

NORTH OF GREAT SLAVE LAKE.

Mr. Stewart was at Fort Providence on July 15, 1906. Fort Providence is near Slave lake on the Mackenzie river, in latitude 61.25. This is 917 miles by travelled route from Athabaska Landing, but as near as Mr. Stewart could calculate it, about 550 miles, further north than Edmonton. He saw there on July 15, wheat in the milk, potatoes in flower, peas fit for use, tomatoes, turnips, rhubarb, beets, cabbage, onions, and other garden vegetables.

The tomatoes were not fully formed and witness did not think they ripened. They grew them under glass. The strawberries ripen at any time. In fact they had ripe strawberries before that, also raspberries, currants, gooseberries and saskatoons. The wheat that Mr. Stewart saw there was just in the milk. He inquired when it was sown and was told May 20. It seemed incredible, until it was remembered that there is scarcely any darkness during summer there. There was about 20 hours' sun each day, and the heat was greater for several days than anything Mr. Stewart had ever experienced in Ottawa. Along the lower Athabaska and at Fort Chipewyan, Mr. Stewart and his fellow travellers had it over 100 in the shade for several days. There was a thermometer on the steamer in the shade. Perhaps the heat was greater on the boat than it would have been ashore. Certainly it was exceedingly hot weather, and continued all night. There was very little night at that time. That Arctic heat was something quite unexpected. The hot wave extended down to the Arctic sea that year as Mr. Stewart ascertained from Indians who had come from Rampart House, near the Alaskan boundary to meet the steamer the *Wrigley*. He returned with them instead of coming back with the boat and they lost two of their dogs from the heat, and that in the Arctic circle.

From his observations along the river, that portion of the Mackenzie he travelled through presented a better appearance than the Athabaska basin. He did not see much hay around Slave lake. He was not travelling through the country there.

Asked if he would care to follow farming around Slave lake, the witness remarked that he was not optimistic, but would not care to express an opinion on that because his visit consisted in just running through the country. His principal object was to see the timber, but he took notes of everything else as far as he could.

THE FARTHEST NORTH.

Fort Providence is at latitude 61.25, and Fort Good Hope is north of the 66th degree, or about 350 miles further north. Fort Good Hope, in latitude 66.16 is 970 miles further north than Edmonton, yet Mr. Stewart saw cabbages, onions and other garden vegetables growing in the gardens there. Beyond this he did not see any until he got to Fort Yukon. When you get beyond Fort Good Hope the frost is so near the surface of the ground that it is pretty hard to raise anything. At Fort Macpherson, and in that neighbourhood where the portage is crossed, you are on frozen soil. The vegetables at Fort Good Hope looked as good as any others. The soil there was very fertile.

The name of the fort which is nearest to the mouth of the Mackenzie is 'Point Separation.' It is not on the Mackenzie, and was so named because it was there that Sir John Franklin and Dr. Richardson separated on Franklin's memorable second trip. Turning around Point Separation you come up to the Peel. There is no fort at the mouth of the Mackenzie. The delta is flooded when the tide comes in. Mr. Stewart was there in July.

There were no evidences of vegetation along the river that far north which would lead the witness to conclude that agriculture could be carried on there. As far as Port Good Hope on this side of that place, and around Providence, the country is a fine one; banks twenty-five and thirty feet high, level something like the Saskatchewan at Prince Albert. It is a wooded country.