

EVIDENCE OF JOSEPH BURR TYRRELL, B.A., MINING ENGINEER, OF THE CITY OF TORONTO, HEARD BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE, MARCH 2, 1907.

Mr. Tyrell began his evidence by indicating upon the map the country he had been over in the districts covered by the investigation. He remarked that five or six years' experience in the country south of the Saskatchewan prepared him for the work immediately north of it.

From Edmonton the course of one of his trips in the northern country, was down the Athabaska river to Lake Athabaska, across through Lake Athabaska to its eastern end, up Black river and across the height of land to the Dubawnt river and down Chesterfield Inlet to Hudson bay, down the shore of Hudson bay and across from Churchill on Hudson bay, on snowshoes, to the north end of Lake Winnipeg. Still another year his route lay almost directly along the proposed line of the Canadian Northern Railway. Another year the witness followed the old Hudson bay route down by York Factory and by Oxford House, and in that direction.

At another time the witness took a course from Prince Albert northward through Green lake and down the Beaver river to the Churchill river, and north across the country by Cree lake to Black river, across on that line, then round through Wollaston lake and up to Geibie and Foster rivers and back by the same route that he went out. Another year he went up from the Saskatchewan across by the Frog portage and up through Reindeer lake and northward from it through a chain of lakes to the headwaters of the Kaszan river, down the Kaszan river to Yathkyed lake, and then eastward from there cross country to the west coast of Hudson bay. Again he spent a season in the country north of Winnipeg lake, around the Burntwood river and a number of streams there, Grass river and so on, west of the Nelson river. These trips had been chiefly east of the Mackenzie and Athabaska rivers, and west and southwest of Hudson bay. That is the country that his aspirations chiefly covered for some years. He spent nine or ten years in that country. He had not been in the geological service since 1898. He started west exploring in 1883, and was exploring for the Canadian government from 1883 to 1898. It is 24 years ago since he first went west to the Rocky mountains.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS.

To the west of Hudson bay and north of the line of the forest which runs from Churchill northwestward through Ennadaidai lake, and a short distance south to Dubawnt lake, and which lake is marked on the map which the witness prepared some years ago for the Geological Survey and published then, there is practically no agricultural land. Mr. Tyrrell would not consider that any of the land north of the limit of forest growth was of any value for agriculture.

The tree line starts practically at Churchill and runs northwesterly. South of that there are trees, and north there are none.

The country north of the tree line is partly rock, but the greater part broken rock and boulders, and a rough stony country without any great elevation, and very little vegetation of any kind, except a great many Arctic plants and sedges. Mr. Tyrrell believes the country is permanently frozen as far as he could see. It does not appear to him that there would be any possibility whatever of growing anything on it. That eliminates from an agricultural standpoint that portion northwest of that line.

Now south of that line there is a belt from one to two hundred miles in width of country that is sparsely wooded. It is not a forest country, but it is wooded along the