

map of those two great estuaries as accurately as possible, preserving the local names of the lakes and water-ways. This map is, indeed, the chief result of my labors.

Besides these vast deltas there are other lands, on the left bank of the Slave River, perfectly fit for cultivation; this is indeed proved by the old settlement of the Beaulieu family on the banks of the Salt River; but the settlers there would have to struggle against inextricable forests, and an entire want of roads or other communications, without mentioning other serious inconveniences.

But there is in the Athabasca district a belt not overrun by forest, and which has nothing to fear from periodical inundations; where timber only grows sufficiently for the needs of colonists, and is rarely a mechanical obstacle; well covered with undergrowth and grass, capable of cultivation, crossed by a wagon-track, watered by streams, stocked with fish-bearing lakes, and offering every facility and advantage for the construction of a railroad. I refer to the zone of natural prairie along the Rocky Mountains, from the mountains of the Upper Saskatchewan to the banks of the Hay River, one of the feeders of the Great Slave Lake. I have been told by very many persons who have travelled over the Great Prairie, by which name this fertile belt is known, that it comprises every condition requisite for settlement, as well as being rich in lumber requisites and minerals of all kinds. Sulphur, bitumen, and coal crop up in many places, with rock-salt, iron, native copper, and even gold (according to report). Against these advantages, must be set the fact that the means of subsistence have become more and more rare, from the rapid diminution and imminent extinction of the animals which supplied the daily food of the Indians, such as the moose, caribou, wapiti, bison of the woods (a distinct species from the musk-ox and prairie bison), beaver, porcupine, &c. The musk-rat alone seems not to have failed as yet, and continues, as before, to swarm on the lakes, ponds, and smallest streams. I can only regret that I have no personal knowledge of this fertile region.