

APPENDIX No. 1.

REPORT

AND

MINUTES of Evidence of the Select Committee of the Senate on the existing Natural Food Products of the North-West Territories, and the best means of conserving and increasing them.

The Select Committee appointed by your Honorable House for the purpose of collecting information regarding the existing natural food products of the North-West Territories and the best means of conserving and increasing them, with leave to send for persons, papers and records, have the honor to make their Second Report as follows :—

Your Committee determined at the outset that the best means of systematically collecting information upon the subject of their investigation would be to frame a list of questions indicating the nature of the inquiries to be made by the Committee. This was accordingly done, and copies of this list, which is hereto appended, were sent to such Senators, Members of Parliament, Clergymen, Government Officials, Officers of the Hudson Bay Company, leading business men and others, as from residence, travel in, or other acquaintance with the North-West, would be best qualified to furnish information. In each case a written reply was requested to the questions or to those of them with the subjects of which the recipient might be most familiar. In this manner much very valuable information was collected. The replies received up to the date of this Report are appended hereto, and doubtless a number of them will yet be forthcoming.

Your Committee examined orally a number of gentlemen personally familiar with the subjects of inquiry and exceptionally qualified to furnish information and express opinions thereon. Their evidence, which, in accordance with the authority obtained from your Honorable House, was taken down by a shorthand writer, is herewith submitted.

Your Committee regret that in the case of His Grace Monseigneur Taché, Archbishop of St. Boniface, illness, and in the case of the Honorable Sir Donald A. Smith, M.P., pressure of business and the necessity of leaving for Europe, prevented your Committee from having the benefit of their long experience and intimate acquaintance with the products and needs of the North-West; this, your Committee regret the more, as His Grace Archbishop Taché and Sir Donald A. Smith expressed a deep interest in the proceedings of the Committee, and their willingness, had it been possible, to have assisted the Committee by every means in their power.

Your Committee also desire to acknowledge the courtesy of those officers of the Government resident in the city, who have given oral testimony, made suggestions or placed at the disposal of your Committee valuable reports, maps, papers, and specimens, and would mention especially the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, the Deputy Minister of Fisheries, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Robert Bell, Esq., M.D., F.R.G.S., Assistant Director of the Geological Survey, Professor Saunders, of the Central Experimental Farm, and Mr. J. B. Hurlbert, LL.D. They also desire to acknowledge the value of the information thus obtained from the Manitoba and North-West Members of the House of Commons, and from gentlemen residing in Manitoba and the North-West, who were temporarily in Ottawa.

Your Committee also desire to acknowledge generally the interest that was taken in the subject, and the promptness and value of the replies sent in response to their request.

From the evidence thus obtained, your Committee are of opinion that at the time of the transfer of the North-West to Canada, the natural food products of the region now known as the Territorial Districts of Assiniboia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Athabasca, were very equally distributed, the buffalo of the first two districts furnishing food, lodging and raiment for the indigenous population, equal to and