

APPENDIX No. 4

this land here, they would not have it because it was, they said, all gravel and sand and in fact they were having a trial about it and I was asked to give evidence. I was going to give evidence that it was good, but the Queen died the day that we had the trial, and before the judges were reappointed and the thing was brought up again, some Americans taught them that the land was good, and since then they have been squabbling about it.

CROPS GROWN ON ALKALINE SOILS.

Our ideas change, my ideas about alkaline soil have changed, not in regard to the water, the water question is a difficult question. Now that point there is Saskatoon, and right there (indicating on map) about 25 miles to the east of Saskatoon there is a settlement that is only four years old which we passed through this year where there were hundreds of acres broken, and, as far as we could see, on both sides of the track there were fields of wheat as fine as any wheat we saw in the Carberry plain. As I said, the settlement is only four years old. Passing Saskatoon, and going west about ten miles, or less, on the line of the road we passed through the Smith settlement. I inquired if this was an old settlement, and they said, 'yes, we came here when the Temperance Colonization Settlement was established by Mr. Livingstone.' What I want to emphasize is that this is the oldest settlement that I know of in the West. It is nearly equally old with that at Carberry. In the Carberry settlement, when passing through it you would think they were all gentlemen. They have beautiful houses, with fine windbreaks and everything delightful around the place. When we got through to the Smith settlement, behold it was exactly the same. I said, 'Mr. Smith, when did you come here?' and he replied, 'Twenty-one years ago.' I said to myself, here is what the country is going to be 25 years after it is settled. That is what I saw. If the country had been newly settled I would have had doubts, and as this gentleman said to me just now, I would have said, 'there is sand here.' I say 'yes, there is sand.' There is a little sand in the land all the way from Little Manitou lake to far beyond Saskatoon and away to the west until you get pretty well to the Bare Hills and beyond. Here, there is a modicum of sand in the soil. I have written here what, with the permission of the chairman, I will put into my notes eventually what the settlers said of that tract. A gentleman who had been here some time and to whom I spoke, said to me, 'We consider that the sand instead of doing harm does good, and we have never missed a crop.' That gentleman had been there seven years. Mark, gentleman, he said that he had been there seven years and during that period he had never had a crop fail. His remark was, 'We have no drought, it never does us any harm, and we have no frost because our land is warm.'

By Mr. Staples:

Q. What is the subsoil?

A. It is clay.

Q. About how far down?

A. I do not mean that it is sandy, in the sense we would call it sandy; there is a modicum of sand. I will put it another way, it thickens as it goes down, in other words, it solidifies as it goes down. He said they never had any frost and the crops never fail.

Now, here was another thing I started out with, but I gave it up, when I saw how it turned out. At Portage la Prairie, I went to a farmer and said to him: 'Will you kindly give me the time that you sowed your wheat, and the time you cut it? I will ask you for it during the winter.' I did that all along, wherever I got a chance; nearly every day I would ask a farmer that question. But when I was here, east of Saskatoon (indicating on the map), I found the grain was getting hard; that was in the middle of July, and when I arrived at about 18 miles west of Saskatoon, close to that lake, on July 28, I found one field of wheat was fit to cut. Then I gave it up, because, as I went further west, I found that the grain ripened; I noticed lots of