

Sir G. Simpson.

26 February 1857.

727. *Chairman.*] You have stated that in Rupert's Land you do not think there is any extent of territory of any consequence which would, for some time at all events, be adapted for colonisation and settlement?—Which would be favourable for colonisation or settlement; it is possible.

728. Do you apply the same observation to the land to the westward of the Rocky Mountains?—In the British territory I do, north of parallel 49°; it is a rugged, precipitous, mountainous country.

729. Is the whole of it of that character?—Principally of that character.

730. Do you know Vancouver's Island?—I have passed Vancouver's Island previously to its being British territory; I cannot speak to it.

731. Do you consider Vancouver's Island as being within the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company?—No.

732. You do not mean your observations to apply to that?—No, not to Vancouver's Island.

733. Are you acquainted with the coast near Vancouver's Island and above it?—Yes, I have gone along the coast from Puget's Sound to the Russian principal establishment at Sitka.

734. Do you believe that coast to be altogether unfavourable for the purposes of colonisation?—I believe it to be quite unfit for colonisation.

735. Do you know Queen Charlotte's Island?—I have not been on Queen Charlotte's Island.

736. Mr. *Edward Ellice.*] You confine your observation to the main land?—Yes.

737. Mr. *Gladstone.*] I think you have spoken of Rupert's Land as including, from west to east, the whole country, beginning from the Rocky Mountains and moving eastwards?—Yes, to the shores of the Bay.

738. Do you understand that to have been the original signification of the term Rupert's Land, dating from the period of the charter?—Yes, that it includes the land on all waters falling into Hudson's Bay; they form the boundaries of the territory.

739. There is a reference in the charter to the fall of the water, is there?—I cannot call that positively to mind; that is the impression upon my mind, and I believe it is the general impression.

740. It is difficult, I suppose, for you to state what you would take as the northern boundary?—The northern boundary of Rupert's Land I call the Methy Portage and Lake, dividing the waters that fall into the Bay from those that fall into the Arctic Sea; there is a height of land at the Methy Portage.

741. Taking the Methy Portage as the northern boundary for that longitude, as you come eastwards the territory trends very much to the north?—Yes.

742. And goes up to the Melville Peninsula, which seems to be about the northernmost part?—Yes.

743. Speaking of the whole of that country, as included in Rupert's Land, would you draw any material distinction between the climate of one part and the climate of another?—Yes; the climate of the southern part of the country is not so rigorous as that of the northern; the winters are not so long.

744. What would you say was the length of the winter in the most favourably situated parts of the territory?—Five and a half months, I should say, at Red River, which is the most favourable part of the country.

745. Is there any part of the coast of Hudson's Bay, or James's Bay, which partakes of a comparatively good climate?—Certainly not.

746. Is the softening influence of the sea not much felt in any portion of it?—Not much; at York Factory, within about 18 inches or two feet of the surface, we come to ice.

747. Mr. *Edward Ellice.*] At all times of the year?—At all times of the year.

748. Mr. *Gladstone.*] Would that observation apply to James's Bay, even down to the southernmost point, viz., Moose Fort?—I should say the climate is not much more favourable; barley very seldom ripens there, and the potatoes are exceedingly small, and the crops unproductive.

749. Irrespectively of the question of north and south, is not there a good deal