

six years, and the Indians claim that they kill the calves. Witness thought that there were somewhere in the neighbourhood of three hundred and fifty buffalo. That was approximately, of course. He got a specimen for the Department of Agriculture last year to be mounted. The Indians got it for him. This herd are the only wild buffalo on the continent, he believed. They are very large, much larger than the plain buffalo. One old Indian told the witness that years ago they found a herd of buffalo between the Liard and the Hay river, and one time they got a herd of them at Fort Providence, and they slaughtered all that were in there.

There has been a close season for buffalo for a good many years. The skin of the buffalo that the witness procured for the department was a tremendous size, and he would say the animal must have weighed fourteen or fifteen hundred pounds.

You do not require to enforce the law to protect the buffalo. The Indians will not kill them. They want to preserve them as much as any one else. They are the Wood Cree Indians in the country north, as far as the sixtieth parallel, and the Chippeweyans north of latitude sixty until you come to the Aleutians or Esquimaux. The Indians think if the buffalo are gone they will have nothing left. The Crees are benefiting by the errors of the Indians south of the Saskatchewan. They know that the buffalo are all gone south of them and want to protect the wood buffalo. The government is giving a bounty for each wolf killed. Not many have been killed yet. The Indian does not like to kill wolves because of some superstition, but the half-breeds will kill them. Witness saw a couple of those timber wolves a couple of years ago. They were very large. These wolves never go in packs. They generally are in couples, but you sometimes see three of them together, and that is the most you see together.

The musk ox is not becoming exterminated as the buffalo is. There are lots of musk ox in the country. They will take care of themselves. You cannot follow them. The Indian cannot go very far into the muskeg, and they do not follow the musk ox any distance. They get them at the end of Lake Athabaska sometimes, but they have not been killing them since the close season started two years ago.

MINERALS.

The minerals lie in the country east of Lake Athabaska. It looks to Mr. Conroy just such a country as the Lake of the Woods, the same Laurentian range, a kind of reddish grey granite with strings of white quartz running through it. If there is anything in the quartz, there is lots of it there. The same way with asphaltum, if it is any good there is lots of it.

Some gold was discovered up near St. John's a couple of years ago, just below St. John's, near Mud creek. Then there is the gold sand on the Peace river.

Asked if there is much coal in the country he had travelled through, Mr. Conroy replied that there is coal everywhere, both on the Athabaska and on the Peace. Coal is plentiful. There is coal also in the Liard country and gold also. The coal is good for fuel, and burns well.

There is a salt mine at Salt river. The salt is as white as snow. It is right at the northern boundary of Alberta.

In reply to a question, the witness said he had been to Fort McMurray many times. He went up the Athabaska to McMurray. He saw en route timber, coal, asphaltum and oil, the best oil country he had ever seen. Some places you can see it leaking out of the bank. The banks are very high there. He had been right to the top of this bank and it is all asphaltum. He could not figure out the extent of it. There are miles of it.

CLIMATE.

Asked by the Honourable Mr. Ross, of Middlesex, how the climate in the Peace river district compared with that at Edmonton, Mr. Conroy replied that it is about the same.