

dare say, visited Banks' or Baring Island?—I visited Wollaston and Victoria Lands, I surveyed all the southern coasts there. J. Rae, Esq., M.D.

397. You were not on Banks' Island?—No. I was not so far north.

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398. Then you cannot speak to the natural productions of that land?—No; there is nothing to be found on the neighbouring lands, the Wollaston and Victoria Lands, except limestone; a little trap and sandstone rock are seen.

399. I thought that coal was to be found on Banks' Island?—They have found that there, but on the land that I was over there is no symptom of coal; the whole coast is bare limestone.

400. Is it a coal or an ignite?—I am not quite sure. I have seen none of the specimens. I think it is a coal; there are no great quantities of it found.

401. Are animals found on it?—Yes; rein deer and musk ox.

402. Does the musk ox require a very cold climate?—Generally; it is seldom seen south of the Arctic Circle.

403. Mr. *Lowe*.] You heard Colonel Lefroy express some doubt whether the Company did all they could for the Indians in the matter of goods being sent out; what do you think on that subject?—I have never met with that myself.

404. What do you understand by it?—What Colonel Lefroy, I think, alluded to, was the deficiency of ammunition for a year or two at the Athabasca and the Mackenzie Rivers.

405. Ammunition to be supplied to the Indians?—Yes; I have heard a different reason for that, from that given by Colonel Lefroy. The gentleman in charge of those districts appeared to be very close and anxious to make a very large traffic at a very little expense; and goods were actually forced upon him from the depôt at York Factory; I have authority for saying so; and more goods were actually sent up than the gentleman asked on his requisition.

406. Was that the only defect?—That was the principal one.

407. Do you think that it would be a good plan if the Company were to furnish goods in great abundance, and with great facility to the Indians?—Clearly, and they do so generally; it is their object both to clothe the Indians well and to give them plenty of ammunition, because the better they are fed, and the better they are clothed, the better they will hunt.

408. Do you give them those things, or do they trade for them?—They get them in advance; they get their goods all upon credit; not to keep them under subjection to the Company; but the Indian is so improvident that if he were paid in the spring he would waste everything before winter. Several attempts have been made to do it, and their debts have been cancelled to them; but it could never be done except at two or three of the forts, where we gave them employment in the summer, when they sometimes earned from 12 *l.* to 25 *l.* worth of goods in a season.

409. Mr. *Charles Fitzwilliam*.] Does that mean 25 *l.* worth of goods at the price of the country, or in the market in London?—At fifty per cent. on the prime cost here, which we put on for charges of freight, loss, damage, and loss of interest. Let me add, to show that this per-centage is not exorbitant, that our servants buy goods, and take them up from the Bay to the United States, at St. Mary's, and sell their clothes to the Americans, a profit being thus made.

410. Lord *Stanley*.] You say that 50 per cent. upon the prime cost in England is the rent-charge to the Indians?—That is the tariff to the servants; and in supplying the Indians at that price the Indians can gain by their labour at that rate, goods to the value of 12 *l.* to 25 *l.* in the summer season.

411. Are the prices of goods sold to the Indians uniform throughout the district, or is there any increase consequent upon the greater distance in the case, for instance, of forts upon the Mackenzie?—The tariff is increased there; it is higher; but to show that it is not exorbitant, compared with other traders, we sell our goods at Mackenzie's River, at Fort Simpson, upwards of 100 per cent. cheaper than they are sold in the Russian settlements over in the Russian territory, and the Hudson's Bay Company's goods have much further to go.

412. Do you know whether the Russian Company has any monopoly or not?—It is a government thing; of course it is a monopoly.

413. Then you are merely comparing one monopoly with another monopoly?—Yes; at Fort Simpson we have no opposition, and we sell the goods at that rate.

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