

DESCRIPTION OF THE REGION VISITED.



It is hardly necessary to remark that the southern interior of the Province is a stock-farming, not at present an agricultural region. The rainfall generally is deficient for the growth of crops in soil otherwise arable; and farmers have to depend on the water of streams for the irrigation of their land. Men of moderate means can irrigate only where water can be easily applied from streams coming from higher levels, and though there are a good many of these streams, yet the available ones are few compared with the extent of the district. Unfortunately, the channels of the rivers and streams are, for the most part, deeply sunk, and it is difficult to take water from them for irrigating purposes.

The area of land fit for cultivation, even with the use of water, is not extensive, though larger, perhaps, than is commonly supposed.

The general soil in the Thompson country, probably a fertile soil, but lying too high for successful agriculture is known as "boulder clay." It is composed chiefly of unmodified drift, but without a stiff clayey character. It is for the most part a yellowish grey mixture of clay and sand, rather hard and with stones intermixed. Exposed to the weather, it softens and becomes intermixed with vegetable matter.

The other class of soil, known to be extremely fertile and lying low enough for agriculture, is that upon the benches and terraces, and irregular slopes of some of the valleys which once probably were the bed of a great lake. The sediments of the old lake now cover