

## THE PEACE RIVER VALLEY.

As regards the Peace river valley, Mr. Bredin would judge that from the mountains to Peace point, a distance of between seven and eight hundred miles, following the windings of the river, there is an average of 75 miles in width on each side of the Peace river that is equal to the soil on any similar length of the Saskatchewan. That would make the Peace river country about 150 miles in width, and extending from the mountains to Peace point, a distance of seven or eight hundred miles, which is all equally good for agricultural purposes with the Saskatchewan valley. That would extend considerably beyond the bottom lands of the river, including also the table land back of the river. A great deal of it is clean prairie, on the north side especially. There is more of it covered with scrub and small timber than there is clean prairie, but the soil is equally good where the timber grows.

The attention of Mr. Bredin having been drawn by the chairman to the discussion which took place on the evidence given before the Committee on Agriculture in the House of Commons by Mr. Macoun with reference to that Spirit river country and the Opaskapee, and particularly to Mr. Macoun's statement that down in the valley of the river you could produce grain, but that the table land was of very little use, he stated that he had a ranch at Grand Prairie for six years and raised oats and vegetables every year there. He had cattle there for five winters, and the average length of feeding them during those five years was six weeks of each winter. That is south of the Peace river, but within this belt of 150 miles. In that Spirit river country he knows there are some white settlers, as well as half-breeds, who are making their living raising stock and farming.

That 700 or 800 miles of good country, of which the witness spoke, would extend right to the foot of the Rockies. As to the question of the uniformity of the quality of the soil, he had only been down to what they call Wolverine point, near Fort Vermilion. He should say the country is uniformly good from the Rocky mountains to that point. At Wolverine Point the valley is much lower and perhaps the soil may be blacker, and the black soil may be deeper on the lower stretches of the Peace.

All of that country would be good for stock. Both slough and upland hay is abundant. The pea vine and all the small fruits that grow anywhere else in the northwest grow up there, and all the wild flowers that witness knows of in the northwest grow there.

This area in the Peace river country will compare on the whole with any part of Canada.

Mr. Bredin referred briefly to a trip east from the Athabaska district last summer, when he travelled from Fort McMurray up the Clearwater river and thence across to Prince Albert. The land on the Clearwater river for 100 miles in the bottoms is very good. It appeared to witness, however, to be very sandy back on the high rocks. He should think there would be a good deal of rock and muskeg. From where he left the Clearwater river in to Prince Albert, on the north Saskatchewan, the country was more or less of a sandy nature. There were beautiful lakes all the way, filled with good whitefish and trout. The whole northern country is that way.

In reply to a question, Mr. Bredin stated that after his ten years' experience of the country north of Edmonton he would consider that as quite as good a place for a man to settle in as the Saskatchewan valley was 25 years ago. It is in exactly the same position as the Saskatchewan valley was in 25 years ago. During the debate on the capital question in the Alberta legislative assembly at Edmonton, the witness made an estimate of the good land north of Edmonton in Alberta, and it figured up more than the good land south of that city. If you were to add all the good land north of the Alberta boundary to northern Alberta, you would have about twice as much good land in the province of Edmonton as there is south of Edmonton.