation, that, practically, justice was administered?—I am sure of it, as far as I know; but there really was no justice to administer; there was no crime.

3330. To what do you attribute that absence of crime, because in these places generally there is crime?—I think to the absence of spirits.

3331. As far as your knowledge extends in other respects, did the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company over the population there appear to you to be oppressive?—Quite the contrary.

3332. I suppose you must have heard the matter talked over; do you think there is any other better way of keeping that country or governing the natives than by this rule of the Hudson's Bay Company?—By the "natives" am I to understand Indians?

3333. The Indians and the half-breeds?—I think the Hudson's Bay Company have an experience of them that no other body can have, and I think they managed them exceedingly well while I was there.

3334. What do you suppose would be the result of having any loose form of government among the Indians; if they were allowed to do as they liked?—I think they would kill one another; the Americans would soon use them up if they were there.

3335. It is hardly necessary to ask you; but is there any other better mode of governing the country which you can suggest, with your personal experience?—I do not know that under the circumstances, the isolated position of that colony, you could have a much better government than its municipal government.

3336. Did you reside in Canada at all?—I did not reside there.

3337. Did you stay in Canada at all?—A short time; I had a good deal of communication when I was there relative to those very parts which we are now speaking of; chiefly with Lord Elgin.

3338. Do you know whether there was any great desire expressed in Canada with regard to that territory?—Not 10 years ago when I was there.

3339. Mr. Roebuck.] You have been asked whether that is the best government for that country; did you ever turn your mind to the colonising of the country; whether the existing government is the best government for filling it with white people?—I do not think it is.

3340. Is it not a government which prohibits white people from coming there?—I am not aware of any prohibition.

3341. Does not every government which maintains fur hunting keep the country wild?—They wish to keep all the country wild I believe which is north

of

of 52°, but I believe below that, between that and 49°, they would be very glad if it was as well cultivated and peopled as in Canada; that is to say, the Hudson's Bay Company have always expressed that opinion to me.

3342. So that if we take the Hudson's Bay Company by their expressions, they would be glad to see that part of the country peopled with a white population?—I am quite sure of it, and even the Governor, Sir George Simpson, upon one occasion, I may fairly say, said to me that he personally would be glad to see the Red River in the possession of the Crown.

3343. If that government be not a good government for the creation of a colony in that part of the world, it is not the government desired by the Hudson's Bay Company themselves?—I do not understand the question.

3344. They desire to colonise the country, do not they?—They expressed that wish.

3345. Then if their government be not the best government for colonising the country, it is not the government which they really desire?—I really do not know. I am very stupid, for I do not comprehend the gist of the question.

3346. Will you again turn your attention to the tract between Red River and the western portion of Lake Superior; have you ever travelled from Montreal to Kingston by river?—I have gone from Kingston to Montreal.

3347. By river?—Yes, I have.

3348. Were there any canals at the time when you went up there?—I did not go through any canal.

3349. Did you go in a bateau?—I did not.

3350. How did you go?—I embarked at Kingston.

3351. I am talking of going from Montreal to Kingston?—I did not proceed that way.

3352. It is exactly the opposite way?—Yes.

3353. Did you ever go from Montreal to Kingston?—I never went from Montreal to Kingston, but I went from Kingston to Montreal.

3354. Then you descended the river?—I did.

3355. In what?—I think it was in a steamer, or occasionally steaming.

3356. You did not know that river before steamers were upon it?—No.

3357. Had you any opportunity of seeing the difficulties of the rapids of the St. Lawrence?—I saw no difficulty, I went down with great facility.

3358. Therefore you cannot give me an answer to this question, whether there be not as many obstacles between Kingston and Montreal, by way of the river, as between the western point of Lake Superior and Red River?—The waters are quite of a different character: the one is exceedingly deep water, though very rapid; the Quebec River, in fact, is the great river that flows down; but the other is comparatively shallow, excepting in the lakes, and broken up between rocks where you have to haul or pole the boats and canoes, and these obstacles are almost innumerable.

3359. Did you ever see a bateau taken up the St. Lawrence?—No.

3360. You have seen a French bateau, I suppose?—Many.

3361. You know that they do not draw above two inches of water when they are not laden?—Very few.

3362. Those bateaux went up the River St. Lawrence?—They did.

3363. They were pushed up close by the shore over the rapids, where the water was very shallow?—Yes, but they were not interrupted by rocks; there was a free navigation though it was a flow down of water.

3364. Is that your statement to me that they were not interrupted by rocks, because I have been up that river very often, and I know that there are rocks?—I speak of what I encountered.

3365. You did not encounter any rocks, because you went down the river?—I went down the river by steam, and therefore I cannot speak of the difficulties up that river; I am speaking of the difficulties of the rivers between Fort William and Lake Winnipeg.

3366. Would there be any difficulty in making roads over that portage?—Not the slightest.

3367. If there were good roads and waggons over the portage there would be no great difficulty?—It would be hardly worth while hauling in wheel carriages for 20, 25, or 30 yards. The water is kept up till it comes to a narrow place, perhaps between two rocks, and there it pours down with a vast force, and you must pole and haul, if you can, or carry; that is the nature of the navigation.

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3368. Do not some of the portages extend some miles?—I think the longest is three miles.

3369. Would it not be an advantage to have a road there?—They have an old road upon that, made of wood; it was made by the old North-West Company, and it is there still.

3370. Have they any waggons there?—No, they carry all on the back.

3371. But if they had waggons I suppose they could carry goods very easily?—They might make a tram; there is no difficulty in making it; there is plenty of wood; but where would you get the horses and how keep them.

3372. There is no difficulty in making a communication between Red River and Lake Superior?—There is no difficulty; I admit it at once.

3373. Sir John Pakington.] What sort of communication do you mean; land or water?—Only by water; you cannot go over the swamps.

3374. Mr. Edward Ellice.] You cannot do it by land?—No, it is impossible; you cannot even send across a post, excepting in winter, when the country is frozen.

3375. Sir John Pakington.] When you said, in answer to the Honourable Member's question, that there would be no difficulty in making a road between Red River and Lake Superior, did you refer to a means of communication by water?—I meant by a road there, a route; I should have used the word route.

3376. Of what sort?—By water, carrying over the portages.

3377. You have been questioned about the use of waggons; would there be any difficulty, in your opinion, in making such a road from Red River to Lake Superior as would make it possible to convey goods by waggons?—I think it utterly impossible.

3378. Why?—On account of the swamps, and there being so many lakes and rivers to cross.

3379. Are those swamps of great extent?—I believe the great face of the country to the southward of the rivers is swamp.

3380. Do you mean that the natural impediments are so great on both sides of the river that you think it would be impossible to make a continuous regular road?—A continuous regular road would be impossible; many parts would admit of it, but the major part is swamp.

3381. The major part of the whole distance?—Yes, certainly.

3382. Mr. Roebuck.] But where you could not make a road, could not you go by water?—Certainly.

3383. So that between water and road you could make a good route?—A very good one; I would undertake to take troops along it.

3384. Mr. Edward Ellice.] Where would the animals come from to draw the carriages?—I started that difficulty.

3385. Sir John Pakington.] I suppose there would be no difficulty in conveying animals there?—None.

3386. Or keeping them when they were there?—You might do it by establishing posts, of course, along the rivers, and the Company have establishments; for instance, at Fort Frances, and at Hat Portage, and several other places, the Company have stations, and there they have a few sheep and some cattle, because I have had fresh meat there from them.

3387. Mr. Edward Ellice.] This route would be about 772 miles?—About that.

3388. And I suppose that, although it could be made good, there would be considerable trouble in making it?—You cannot make a continuous road; you can make a route; I would undertake to take my regiment by it.

3389. Not under present circumstances?—Yes; I did worse than that, for I took artillery from Fort York, in Hudson's Bay, to Red River, 700 miles by the compass, over lakes and rivers; and that is a much worse route than the other.

3390. Do you mean to say that under present circumstances the route from Fort William to Fort Garry is a better route for military to go than from Fort York?—I am quite sure of it, for I have gone both.

3391. Sir John Pakington.] Did you say that you took artillery from Fort York to Red River?—I did.

3392. What

3392. What distance is that?—It is about 736 miles.

3393. How did you convey it?—We carried the guns in canvas; we took the guns off their carriages, we had rope handles and carrying straps, and between them so carried the guns.

3394. Mr. *Rosbeck*.] I wish you to direct your attention to the distance between Fort William and Red River Settlement; you say it is 700 miles?—Seven hundred and seventy-two, I think. I find a remark on this very paper which was made at the time, and which is as follows: "If steamers shall be established on Lake Superior, the journey from Red River by canoe or barge will end at Fort William, and save 354 miles of dangerous navigation for small boats." The whole distance between Red River and Sault Ste. Marie is 1,126 miles. Sault Ste. Marie is at the efflux of Lake Superior.

3395. Do you say that the Red River Settlement is 700 miles from Fort William?—It is.

3396. Sir *John Pakington*.] By the map, it appears to be twice as far from Fort York down to Red River?—I can only say that I paced the greater part of the portages.

[They are enumerated on this Paper]:

LIST OF PORTAGES occurring between Fort York, Hudson's Bay, and Sea River, from which the Navigation is free from Rapids to Lower Fort Garry on Red River.

Name of Portage.	Nature of Ground.	Length in Paces.	Name of Portage.	Nature of Ground.	Length in Paces.
Rock Portage	Hard, dry, even	48	Long-water Creek	Swampy	521
Borrowicks	Rocky and swampy	30	Second "	Swampy	68
White Mud	Swampy	43	Upper "	Swampy	53
Point of Rocks	Hard, but rugged	61	Front Fall	Rocky, even	49
Brass	Hard and uneven	482	Creek Fall	Rocky and swampy	31
Lower Burntwood	Dry and even	476	Knife Portage	Swampy	59
Morgans	Rocky, broken	266	Upper "	Swampy	40
Upper Burntwood	Dry, rather uneven	59	Lower "	Swampy	58
Rocky Ledge	Hard and rugged	63	Moose's	Swampy	56
Mossy	Swampy and slippery.	603	Crooked Spout	Rocky and swampy	26
Smoothrock	Hard, even	347	Upper "	Swampy	42
First Portage	Swampy	42	Hill Portage	Rocky and rugged	243
Second Portage	Swampy	58	Upper "	Rocky and rugged	57
Devil's	Hard, difficult landing.	173	Whitefall, Robinson's	Level, but slippery	1,760
Ground-water Creek	Swampy	51	Painted Stone	Rocky, even	16
Lower "	Swampy	62	First Dam	Hard, stony	38
			Second Dam	Hard, stony	25
			Sea River	Rocky, even	63

These 24 Portages are the only impediments on the water route over which landing, and generally the boats also, have to be carried.

Upper Fort Garry, 7 November 1846.

J. Crofton, Lieutenant-Colonel,
Commanding Troops, H. B. Territory.

3397. Mr. *Matheson*.] You are not speaking of a straight line?—No; here are the two routes which I have: I must adhere to their evidence.

3398. *Chairman*.] Had you any difficulty in supporting your men at the Red River; did they get plenty of provisions?—Plenty.

3399. Were they very expensive?—No; meat was 2 d. a pound.

3400. And was your flour abundant?—Yes. I have a list of the prices of almost every article sold in the Red River.

3401. There was no difficulty in supporting the men?—None whatever.

3402. Were your men healthy?—I had not even one casualty excepting a man drowned in one of the rivers.

3403. Mr. *Kinnaird*.] How many men had you?—383 persons, I think, made the total number, as well as my memory carries me.

3404. And there was no casualty?—No.

3405. Mr. *Gregson*.] During what length of time was that?—A year and two months.

3406. Sir *John Pakington*.] Are you aware that Sir George Simpson in his evidence stated that from Lake Winnipeg to Lake Superior was 500 miles?—No, he was talking of course as the crow flies.

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J. F. Crysler.
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3407. Mr. *Edward Ellice*.] What means did you take to arrive at those distances?—I merely estimated them at the rate at which we went; I also was pleased when I arrived in Canada to find at the Company's Factory at La Chine that my distances were only different from theirs 11 miles; I paced the portages as a soldier would, and all those distances which I give you are the correct distances.

3408. Sir *John Pakington*.] I find that Sir George Simpson, at No. 793, gave the following answer to a question in this Committee Room; he was asked "What is the distance from the southern part of Lake Winnipeg to Fort William on Lake Superior?—About 500 miles, I think; from Lake Superior to Lake Winnipeg is about 500 miles of bad canoe navigation, with 66 portages, varying in length from 100 yards to three and a half miles." It is quite clear from that answer that Sir George Simpson was not calculating the distance as the crow flies, but that he took the windings of the rivers; how do you reconcile that answer of Sir George Simpson's with the opinion which you have expressed?—I reconcile it in this way, that Sir George started from a different point to me, at least as far as those distances go; I count from Fort Garry and Sir George probably counts from Fort Alexander.

3409. The distance from Lake Winnipeg to Fort William I apprehend is greater than the distance from Fort Garry to Fort William, is it not?—No, the distance from Fort Garry to Fort William is upwards of 86 miles more; from Lake Winnipeg to Fort William is 86 to 90 miles less than from Red River.

3410. Mr. *Christy*.] I think you were Governor of the Red River Settlement?—No; I had nothing to do with the Government.

3411. During the year that you were there?—No, I had nothing to say to it while I commanded the troops; I was merely a soldier; I had nothing to do with the civil government.

3412. On your return to England you were called upon by the Secretary for the Colonies to report upon certain complaints made by settlers in Hudson's Bay?—Yes; I remember that perfectly well; I was quartered at Fermoy, and that question was afterwards discussed in Parliament. As well as I remember, it was Mr. *Isbister's* memorial.

3413. You made nine or ten answers, I think, to certain questions?—Yes; I remember perfectly making replies to Sir Benjamin Hawes, then Mr. Hawes.

3414. Do you adhere to the opinions which you then gave?—I am sure I must, for I took great pains to be accurate then.

3415. Were you resident in any other part of the country except in the Red River?—No, not resident.

3416. Do you consider that the period for which you were in the Red River was sufficient to enable you to form a correct opinion of the country, in reference to the points which you stated in your report to the Secretary of State?—It was limited to Red River, and to form it I think I was long enough there; of course I cannot say what took place in distant places.

3417. You could not say what took place in other remote parts of the country?—Not except from hearsay.

3418. With reference to the condition of the Indians, your observation, I suppose, was directed to their condition in the Red River settlement?—And on the route; I had occasionally communications with them through an interpreter, and they never made any complaints to me, or anything of that nature; they chiefly begged tobacco from me.

3419. Did you take any means to ascertain the condition of the Indians, except in the settlement of the Red River?—At Fort York I did; the Indians in and about Fort York I was interested in, and during the short time that I was there I inquired a great deal about them.

3420. Did the condition of the Indians in the Red River and that of the Indians in the remote districts through which you travelled, strike you as being very different?—There was no difference; they are all much alike, excepting that they differ as to tribes and language.

3421. You speak of the influence of the missionaries in reference to their condition in the answers which you made to the Secretary of State?—I do. I knew the Rev. Mr. *Smithers* very well, who served an Indian settlement about nine miles below the lower fort of Red River, and I used to hear a great deal from him, and with great interest, and he always spoke in the highest terms of the arrangements made for their benefit.

3422. Can you inform the Committee whether it is your opinion that the condition of the natives in the Red River settlement is much superior, where they are under the influence of the missionaries, to their condition in remote and distant parts of the country through which you have travelled?—Measuring their condition by my own ideas of comfort and happiness, I should say it was much better in the Red River settlement.

3423. I think there were nine questions put to you, and you gave answers to all those in your report to the Secretary of State?—I have no copy of them. I lost or was robbed of most of my papers when I was in Ireland, and among the rest a copy of those answers relating to Mr. Isbister's memorial, and therefore I am depending upon my memory entirely for it.

3424. You know that they were furnished to the House of Commons?—I heard so, but never saw them.

3425. And that they have been printed?—I never heard that. I never saw them.

3426. Does your memory serve you with reference to the queries which were put to you? I find that to nine questions only one answer related to the Red River colony particularly; there were nine complaints?—It is now nine or ten years ago. If you ask me the questions which were then put to me I will answer them now as I did then, I hope.

3427. Then you cannot tell me upon what information the answers to the other questions were based?—I really do not now know the questions that were put to me. I cannot remember what they were; if you ask them over again of me I will try and answer them, but I am entirely in the hands of the Committee upon that point, for I have no papers.

3428. I suppose the information which you derived, and from which you gave the answers to the Secretary of State, was principally from servants of the Company, and persons connected with the Company?—It was from my journal; it was from materials collected without any object except private satisfaction, and which were in the form of a journal, which I unfortunately lost among my other papers.

3429. You cannot furnish the Committee with any proof of the evidence which was given by the Bishop of Montreal, whom you quoted?—I do remember quoting his little book.

3430. And various other quotations which you gave?—I do not recollect what quotations they were; probably it was about the religious position of the colonists. I have entered into that very fully in my report on the colony.

3431. You have mentioned that a census was taken by the Hudson's Bay Company of the native population periodically?—Yes.

3432. Does the report which you have referred to contain a copy of that census?—It does not of that, but it contains the census of Red River at three or four different periods.

3433. You have given information to the Committee with reference to a census of the native population; the increase or decrease of the Indians?—Just so; that is done by the Hudson's Bay Company, and no doubt a communication to them would obtain it.

3434. It is not contained in your report?—No; I had not access to the figures excepting to look at them.

3435. Did you ever visit any of the missionary stations which were not in the Red River?—One at Norway House.

3436. In what state was that?—When I saw it there were but few people there, for they were out fishing and hunting at the open season, but I understand that in the winter season they are numerous.

3437. Mr. *Kinnaird*.] But from your experience your impression was that the missionaries were very useful to the Indians?—I believe exceedingly so.

3438. You visited Mr. Smethers's missionary station several times?—Twice; I went on Sundays there.

3439. Mr. *Christy*.] Do you know who pays the missionaries; to whom they are responsible?—I think to the Missionary Society, but the Company give them an allowance of some kind also; I cannot charge my memory with what the Company do give them, but probably you will get evidence upon that point from some of the clergymen, if they are in London.

Rear-Admiral
Sir G. Back, R. N. S.,
D. C. L.

Rear-Admiral Sir George Back, R. N. S., D. C. L., called in; and Examined.

19 May 1837.

3440. *Chairman.*] ARE you acquainted with the Hudson's Bay territory?—To a certain extent I am; but I perhaps may be allowed to mention that I have not been there for 22 years.

3441. Will you state how you came to visit it, and to what part of it you went?—I first went with my friend Sir John Franklin, on an expedition of discovery, in 1819 to 1822. I went secondly on another expedition with Sir John Franklin, from 1825 to the autumn of 1827; and, thirdly, on an expedition which I commanded myself, in search of Sir John Ross and his companions, who were then supposed to have been lost, making altogether, I believe, about nine years that I was engaged in those expeditions.

3442. *Mr. Kissaird.*] What was the period of the last expedition?—From 1833 to the end of 1835.

3443. *Sir John Pakington.*] 1835 was the last year that you were in that part of the world?—Yes.

3444. *Chairman.*] Will you tell us generally the routes of those three expeditions?—The first route was from York Factory to Lake Winnipeg, Cumberland House, Fort Chipewyan, Great Slave Lake, Fort Enterprise, Coppermine River, along the coast to Point Turnagain, thence to the river Hood, across the barren lands to Fort Enterprise and Great Slave Lake.

3445. What is the most northerly point of that route?—The most northerly point is on the coast near Point Turnagain, I think, in latitude 68; between Coppermine River and Point Turnagain. Then we returned across the country, having no provision; and it may be in the mind of the Committee that more than one-half of the unfortunate people perished from want of food.

3446. Where did you return to?—To England, by York Factory.

3447. From Great Slave Lake?—By the usual route; exactly the same route.

3448. That was the first expedition?—Yes.

3449. *Sir John Pakington.*] That was entirely a land expedition?—Yes; so were all these three expeditions; I have been on two others, but they were by sea.

3450. *Chairman.*] Will you describe the route of the second expedition?—The second expedition was to Toronto, then called York, to Penetanguishine, Sault Ste. Marie, Fort William (Lake Superior), the Rainy Lake, the Lake of the Woods, Fort Alexander (Lake Winnipeg), to the Grand Rapid. Up again from the Grand Rapid to Great Slave Lake by the same route as before. From Great Slave Lake down the Mackenzie River past Fort Simpson to Great Bear River; to Great Bear Lake, to Fort Franklin; thence to the western mouth of the Mackenzie River along the coast to Return Reef, being at that time but 140 miles from Her Majesty's ship "Blossom," then commanded by the late Admiral Beechy, the late President of the Geographical Society. I returned again to Norway House by the same route, and from Norway House to York Factory.

3451. And from thence to England?—And from thence to England.

3452. *Sir John Pakington.*] The "Blossom" had entered by Behring's Straits?—Yes.

3453. What time did that trip occupy?—From 1825 to the end of 1827.

3454. How many months?—Two years and three quarters altogether. Then the third expedition was from England to New York; to Montreal; La Chine; Lake Nipissing; Lake Huron, along the north shore of Lake Superior, and by exactly the same route as before to the Grand Rapid, that is to say, to the Saskatchewan River; thence to Great Slave Lake as before. Then along the eastern part of Great Slave Lake, which is new, to its extremity, where I built a fort, called Fort Reliance. Thence across a new country. With the exception of one or two points crossed by Hearne, I discovered the upper part of the Great Fish River; the sources, in fact, of the Great Fish River, or the one named after myself, and I descended it to the sea. Unable to get further, I returned by the same route precisely to Canada.

3455. You followed the Fish River to the sea?—Yes, I discovered it; that expedition occupied about two years and seven months.

3456. *Chairman.*] Then you have been pretty well all over the northern parts of the Hudson's Bay territory?—By just simply the routes which I have mentioned to you.

3457. How

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3457. How did you subsist during these journeys?—On each occasion the expedition was aided by the Hudson's Bay Company, and supplied by that Company with pemican, and other articles for traffic with the Indians; simply for food, to the extent that was required.

3458. How did you travel?—In canoes and boats, but chiefly in canoes, except along the coast.

3459. And there you walked, I suppose?—No, we had built boats.

3460. Sir John Pakington.] In fact you travelled everywhere by water?—All by water; except in crossing the barren lands and on detached services.

3461. That applies to all three of those journeys?—Yes.

3462. Chairman.] What did you do during the winter months?—In the winter we were plentifully occupied in making observations, and working up surveys.

3463. Did you spend your time in the Factories of the Company?—No, not at all; we built our own establishments, log houses with stores and places for our men.

3464. What number of men did you take with you generally?—From 20 to 22 on the former expeditions, on the latter not so many.

3465. Sir John Pakington.] Do you mean that that was the whole strength of your party?—Twenty-two altogether.

3466. Chairman.] Were they Europeans or Indians?—Chiefly Canadian voyageurs; we had some three or four Europeans with us; on the last occasion I had four artillerymen, and very excellent men they were, who volunteered from Montreal.

3467. Were you much troubled by the Indians in these expeditions?—Not in the least.

3468. During the whole time?—During the whole time.

3469. Sir John Pakington.] Did you see many?—I saw the Indians who frequented our establishments for the purpose of barter, chiefly for providing us with provisions; but they came in great numbers, that is to say, 300 or 400 at the utmost, and from that down to half-a-dozen.

3470. Did you always remain stationary during the winter months at those log-houses which you erected?—Yes, for the purpose of making magnetical and other observations, which at that time were of great importance to science.

3471. Chairman.] Can you give the Committee any account of the climate of these regions?—There is a great resemblance in the climate of those places, Great Bear Lake, Fort Franklin, Fort Enterprise, and Fort Reliance. The extreme temperatures at the two former places, as far as I remember (for really I have not referred to it), were 52 minus zero, and 57 minus zero; but at Fort Reliance, a place which I built myself, the minimum of five thermometers was 70° below zero, or 102° below the freezing point of Fahrenheit.

3472. Sir John Pakington.] That was the maximum?—Yes.

3473. How long did that last?—Not quite a day.

3474. Chairman.] What degree of latitude was that in?—62° 46'.

3475. Sir John Pakington.] At what season of the year was it that your thermometer reached that very low temperature?—In January; I do not exactly recollect the date; but I believe it was the 17th.

3476. Mr. Christy.] Was that the year when you wintered on the Fish River?—We did not winter on the Great Fish River; it is scarcely possible to do so. There is no wood on that river; therefore you cannot winter there.

3477. Chairman.] What opinion did you form of the soil of this country; its power of producing?—At the extreme north you get beyond the latitude of the woods; but at Fort Reliance there was wood, more or less stunted, pine, and some others of considerable growth. The soil itself was gravelly, with a mossy surface, but sterile, certainly.

3478. Were you at the Red River Settlement?—I was never at Red River.

3479. Were you on the Saskatchewan?—On the Saskatchewan I passed a short time at Cumberland House and Pine Island Lake in the autumn of 1819 with my friend Franklin; at that time there was merely a garden for herbs, and a little barley was grown, but nothing beyond; that was in 1819 and 1820.

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3480. With respect to communication between the Hudson's Bay territory and Europe, you have been all the different ways, have you not?—I have been merely the routes which I have mentioned.

3481. You have been from York Factory?—Yes.

3482. From Fort William?—Yes.

3483. And from Canada by Lake Nipissing?—Yes.

3484. What do you say of those three routes; which is the best in order to get to the neighbourhood of Lake Winnipeg and the Red River?—Both routes are bad, but if I were to prefer the one route to the other, that is to say, if I had anything to convey to Red River, I should unquestionably prefer the route from York Factory.

3485. Rather than from Fort William?—Rather than from Fort William by the Lake of the Woods.

3486. Sir John Pakington.] Why?—There is an easier access; there is less difficulty in portages, with the exception of one or two falls; but I should say there is less difficulty, and there are fewer impediments.

3487. Chairman.] What opinion did you form of the government of the Hudson's Bay Company from what you saw of its effects?—In the first place, when we went there, there were two companies; they were then in a very disturbed state, and it was impossible for us to form any opinion; we ourselves were not acquainted with the government of the Company; afterwards, as far as I saw of the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company throughout the line of route which I travelled, and I frequently resided at the different establishments with the chief factors and other influential servants of that Company, I saw nothing but the utmost kindness to the Indians and fairness in dealing; I never knew an Indian in want turned away without his wants being supplied, whether he had furs to give in return or not; indeed, I have seen strong instances of great benevolence on the part of the Hudson's Bay officers.

3488. Can you form any opinion of the fitness of that country for colonisation?—None whatever; it never entered into one's imagination 22 years ago.

3489. Sir John Pakington.] I presume that during the greater portion of these periods of between two and three years which each of these excursions occupied, you were stationary on account of weather, were you not?—Yes.

3490. Can you give the Committee any approximation to the proportion of time in each of those trips that you were actually travelling?—Yes; about from the middle of April to the end of October.

3491. Each year?—Each year.

3492. The rest of the year you were stationary?—Yes; we were sufficiently occupied in making observations and procuring food, and that with difficulty.

3493. How did you procure food through those long winters?—It was precisely there where the aid of the Hudson's Bay Company came in to us so opportunely. The Indians known to them came to our establishments, where, I ought to mention, that we had one of the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company attached to the expedition.

3494. Always?—Always; and this officer conducted the trade entirely, we ourselves not at all interfering in it.

3495. Did you see much of the Indians during these various excursions?—From time to time.

3496. Should you say, considering the nature of your object, and the portions of country which you explored, that you had any good means of judging whether or not the government of the Hudson's Bay Company was beneficial to those districts?—Decidedly so, inasmuch as the Indians must have starved without the aid of the Hudson's Bay Company.

3497. Did any instances come under your observation of great suffering or privation on the part of the Indians during the winter months?—I heard of their suffering.

3498. Did you see anything of the sort?—I saw none myself, save and except the few Indians who resorted to Fort Reliance and to Fort Franklin, and indeed to Fort Enterprise, seeking relief from our stores.

3499. Were you at all at Fort Reliance during the summer months?—Only in the spring and autumn; the intervening part was necessarily occupied in exploring the country to and from the coast.

3500. Did

3500. Did you see enough of Fort Reliance to enable you to judge whether or not that is a neighbourhood which would bear cultivation during the summer months?—I should say decidedly not.

3501. On account of climate?—Chiefly on account of climate, but also on account of the conformation of the land, which is so interspersed with rocks; it is granitic.

3502. What did you find as to the climate around Fort York; would it do for cultivation?—That is altogether different; there is an alluvial soil around Fort York; it is a low swampy country. I speak with diffidence upon this point, but I doubt whether it would do for cultivation, because the soil is generally frozen to some two or three feet below the surface.

3503. Even during summer?—In summer. I remember perfectly well seeing a trench dug and the soil was frozen, to the best of my memory, a considerable depth, two or three feet; immediately at the surface it was not, but below that, it was.

3504. And probably never was otherwise than frozen?—I should say not.

3505. On the whole, I apprehend from your answers that you do not think that even Fort York would be a favourable position for colonisation?—Unquestionably not.

3506. Mr. *Kissiwid.*] You mentioned that you had 22 companions with you; did you bring them all back living?—In the last expedition, with the exception of one of the artillerymen, all returned. On the second expedition we also lost one man; that was from sickness; but on the first expedition, which I dare say you may remember, in 1819 and 1822, the greater part died from starvation; they fell down in convulsions and actually died from want of food.

3507. More from want of food than from the climate?—Entirely from want of food and clothing.

3508. You got beyond the supplies of the Company?—It was a tissue of misfortunes altogether; the Indians had not been successful in fulfilling our measures; they had not provided the meat, the reindeer, which we had every reason to hope and to expect they would have provided, and our house, Fort Enterprise, was left entirely desolate.

3509. Have you reason to think that many Indians in that same neighbourhood also died in that year?—They did, but they were somewhat superstitious, and they heard strange tales; sickness got amongst them, and they went from one place to another in search of food themselves.

3510. Did you find a great difference between the Indians that you met far north away from the station, and those who were in the habit of coming immediately near the station?—Not so great one as one would imagine; very little indeed; it was so shadowy as scarcely to be perceptible.

3511. Then you did not see any effects of civilisation upon them?—Not upon the Indians.

3512. You said that they came in for aid?—Yes.

3513. Did the Indians seem to know and feel that they had a right to come to the Company for aid in point of distress when they were starving?—They seemed always to feel that they could fall back upon the clemency and the benevolence of the white man at any extremity; that as long as he had anything to spare in his store the Indian was certain to be relieved.

3514. From your experience, was the feeling of the Indian towards the officers of the Company, the white men, very good?—Very good. I never knew an instance to the contrary.

3515. When you first made the expedition you said that there were some differences with the North-West Company; did you ever suffer from that cause?—Never in the slightest degree, although I had to go and take a very active part in it, being my friend Franklin's first lieutenant at that time; but going from fort to fort we received equal aid from the one as from the other; indeed I remember with great gratitude many acts of kindness and of information conveyed to my friend Franklin and myself by officers of the North-west Company.

3516. Mr. *Roebuck.*] You say that the Indians derived great benefit from the Company. How was that?—I mean as far as regards the supplies which were brought to them from England; blankets, ammunition, clothing, &c., and the luxury of tobacco.

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3517. Supposing there were no Company there, and the Indians were allowed to do as they liked, would they be worse off?—Unquestionably. I think if that ever happened they would be almost decimated.

3518. How then did they get on when there was no Company?—Then, they were accustomed to rely upon their own exertions; they used the bow and arrow; they knew nothing of fire-arms, and consequently were self-dependent; and being self-dependent they maintained themselves at that time.

3519. Before the Hudson's Bay Company had that territory I suppose the country was peopled?—Certainly.

3520. And they were as happy then as they are now?—In all probability.

3521. So that the incoming of the Company was really no benefit to the country?—That I will not pretend to answer, but as regards the moral condition of the untutored Indian, in all probability he was as happy then as he is now.

3522. Sir John Pakington.] Is it your opinion that the sufferings of the Indians, of which we have heard, are really in fact caused by their having become dependent on the white man for ammunition, and for those new weapons which the white man has taught them to use?—In a great measure.

3523. Before the white man was there they had the never failing bow and arrow, and plenty of food?—Certainly.

3524. Mr. Christy.] I think you have said sufficient to show that you believe in the famines which are stated to have taken place amongst the Indians?—Yes; from time to time.

3525. Do you think that they have been very numerous?—I can scarcely answer that question, having been so long away from the country, but during the time that I was there they were not frequent; in little districts occasionally there was a want of animals, and privation followed.

3526. You sustained privation yourself?—Very great.

3527. Did you hold any office in the Company at the time when you made these expeditions?—On my last expedition the Company were kind enough to give me a commission in their service as a chief trader, for the obvious purpose of placing in my hands sufficient authority to make demands upon their posts whenever I might go to them.

3528. For supplies?—For anything that I wanted; I have that commission now.

3529. Mr. Edward Ellice.] There is no emolument attached to it, I suppose?—I am afraid not.

3530. Mr. J. H. Garney.] Did you in the course of your travels, meet with anything that threw any light on the question as to whether the whale fishery could be carried on with any advantage in the Hudson's Bay?—No, I did not.

3531. Sir John Pakington.] How was the health of yourself and your party affected by that intense cold which you have described when the thermometer was 70° below zero?—I cannot say that our health was affected differently to what it would be in any other extreme cold; perhaps the appetite was considerably increased.

3532. But the health was not injuriously affected by the mere degree of cold?—Not at the time; but probably that, with the other sufferings, contributed to produce sickness afterwards for a considerable period.

3533. I presume that although the time for which the thermometer stood at 70° below zero was short, yet throughout all the winter you suffered constant and intense cold?—Yes.

3534. What was the mean range of the thermometer during the three or four winter months?—I am not prepared to answer that question without reference, but I think it was 18° below.

3535. It was always below zero?—Yes; I believe the lowest mean temperature was 28° below zero.

3536. Mr. Christy.] Have you any means of knowing whether the Indian tribes are decreasing in consequence of these famines?—No, I have no means of ascertaining that.

3537. Not from your own knowledge?—From my own knowledge, here and there, and amongst small tribes and detachments of tribes, I heard of a diminution having taken place from want of food; but they were only detached parties, therefore I cannot form an estimate of the whole.

3538. Did

3538. Did you take any pains to ascertain whether that was the fact?—Yes; amongst those detached parties to which I refer.

3539. And those, you say, were from six to 300 or 400?—Yes, those who frequented our fort; but they generally came in smaller parties from 15 to three or four.

3540. Sir *Jaku Pakington*.] What was the temperature in summer in those northern regions?—The temperature in summer varies very much. I have known it go up with a Fahrenheit thermometer as far as 102° plus.

3541. In the sun?—Of course; but from 48° to 60°, I should say, in the extreme of summer.

3542. In the sun?—In the shade; and in very oppressive weather; during thunder storms, perhaps to 67.

3543. In the course of your journey from Fort Reliance down to the mouth of the Back River, what should you say would be the mean summer temperature there in the shade; 50°?—I should say it would not exceed 50°, if so much.

3544. And occasionally the sun was very powerful?—Very powerful; burningly so.

3545. Did the snow disappear from those regions?—The snow disappears entirely from the land between Fort Reliance and the sea.

3546. All the way to the North Sea?—All the way to the Polar Sea.

3547. What was the depth of snow in the winter at Fort Reliance?—From 1½ feet to 3½ feet in some places; but in sheltered places much more.

3548. With a hard surface?—With a hard surface in spring.

3549. Mr. *Christy*.] With regard to blankets and various other articles of clothing, which you say were distributed, and some articles of luxury, such as tobacco, are the Committee to understand that they were given by the Company except in barter?—Spraking of the Company, they were only on special occasions given as presents to the head men or chiefs, and others; certain presents were liberally made after their having brought in good supplies of furs, beavers, &c.; then certain presents were invariably made, and the rest was disposed of in barter.

3550. Not in respect of the necessities of these persons who were in a destitute condition from the state of the weather?—No, not from their being destitute, because they frequently came to the fort; indeed, generally in the summer, in very good condition; not badly off in clothing even, but still the presents were given.

3551. I understood you to say that in cases where there was great destitution the native population were in the habit of falling back on the clemency of the white man?—Yes.

3552. And they received from the Company articles, such as blankets, and even the luxury of tobacco?—Yes.

3553. But that is not the case except as barter?—With certain exceptions.

3554. What are the exceptions?—If, for instance, an Indian with his family had been suffering considerably for some time, and had got, perhaps, behind with his furs, they frequently received gratuities, I believe, from every post in the country, and these were often given as presents.

3555. Mr. *Edward Ellice*.] Have you ever heard of a case where a starving Indian was refused food?—Never in my life, on the contrary a starving Indian is invariably relieved, and sometimes to the detriment of those at the Fort; indeed, in my own case it was so.

3556. Sir *Jaku Pakington*.] Did you yourself see much of the dealing between the Hudson's Bay Company's officials and the Indians for furs?—No, I did not; I was present on various occasions, but I merely saw what passed.

3557. You are not able to give us any information as to the rate of prices?—No, I did not conceive that was a matter in which I was concerned; being there under Government and on a scientific expedition, I felt that it did not become me to pry into the mode of conducting the trade of the Hudson's Bay Company, it was sufficient for me that I received every aid and kindness from them.

Rear-Admiral
Sir G. Esch, v. N. S.,
D. C. L.

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Jouis, 21^e die Maii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Blackburn.	Mr. Percy Herbert.
Mr. Christy.	Mr. Kinnaird.
Mr. Edward Ellice.	Mr. Labouchere.
Mr. Charles Fitzwilliam.	Mr. Lowe.
Vascom Goderich.	Mr. Matheson.
Mr. Gregson.	Mr. Roebuck.
Mr. Grogan.	Vincent Sandon.
Mr. J. H. Gurney.	Lord Stanley.

THE RIGHT HON. HENRY LABOUCHERE IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. James Cooper, called in; and Examined.

Mr. J. Cooper.

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3558. *Chairman.*] YOU are acquainted with Vancouver's Island, I believe?—Yes.

3559. Will you have the goodness to state to the Committee what opportunities you have had of becoming so acquainted with it?—I have been a resident there for six years as a resident and colonist.

3560. What six years were those?—From the spring of 1851 until the spring of 1857.

3561. Have you still property there?—Yes.

3562. Do you intend to return to the island?—Not at present, at all events.

3563. Were you in connexion with the government of the colony?—I was a Member of Council there for five years.

3564. Are you connected with the Hudson's Bay Company in any manner?—Not at all; I was formerly in their service in command of their vessels; but I went out there decidedly independent, on my own account.

3565. Are there any statements with regard to Vancouver's Island which you are desirous of making to this Committee?—I have some; but I am not prepared to give them to-day; I arrived in town only a few hours ago. On what particular questions are the Committee desirous of having information?

3566. That is for you; we shall be glad to have any information upon the state of Vancouver's Island?—I am prepared to answer any questions, to the best of my ability, which are put in form.

3567. Did you pursue the business of an agriculturist in Vancouver's Island?—Yes, I did.

3568. What extent of land did you occupy?—I had a farm of about 300 acres.

3569. Was it your own property?—It was decidedly my own property, but there are encumbrances upon it at present, as the land is not paid for.

3570. You bought it of the Company, I presume?—Yes.

3571. Where is it situated?—In the district called Metchosen, about seven miles from the settlement.

3572. What is your opinion of the soil and climate of Vancouver's Island, and of its capabilities for a settlement on a large scale?—Its climate, in every sense of the word, is superior to that of Great Britain, and its capabilities of agriculture are of a considerable extent. The land is partially wooded and partially open with prairie. There is plenty of room there for a large population.

3573. In point of fact, the population has increased very slowly, I believe?—It has decreased since I have been there.

3574. To what causes do you attribute that?—The mal-administration of the government of the Hudson's Bay Company.

3575. To what particulars do you especially refer?—There is no encouragement for immigration into the country. Many people have come to Vancouver's

couver's Island, and have left it; they have approved of the soil, of the climate, and of the capabilities of the country, but they have objected to being subject to the Hudson's Bay Company. If the British Government were established there, that would be the only necessary step for the British Government to take. There are thousands of people in the neighbourhood of San Francisco and California who would gladly go to a British colony, provided it was under a new administration.

3576. You mean if Vancouver's Island was administered directly as a British colony, and not indirectly under the control of the Hudson's Bay Company?—Directly.

3577. Do you believe that to be the general feeling of the inhabitants?—I am sure of it.

3578. Will you point out to the Committee in what manner the administration of the Hudson's Bay Company operates to check colonisation?—In the first place, with respect to their courts of justice, the people have not confidence in them; there are only a small number, but nevertheless they are unanimous in their opinion, they have no confidence in the courts of justice; our supreme judge has not been educated to the bar; I believe all the knowledge that he gains is from books; for instance, before he can decide upon a case, he has to refer to his books even in the most common case.

3579. I believe most judges are in the habit of referring to books before they decide cases, are they not?—I dare say they are; he has never been educated as a lawyer; that is the grand thing.

3580. Do you not think that under any circumstances the population of Vancouver's Island would have slowly increased, from California holding out great attractions to settlers just now?—That no doubt has been a great drawback to Vancouver's Island, but what we have felt as the greatest drawback is being omitted in the Canadian Reciprocity Treaty; therefore we are cut out, we have no market for our exports; it would have been a great boon to the colony had we been admitted at the same time as Canada was admitted.

3581. What American markets would you have supplied; do you mean California principally?—We should then be on the same terms as a State of the United States.

3582. To what American markets do you anticipate that you would be able especially to export your produce?—San Francisco, in particular.

3583. Have you had any opportunity of becoming acquainted with the mineral resources of Vancouver's Island?—To some extent I have. It abounds in coal, and there is a very large colliery belonging to the Company now at a place about 70 miles to the north, called Nanaimo, or Colville Town.

3584. That is coal, I believe, of very fine quality?—Yes; it is good for all purposes of generating steam, I believe.

3585. Is there any export at all of produce to the Californian market now from Vancouver's Island?—None whatever. The competition is so great from the Puget Sound, that it would be impossible, in fact, for us to compete with them, as on nearly all the commodities which we could export there is a duty of 25 or 30 per cent.

3586. A differential duty?—Yes.

3587. You would chiefly send bread-stuffs and timber?—And coal and salt fish.

3588. Is there a differential duty to that extent upon your coal?—Twenty per cent.; but it is merely the Hudson's Bay Company at present who have a coal mine there. Nevertheless, if it were admitted free into San Francisco, it would be a great boon to the country; it would create a trade.

3589. The rivers and waters of Vancouver's Island abound in fish, I believe?—They do; there are no rivers in Vancouver's Island of any extent; but the Straits of Juan de Fuca and all the salt water inlets around Vancouver's Island abound in fish.

3590. Are there not salmon in the rivers?—Salmon are caught in salt-water, and also in Fraser's River on the mainland, in respect of which the Hudson's Bay Company have the exclusive right of trade, very much to the drawback of the settlers and colonists there.

3591. Are there many Indians on the island?—I should presume there are something like 18,000 or 20,000 on the island.

3592. Do they give you any trouble, or is order preserved between them and

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the white men generally?—We have never had much trouble from them; but a serious trouble is anticipated, unless there is a force there to keep them in check.

3593. Why so?—Because they are excited by the wars now prevailing on the continent close to their borders; so much so, that the Indians are quite cognisant of the facts which are taking place on the opposite side within a few miles of them.

3594. I believe there has been a very serious and destructive war carried on on the American side of the frontier between the Indians and the white men?—Yes, a very barbarous war.

3595. But hitherto there has been absolute peace on the British side of the frontier?—We have only had one or two little difficulties, yet they have always ended comparatively quietly, and we have had very little trouble with them; we have occasionally had the assistance of a man-of-war up there, and we have checked it in its bud.

3596. Are you aware of any instances which have lately occurred in which individual outrages have been perpetrated by red men in Vancouver's Island, and where they have been brought to justice with the assent of the tribes, and without any difficulty?—Yes, in two instances.

3597. Do you think it very important to be able to maintain that influence over these tribes?—It certainly would be; but I am afraid it will not last much longer unless we have a force permanently settled on the island. At present we have only one constable; we have no military force there at all, so much so that the settlers are squatted about the country, and we are liable to get our throats cut at almost any moment's notice.

3598. You say that you have one constable only; in what way were these Indians apprehended?—By the assistance of the men-of-war; it could not have been done without. Her Majesty's ship "Trincomalee" was the vessel that went up last, and on the former occasion Her Majesty's ship "Thetis."

3599. When you left the colony had the constitution been fully brought into effect in the way it now is?—Nominally. There was a legislative assembly constituted, but we could not muster a sufficient number of members to sit at it; there were only six or seven members that were eligible for the position.

3600. What was the number of voters?—I suppose every member was returned by one or two voters.

3601. What was the number of white men altogether in the island?—Not more than 250 or 300.

3602. Do you know what the qualification for being an elector of Vancouver's Island is?—Yes; that he should hold 20 acres of land.

3603. What did the constituency, with that qualification, give in point of numbers; do you remember?—There were not a great many holding that quantity of land.

3604. And of those the greater number, I believe, are servants of the Hudson's Bay Company?—Yes, most of them; there are no free settlers at Vancouver's Island. The mechanics and tradespeople that have gone out there, under the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, instead of returning to Great Britain have bought land there, and remain. I, and a gentleman of the name of Grant, Captain Grant, were the only persons who complied with the prospectus of the Company. I took out men from England with me.

3605. In short the sum of your opinion is that it would be desirable to constitute Vancouver's Island a British colony, in the ordinary manner, and to govern it with the institutions which usually belong to a British colony under those circumstances?—Most assuredly.

3606. Do you think it would be desirable to comprehend in any such colony any part of the mainland adjoining Vancouver's Island?—Yes; I consider that Fraser's River should be thrown open into Thompson's River district. There is a large beautiful district called Thompson's River, about 150 miles or so from the mainland; it lies in about the same latitude as Vancouver's Island.

3607. You think that there is a considerable extent of country upon the mainland, adjoining Vancouver's Island, which is calculated for the purposes of settlement?—Yes; one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

3608. Is it as good as Vancouver's Island itself, do you think?—I think it is better; it is more open land. Vancouver's Island is broken; it is very heavily

heavily timbered, and it would require great expense in clearing some portions of it before it could be made available for agricultural purposes.

3609. Is there any prairie land in Vancouver's Island?—Yes, but not to any great extent.

3610. You stated that you thought that the administration of the law was not satisfactory to the colonists at the present moment?—Decidedly not.

3611. Will you inform us what alteration in the system you think would be advantageous?—I think that if a supreme judge were appointed from this country, a man in whom the British Government had confidence, it would give confidence to the people there and they would be satisfied; at present it so happens that the gentleman holding that appointment is the brother-in-law of the Governor (who is also a paid servant), and paid by the Hudson's Bay Company, and therefore many cases that come under his notice of course must clash with the interests of individuals.

3612. Do you state that you think that these circumstances which you have mentioned cast a suspicion over the decisions of the judge, which you think objectionable; are there any of his decisions which you think there is any just reason for complaining of?—Yes; there is the case of the Rev. Mr. Staines, who was colonial chaplain; that is a very pointed case; he was persecuted most vilely, I believe myself, through the instrumentality of this Mr. Cameron, for he was a prominent party there; he (Rev. Mr. Staines) was no doubt obnoxious to the authorities, and he was persecuted on that account; I am not prepared to say that that really was so, but that was the opinion of the people; he was prosecuted for stealing some pigs. This Mr. Cameron, the judge there at present, after his nomination, was going to bring the case forward without even a grand jury being empanelled, but the bill was ultimately ignored.

3613. Viscount Goderich.] I think you stated that there were certain classes of cases which came before this judge in which the interests, as I understood you, of the Hudson's Bay Company, were contrary to the interests of individuals; can you explain to the Committee what those cases were?—I said that they would clash with individuals.

3614. Will you explain generally, without entering into detail, what those cases are?—There is a case now pending. There is a gentleman out there of the name of Langford, who has been a bailiff under the Paget Sound Company for some five or six years, and they wish very much to get rid of him. The Governor, the judge, and the bailiff are all paid servants of the Company.

3615. Mr. Edmond Estlin.] Who is the judge that you are speaking of?—Mr. Cameron.

3616. Do you know by whom he was appointed?—He was nominated by Mr. Douglas and appointed by the Queen, I believe, confirmed by the Queen.

3617. The Colonial Office?—The Colonial Office.

3618. Mr. Gregory.] You have stated that you do not consider that the gentleman now holding the office of judge there is acquainted with law. On what grounds do you base that opinion?—Because he is not a lawyer.

3619. Has he been educated as a lawyer?—Never; he was educated as a draper, I believe.

3620. How long has he been in this situation?—He has been holding that office now for about four years.

3621. Chairman.] Was he never called to the bar?—Never in any part of the world. He was formerly a superintendent of an estate in the West Indies, in Demerara. I am prepared to take my oath that he was not a lawyer.

3622. What is his salary?—He receives 150 *l.* a year from the Hudson's Bay Company as superintendent of their coal mines; clerk to the coal mines. He receives also another 100 *l.* per annum from what is called the Licence Fund. There are heavy licences from the publicans; they pay about 120 *l.* per annum. I believe that gives an income to the colony of about 400 *l.* or 500 *l.* per annum, and he receives 100 *l.* out of it.

3623. Does he receive nothing as judge?—Nothing except that salary.

3624. In short, he is a magistrate rather than a judge?—No; he holds his commission as chief judge.

3625. Mr. Gregory.] Does he adjudicate on all classes of questions that may arise in the island?—Yes, he is the supreme authority.

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3626. Criminal and civil?—Civil only, as supreme judge.

3627. Has he ever exercised that authority?—No, not in a criminal case.

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3628. To what extent has he gone in civil cases?—I believe that the reason he has never acted is because all the cases now pending have been put back as far as possible. My opinion is, that they are afraid that he should act for fear of a collision.

3629. Viscount Goderick.] Do you suppose that he has power to sentence a man to death?—No, I do not think that; I believe the executive authority upon that rests with the Governor.

3630. Mr. Grosvenor.] Was this gentleman judge of the island at the time of some disturbance which occurred about 1853, when two Indians were hanged for murder?—No, it was the Governor who acted, Mr. Douglas.

3631. Was he at that time judge and governor?—He was the only authority there. This Mr. Cameron is judge in civil cases, but he is one of the magistrates for all criminal cases.

3632. In fact no criminal case has been adjudicated upon by the judge since his appointment?—No.

3633. Chairman.] Do you think, upon the whole, that the conduct of the government of Vancouver's Island towards the Indians is humane and judicious?—Humane probably, but not judicious.

3634. In what respects injudicious?—If an Indian commits any depredation he is bribed; there is no authority, no force, to punish him; and therefore rather than he should show a disposition to be angry, he will perhaps get two or three blankets given to him to make friends with them again.

3635. You think that the policy pursued towards the Indians is of too gentle a description; that there is not sufficient firmness?—It may be of a description which would answer the Hudson's Bay Company's purposes sufficiently well in the interior, or on the continent of America, but not among a settlement of British subjects.

3636. But is not this fact patent and notorious, that on the American side of the frontier there have been wars of the most barbarous and cruel kind between the white and the red man; and that on the British side of the frontier, upon the whole, order has been preserved, and there has not been, I believe, a drop of blood shed in conflict between the white and the red man?—Yes; but will you guarantee that that is going to remain?

3637. Mr. Grosvenor.] Do you speak of your own knowledge, when you say that when an Indian commits an offence he is bribed to keep him in good humour?—I do.

3638. Can you give an instance of the kind?—Many.

3639. Mention one within your own knowledge?—I will give my own case. I had some property stolen from me, and the man, instead of being punished after an investigation, was told not to do it again, and therefore he was let off.

3640. Chairman.] That is what you mean by being bribed; not sufficiently punished?—But in many cases they are really bribed; they have property given to them so that they may not create a disturbance; there is no force or authority in the country to punish or check them.

3641. You do not mean that if an Indian has committed an offence, he has a reward given him for having committed that offence?—It appears so.

3642. Mr. Grosvenor.] In the instance that you refer to, of property stolen from yourself, what redress did you get?—None; I lost the property.

3643. Chairman.] Are the Indians thievish in their habits?—All of them.

3644. Viscount Sandau.] But without any military force, and with only one constable, would it have been safe for the Company to punish the Indian?—No, decidedly not; that is the reason they do not punish the Indians, because they are afraid of the Indians retaliating. The Governor (in his official capacity) admitted, that his anxiety for the safety of the colony caused him many sleepless nights.

3645. Mr. Edward Ellice.] Do you know any cases of Indians having been punished by the Company?—Yes, one or two.

3646. Chairman.] I think you stated a short time ago, that you were cognizant of two cases where serious offences had been committed by Indians, where those Indians had been apprehended and brought to justice?—Yes; but that has not been by the Hudson's Bay Company, but by Her Majesty's ships.

3647. It was done doubtless through the instrumentality of Her Majesty's ship which happened to be on the station, but it was done by the authority of the local government, was it not?—In one instance, when the "Thetis" was there, Captain Kuper, who was in command, had to write several letters before he could prevail on Mr. Douglas to act.

3648. Mr. Grogan.] What was the instance in question; speak of your own knowledge?—One man had been killed; he had been shot; he was a shepherd.

3649. Was that in 1853?—It might have been 1852; the fall of 1852 or the spring of 1853.

3650. Chairman.] What was the recent instance which occurred the other day?—A short time ago, probably a twelvemonth ago, there was a man fired at; he was wounded, but not mortally; the man recovered; in that case the man who had fired at him was hung by the assistance of the force there of one of her Majesty's ships, the "Trincomalee."

3651. An Indian fired?—An Indian shot at a white man, evidently with an intent to kill; but it was, fortunately, not a mortal wound.

3652. What occurred?—With the assistance of the "Trincomalee" there was a proper force sent up, and that man was apprehended.

3653. What was done with him?—The Indian was hung

3654. Mr. Roebuck.] How was he tried?—By a jury, and the Governor acted as judge; the Governor was the executive; he holds the executive authority.

3655. That is a judicial authority, the trying of him?—Yes.

3656. The hanging of him is executive?—Yes.

3657. Chairman.] I think you stated that this punishment of the Indian produced no bad effect upon the minds of the tribe generally?—No; they probably believed that it was all right; they believed that it was correct that the man should die.

3658. They believed that justice was done?—They believed that justice was done; but the Indian character is very susceptible, and they are just as liable to retaliate, perhaps at a day's notice; a very little thing perhaps will rouse the Indian blood; and unless there are a number of white people there, there is no force really to show an opposition to them. If 400 or 500 Indians come down, what force have we? There is a settlement here, and another there, scattered all over the country; the only legitimate force in the place is one constable.

3659. Mr. Edward Elliot.] Do not you know that in the case which you have mentioned, the man was hung with the consent of the chief of his tribe?—Yes; but I believe that the chief himself was bribed; that he had a number of blankets given to him after the man was hung, or before.

3660. Chairman.] Do you know that?—I could not swear it, but that is the general belief by the people.

3661. Mr. Grogan.] Does your complaint of the management of the Hudson's Bay Company in this department arise from there being an insufficient force for the protection of the inhabitants?—Yes.

3662. Is that the sum and substance of the complaint?—No; the sum and substance of our complaint is, that we are exposed to danger from the treachery of the Indians; that we have no proper constituted courts; that the Government and management of the Hudson's Bay Company is substantially and radically wrong, deterring (from their powerful monopoly) the advancement of the colony; that we were not admitted in the Canadian reciprocity treaty; and we have found by practical experience the incompatibility of a powerful Company attempting to colonise.

3663. Lord Stanley.] Your evidence comes to this, that the colony is weak; that the Indians are numerous, and that therefore a policy of conciliation has been, of necessity, adopted towards them?—It has.

3664. Mr. Roebuck.] But did you not also say that the person who was appointed judge was incompetent?—I did.

3665. That is an addition to all the other things?—Of course.

3666. Mr. Grogan.] On the occasion of the trial and execution of the man whom you have just alluded to, did the chief judge of the country take any part whatever in that trial?—He was up there with the Governor.

3667. Did he preside?—No.

3668. Did he take any part in the examination?—Not that I know of.

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3669. Mr. *Edward Ellice*.] Were you there?—No; it is some 70 miles from the settlement.

3670. How then do you know that he did not take part?—Because there were plenty of people there that I knew who told me.

3671. Mr. *Grogan*.] What may be the salary of the one constable who is there?—Probably some 35 *l.* per annum, and his provisions found him.

3672. You spoke of a considerable income being derived from licences issued to public-houses; what is the annual licence of a public-house there?—£. 120 for a retail dealer.

3673. Is that the amount of the licence in each case?—It is 120 *l.* in each case for every house licensed.

3674. Do you mean that if I wanted to establish a public-house there I should have to pay a licence of 120 *l.*?—I do.

3675. Is there any land given with it?—No.

3676. Is there a house?—No.

3677. I must build the house?—You must build the house and then pay 120 *l.* for the privilege of selling liquor.

3678. And I must buy the land?—You must buy the land in addition.

3679. When I have bought the land and built the house and paid the licence, what position am I then in in regard to the exercise of my trade?—It is all chance.

3680. Is there any interference with me whatever?—None at all.

3681. Am I allowed freely to import the spirits or groceries or whatever else I may deal in, for the use of my shop?—Yes; there is no duty whatever on them.

3682. Is there any restriction whatsoever given as to the quantity of spirits which I may sell, or to whom?—No, there is no restriction.

3683. May I sell them to the Indians?—No.

3684. That is a restriction?—Of course; I am speaking of the inhabitants of the colony.

3685. Is there any other restriction whatsoever?—I can confidently say not, neither in importing; nor exporting; but certain restrictions exist as to who shall be allowed to purchase by the bottle, or gallon.

3686. In the carrying on of that business which I have alluded to, how should I be paid; would it be in food, or fish, or peltry, or goods of any kind?—You would be paid in money; the currency of the country is dollars and cents, and there is very little of that; we have no English money there.

3687. What is the regulation with regard to the sale of spirits to the Indians by such a trader as I have alluded to; is he prohibited from dealing with the Indians at all, or only in the case of spirits?—Only in the case of spirits.

3688. Viscount *Goderich*.] But the licence is simply a licence to sell spirits, is it not?—That is all.

3689. It does not require a licence to sell other things?—No.

3690. Mr. *Edward Ellice*.] You were a Member of the Council, were not you?—Yes.

3691. Were you a Member of the Council when that licence was imposed?—I was; but I protested against it. I thought it too exorbitant for a new colony.

3692. Mr. *Rosbeck*.] How long were you there?—Six years as a settler.

3693. Then you know the climate?—I do.

3694. Had you a farm?—I have had a farm.

3695. Have you paid attention to the climate of the country?—I have.

3696. Do you know the soil of that country?—Yes.

3697. Is the soil fit for farming?—It is capable of producing all the crops that we can produce in this country, and some others which we cannot produce; for instance, Indian corn; but I do not think it would come quite to perfection on account of the nights being rather too cool.

3698. Wheat ripens there?—Wheat ripens there to perfection.

3699. Therefore if we heard any statement doubting that wheat ripens there, your authority is contrary to it?—I am prepared to contradict it; it is one of the finest wheat-growing countries in the world.

3700. Have you been over the island?—I have been a considerable distance in the interior.

3701. Have you been north?—Yes.