

CHAPTER III

HONOURABLE MR. SUTHERLAND'S EVIDENCE

THE NORTH-WEST AND AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENT

COMMITTEE ROOM, HOUSE OF COMMONS, MONDAY, April 3rd 1876.

Honourable JOHN SUTHERLAND, Senator, of Kildonan, Manitoba, appeared before the Committee, and in answer to questions, said :

I have been in the North-West all my life. I was born within the corporation of Winnipeg. My age is 53 years. I am a practical farmer.

From my long experience there, and from what I have seen in other Provinces, I have come to the conclusion that the soil, climate and other natural advantages of Manitoba are conducive to successful farming, and that a poor man can more easily make a living there than in other parts of the Dominion.

The usual depth of alluvial deposit on the prairie is about two and a half feet, and on bottom lands from two and a half to twenty feet. The natural grasses are very nutritious, and cattle can be wintered without any coarse grain, neither is it customary to feed any grain except to milch cows or stall-fed animals.

The usual yield of prairie grass when cut into hay is an average of from three to four tons per acre. It usually grows about five or six feet high, and, although coarse, is very nutritious.

I consider the North-West as very well adapted for dairy purposes, as we have many miles of natural meadows throughout the country, and hay can be cut and cured for about \$1 per ton. We have five or six varieties of grasses that are good and well adapted for stock feeding, while a few others are not so suitable.

We have occasional frosts ; generally one frost about the first of June, but seldom severe enough to do any material injury to the growing crops, and showers are frequent during spring and summer. The average depth of snow throughout Manitoba is about 20 inches, and is quite light and loose.

I would consider it advantageous for a farmer to take improved