

opinion that future benefits of great importance would inure to the country, if certain fishing grounds were reserved exclusively for the Indians, more particularly as, just now, such reservation could be made without any material interference with the vested rights of any considerable number of White men.

Interesting evidence has been received by your Committee in regard to the reproduction of the American Bison as a food supply, but they are of the opinion that in the changed condition of the country the presence of these animals would disturb the present agricultural training of the Indian, and interfere with the farming and herding efforts of the White; but attention is respectfully directed to that portion of the evidence accompanying this report, which refers to the crosses that have been effected between the male of the Buffalo and a Durham cow, and *vice versa*, (the witness, S. L. Bedson, Esq., preferring the former cross), the hybrid animal thus produced being said to be larger, hardier, stronger, heavier and more easily wintered than the domestic animal, with the additional advantage of yielding a skin as heavily but more evenly furred, than the buffalo robe, and worth, in the opinion of the witness, as much as the full price of a domestic animal. As this herd of sixty-eight animals of the true American Bison breed seems to be the last in British North America, your Committee think that much good might possibly be effected were the Experimental Farms in Manitoba and the North-West to continue these interesting experiments with these and with other long-haired varieties of domestic animals, and also to endeavor to obtain Hybrids between the Moose and Musk Ox and domestic stock. While speaking of these Experimental Farms, your Committee recommend the cultivation of the native plum, cherry, and the many varieties of indigenous berries, and hybridizing of these with foreign varieties, as being more likely to yield successful results than the introduction of new plants. The attention of your Committee has been often directed by the witnesses to the value of some of the indigenous vegetables, such as the turnip, carrot, onion, kamass and others, on account of these ripening much earlier than the cultivated varieties, and in the opinion of your Committee, this fact, taken in connection with the wide distribution of these vegetables, may render them a desirable addition to the gardens of both Indian and White.

Your Committee have had much evidence in connection with increasing the existing natural animal foods and their preservation for future use. The most generally distributed of these seem to be one or other of the four species of Hare found in the North-West. The Rocky Mountain Hare or Jack Rabbit, an animal often yielding twelve pounds of flesh, is principally found in Alberta and Assiniboia, the Arctic or White Hare is confined to northern Athabasca, while the Grey Rabbit and its intrusive southern neighbor, the Spotted Rabbit, are found at almost all places which produce their food. These latter are found for some years in almost countless numbers, after which an epidemic, which is variously described, renders them as scarce as before they had been plenty. This fact points to the necessity for economizing them in times of abundance, and to substituting for them, in years of scarcity, the same species from healthy districts.

Various methods of preserving the existing food supplies are in use by the Indians of the wooded districts of the North-West, and the evidence obtained goes to show, that the flesh of fish, animals and birds may all be preserved for many months by drying, smoking, salting or freezing, and for many years, if the process formerly so generally used in the preservation of buffalo meat with domestic tallow is followed, and that in any of these forms it constitutes healthy, easily transported, and economical food for both Whites and Indians. Your Committee are of opinion that in years of plenty Indians should be encouraged to so preserve it for their own future use, and to sell and to ration those of less favored localities.

Although not specifically instructed on the subject, your Committee have procured much evidence as to the planting of trees for wind-breaks and for fuel, sugar and shade purposes, and, upon collating this testimony, your Committee find that of easily procured indigenous trees, the poplars, some varieties of which, in favored regions, attain a diameter of eight feet, the ash-leaved maple and the aspen, provide an excellent summer wind-break, which may be rendered equally effective in winter by the addition