

What is the reason for the change? What made it possible for the Pacific Great Eastern to make a profit?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Gold.

Mr. FRASER (Cariboo): Nothing else but gold. Only one thing has been responsible, and that has been the activity in the gold mining portion of that district. Just to show hon. members what a little change it takes in industry to take a railway out of the red and put it on a paying basis may I say that in Barkerville, one of the most active areas, probably an area of ten square miles—not more than that—is the one which is under investigation at the present time. I do not think there is much more than double that amount under investigation in the Bridge river country. On account of the activity in the mining industry these two small areas have brought that railway from a non-paying proposition to a paying proposition. Is it not well that this house should be reminded of conditions of that kind when we are talking about the Peace River railway. I think we should have our attention directed to the possibilities for mining in the Peace River country. Do not forget what 7,500 square miles of area means in a placer mining country. There are good rivers which will produce employment on their benches and bars for placer mining. We have the Finlay, the Parsnip, the Peace and fifteen or twenty of their tributaries throughout the whole of their length.

The one particular prospect to which I shall direct the attention of hon. members in connection with lode mining, is that located at Mount Selwyn, at the junction of the Parsnip and the Finlay rivers. Mount Selwyn is one of those large, barren looking mountains that anyone may see in British Columbia in almost any quarter he may travel. But the fact that it contains minerals makes considerable difference. What are the prospects or possibilities for that little section at the junction of the two rivers I have mentioned? I refer to the point where the Parsnip and the Finlay rivers meet, and from that point run together as the Peace river.

I shall now direct my attention to statements made by mining engineers who for the last twenty or thirty years have been examining the property. At this point I shall outline some of the results of their investigations. These men are men of good standing, and men whose opinions should be respected. They are men who have nothing to gain by giving out information which is more or less unreliable. The estimated tonnage in the one property at the junction of the two rivers I have men-

[Mr. J. A. Fraser.]

tioned is 1,384,000,000 tons of ore above the level of the Peace river. Some hon. members have heard of Canadian mines which go down three or four thousand feet below the level of the present stream. There is no reason why the ore in Mount Selwyn would not go to any conceivable depth. It might just as well go six or seven thousand feet below the rivers as it towers four or five thousand feet above the river. One engineer has made the statement that if the ore averaged \$2 a ton, it would be the largest mine in the world. A number of assays have been taken, and of 63 assays the ore averaged \$4.28 on the old valuation of gold. Also four hundred samples of that same ore ran from \$4.70 to as high as \$12 a ton.

I could elaborate, Mr. Speaker, on the possibilities of mineral production in the Peace River country and in the territory contiguous to this proposed railway at much greater length than I have done. Probably I could write such a good prospectus that many hon. gentlemen listening to me would wish to subscribe and take shares in some of these properties; but I do not propose to go any further. All I can say is that I am amazed that this situation should remain as it has done before this parliament, where it has been under continuous discussion for the last ten or twelve years, with nothing done. After the house has had the advantage of listening to the case presented year after year by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Kennedy) the situation still remains as it was ten years ago. It is amazing. The biggest surprise I got out of it all was when I turned up the records to-day and found that on a proposition of this kind only thirty-nine members of the house were found supporting it and all the rest opposing it.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the development of the Peace River country does not rest only upon the production of wheat. It is time that greater attention was paid to the other possibilities of the Peace River country and that we forget about wheat. I would not be at all alarmed over the possibility of an extra production of wheat because the people in the Peace River country are all intelligent—they would not be there if they were not—and they know just as well as we do what the situation is regarding wheat. They are not going to grow wheat when they cannot sell it. Do not believe for one minute that they are going to grow a lot of wheat when they know perfectly well that the market cannot absorb it. They will turn their attention to other kinds of production, and there are all kinds of things that can be