

for a very voluminous return of papers. Last year I made a motion for certain papers, and explained that what I wanted was a synopsis of the information. Well, that synopsis came down, it was not at all voluminous, and it contained all the actual information required and all in the possession of the Government; whereas, if they had sent down all the papers, they would have filled a volume. I want something of the same kind now. I do not wish to have a voluminous return brought down, but the pith and substance of the reports that have been sent in. The country to which this motion relates embraces a third part of the entire distance across the continent. It has been represented very often as a sterile and barren country, and, if such is the case, if all this is true, then the Pacific Railway would be a most unfortunate undertaking; but I have information, and I am satisfied from what I have seen myself and from the reports of others, that that country is very far from being a barren country, that throughout its entire extent of 1,000 miles, from the Ottawa through to Rat Portage, to the verge of the prairies, there are immense tracts of very good land, that the whole country is covered with forests and nutritious grasses, cattle that range through it get fat in summer, and the forests of lumber are practically inexhaustible.

An hon. MEMBER. Timber limits.

Mr. DAWSON. For my part, I possess no limits, but there is room for the lumber trade to be carried on there in regions which have not yet been touched by the lumbermen. There are many parts of that country more especially in the valleys among the hills, where the soil is exceptionally rich, and to form an idea of that country I would only ask hon. members to look across the Ottawa, to look to the valley of the Gatineau. The Gatineau runs through a country of the same kind. A country entirely composed, or nearly so, of different forms of Laurentian rock, and the hon. member for Ottawa tells me that he has a population in his constituency of over 50,000, 30,000 of whom are in the valley of the Gatineau. The county of Pontiac is precisely the same, the same sort of rock, the same sort of country as that north of Lakes Huron and Superior, and in that county there is a very large and thriving population. With regard to the country immediately north of Lakes Huron and Superior and extending back to the Pacific Railway, as a proof that it is not unfit for settlement, I may say that we have now 20,000 settlers along the Georgian Bay and up to Sault Ste Marie, all living comfortably, cultivating the soil to the north, and they grow most beautiful wheat. It is an admirable country for growing wheat where the land is good. I do not mean to describe it as a paradise, but I do say there are large tracts of excellent land in it, and the settlements now extend along the Thessalon and back of the Bruce Mines—which, looking from the shore, seems to be the most dreary part of the whole country—40 miles already, and the settlers all express themselves highly pleased with the land. In the valleys of the Mississauga and Thessalon to the east and Goulais River to the west of Sault St. Marie there are also large tracts of good land, tens of thousands of acres, in many places, room for a dozen townships, with sufficiently level land equal to that of the prairies of the west, and with a climate far milder in winter, and I think, just as good in summer. Now, Sir, as you proceed west of Lake Superior you find an equally good country in the valleys of the rivers. Along the coast of the lakes the country is very rough and broken, but when you get inland to these river valleys you find excellent soil. Then as regards the Pays Plat River which flows into Nipigon Bay a gentleman connected with the Pacific Railway, and a most intelligent man, told me he had been through it and that there was room enough for at least half-a-dozen townships, of the

Mr. DAWSON,

most magnificent land, all level, or nearly so, between the ranges of mountain on each side. The same may be said of the Black Sturgeon River which flows into Black Bay, a large river with very extensive flats at the mouth where there is room for several townships. In the valley of the Kaministiquia, again there is quite a large extent of good land. A thriving settlement has already sprung up there where they grow wheat and cereals of all kinds, and the people are highly pleased and satisfied with their lands. Going further back, away from the immediate coast of the lake, and westward from Lake Nipissing there is a considerable tract of fair land between Lake Nipissing and the west branch of the Great French River. There is some very good land in that section. In the valley of the Spanish River again, according to the surveyors reports, from the point where the line crosses that river to Lake Huron, there is a considerable tract of good land; and to show that people appreciate the land there I am told that a company is now being organized to form an extensive cattle ranch on the Spanish River where they think the conditions are as favourable as in the North-West. Large sections of the land have been burned over and are almost like prairies. In the valleys of the rivers the soil is very rich and produces all that is required for the support of cattle ranches. As you proceed still further west and still further to the north, the country becomes more level; as to that country not being valuable there never was a greater mistake. Mr. Dymond, who was formerly a member of this House, a highly accomplished gentleman, and whose statement would not be called in question, a gentleman well qualified to describe the country, visited that region and collected a large amount of information for the Government of Ontario; and I may say that that Government values the timber in that country as worth \$150,000,000. Now, Sir, if I may be permitted, I wish to read a few extracts describing the country between the height of land which runs from the neighbourhood of Lake Temiscamingue and the Ottawa River westward, all the way to the vicinity of Thunder Bay and beyond that. Now, in that country, after you pass the height of land, according to the description I have of it, there is an immense tract of level country where the soil is good. It extends westward from Abitibi along the slopes of the Moose for 350 miles, and then on the slopes of the Albany River and along nearly its whole extent, the country is very little broken by hilly ground. Last year Dr. Bell, describing this country before the Emigration Committee, said:

"Referring to the mineral deposits, Dr. Bell said that iron ore in inexhaustible quantities was found on the east coast of the Bay, and on the islands northward from Cape Jones, the ore being of a very valuable kind, from the great amount of carbonate of manganese it contains, making it available for the manufacture of Bessemer steel. But there appears to be a serious question as to the adequacy of the fuel supply for its manufacture on the spot. Dr. Bell said that he had seen specimens of anthracite coal, supposed to exist on Long Island; but, he added, the quantity is not known to be great."

Then with regard to the land north of the waters of the Moose, he says:

"To the southward of James' Bay, the southern prolongation of Hudson's Bay, and to the south-westward, there is a long tract of land which, sooner or later, will be, I believe, of value for agricultural purposes. It extends for a distance of nearly 200 miles in a southerly and south-westerly direction. The immediate shore of James' Bay, towards the south end, is very low and level, and the country for some distance back is covered with sphagnum moss, but this does not exist far inland. The greatest extent is between the lower parts of the Albany and Moose Rivers, but beyond that, there is a level tract of excellent land, well wooded; and southward and south-westward of that again, the country rises pretty rapidly for a short distance and we come upon a plateau which extends inland for another 100 miles, and over the greater part of that the land is excellent as far as I could judge. I have surveyed all the principal rivers and lakes and canoe routes of that country, and made excursions inland to see the rocks and the soil, and it would be what we should consider, in Western Canada, good land. On the eastern side of James' Bay, there is a narrow strip extending about 100 miles from the southern extremity, which would be useful for cattle