

4 EDWARD VII., A. 1904

The principal difficulty with which the ranchers had to cope was not so much the scarcity of water from lack of sufficient rainfall, as the fact that squatters coming into the region located near all the springs and available water approaches, and by fencing in these springs and approaches prevented their being used by the cattle, thus practically locking up tracts in some instances as extensive in area as 25,000 or 30,000 acres. The department, however, took the necessary measures to obviate this difficulty as far as possible by the creation of stock-watering reserves, on which no settlement is allowed, thus leaving the water supply accessible to every one.

By Mr. Chabon :

Q. You say they have received as much in the North-west for one dollar as in California ?

A. Of water ? Yes, they are entitled to as much if they wish to use it.

Q. Does it mean that they pay thirty times as much for a cubic foot in one of the United States, as against \$1 in the other, or that it serves the same purpose. It is a fact which most people know that they are obliged to use more water in California for the reasons stated than in Alberta ?

A. In the North-west they don't have to use the water continuously. They only use it perhaps once or twice in the season. In California they have to use it mostly at all times, say once or twice a month, and consequently although our people have the right to the same quantity of water as they have in California they don't actually need it or use it.

Q. If they did, they would pay more ?

A. They would pay no more.

By Mr. Kidd :

Q. I suppose there are two months that they don't use it at all ?

A. Yes; in California they do not use the water for about two months, December and January.

In Alberta irrigation is more of an insurance on good crops. It is the same as a man who owns a vessel and is putting to sea with a valuable cargo. He places thereon an insurance securing the value of the same, so that in case the vessel and cargo are lost, he is protected against loss by the insurance. The farmer, in a like manner, insures his crop against failure by drought by securing the right to the use of a water supply from the irrigation, in case of need; so that if the natural water supply should fail him and his crop be endangered, he is amply protected, and has no cause for anxiety, having a certainty of a successful crop. So that irrigation is in fact an insurance on a sure return for his labours.

PRODUCTION OF SUGAR BEET BY AID OF IRRIGATION.

I will again refer to this matter in connection with an industry of no mean importance, which owes its existence in the west to the inauguration of cultivation by irrigation; that is, the beet sugar industry. I have here some photographs by way of illustration.

The same capitalists who were at the head of the Canadian North-west Irrigation Company, have constructed a beet sugar factory at an estimated cost of about \$50,000, and in connection with the same have begun the cultivation of sugar beets upon a tract covering 3,000 acres.

By Mr. Ross (Ontario) :

Q. Where ?

A. Near Cardston.