

If even the buffalo, whose nose is formed by nature for this purpose, finds a difficulty in obtaining his food, how much more difficult must be the task of self-support to the domestic animals.

There would be no difficulty in providing and storing abundance of excellent hay before the fall of the year. Hay was cut for my horses at Carlton, at my request, in September 1857, which lasted them well into the middle of spring, although they began to use it shortly after Christmas. In September 1858, two of my men cut hay sufficient from the swamps around Edmonton to provide amply for 46 horses during the early spring of 1859.

A third inducement to settlement in the valley of the Saskatchewan is the fact that the settler has not to encounter the formidable labour of clearing the land from timber. The frequent fires which continually traverse the prairie have denuded the territory of large forest trees, indeed so much so as in some places to render their absence deplorable, and the result of these fires is that the agriculturist may at once commence with his plough without any more preliminary labour.

Although throughout the whole of the fertile region, as well as in the subarctic forests of the north and west, there is no timber fit for export, such as the white pine or the gross larch, so highly prized by the lumberer. Yet there is abundance which would serve the purpose of the settler, and suffice to construct houses and furnish him with fuel. Coal, available for smelting purposes, exists abundantly, and iron in very large quantities.

The capabilities of this country and its climate, for the success of the cereals, have hardly been sufficiently tested. But I have seen first-rate specimens of barley and oats grown at many of the forts. Wheat has not been so successful, but I am hardly prepared to say that this was because of the unfitness of the climate to produce it. I have much reason to believe that the seed has been bad, and the cultivation neglected, and the spots chosen not of a suitable aspect. I have not only seen excellent wheat, but also Indian corn (which will not succeed in England or Ireland) ripening on Mr. Pratt's farm, at the Qu'appelle Lakes, in 1857.

Harvest would commence early in September, and its operations would not be seriously interrupted by three or four wet days in that month, taking that as a fair average of the rain that falls at that period; more rain falls in the spring than in the autumn, but even then it is inconsiderable.

The only principal disadvantage accruing from the greater altitude of the region approaching the Rocky Mountains, is the almost continual night frosts during the summer, not severe during that season, but so frequent as to be almost of nightly occurrence; these would probably prove prejudicial to wheat; barley and oats, however, would do well.

The only objection to raising sheep and pigs would arise from the number of their natural enemies, the wolves, which roam everywhere through wood and plain, and this is probably the cause why the sheep of the country are prompted by their natural instinct to shelter in the inaccessible cliffs of the Rocky Mountains. The ewes and lambs are frequently seen feeding at a low altitude, and evince a preference for the grass below, which naturally grows in greater quantities.

The proceedings of the Expedition from the termination of the canoe route, to the period of its arrival at winter quarters in 1857, was directed to the examination of the country, from the forks of Red River and the Assiniboine to the boundary line at Pembina, in longitude  $97^{\circ}$  W., nearly; and thence along the boundary line to the limit of the fertile belt, in longitude  $105^{\circ}$ , whence we started again from Fort Ellice, and reached the boundary line at the Roche Percée.

Starting again in September, the Expedition proceeded to the Qu'appelle Lakes, and to the elbow of the South Saskatchewan. Then crossing the South Saskatchewan proceeded northward to Fort Carlton, where the members of the Expedition established their winter quarters, and all further work for the horses ceased for that season. For the first season's explorations, I engaged 14 men and purchased about 30 horses.

The second season's explorations commenced about the termination of the month of May 1858, and were directed to the examination of the country between the two Saskatchewan, and subsequently the Expedition was divided into branch parties, in order to explore the mountains in several directions before the termination of the season.

Previous to crossing the mountains in 1858, I made a branch tour, accompanied by my Secretary, Mr. Sullivan, along that portion of the fertile belt skirting the base of the Rocky Mountains to the boundary line, which we crossed again in long.  $113^{\circ}$  W.

The branch expeditions into the Rocky Mountains were effected in August and September 1858. They proved very satisfactory, and established the fact that several