

streams, and in the more protected places, but there is comparatively little wood of any value upon it.

In that country there are, the witness considers, some of the lower lying areas along the stream and in odd places that would support a northern vegetation, but it is not eminently suited for agriculture. The ordinary plants that are grown in many northern countries could doubtless be cultivated in many places. There is very little humus, very little decomposed soil there, except just in the valleys.

South of that again is a belt of forest. That country is essentially suited for agricultural purposes. It starts on the east between Lake Winnipeg and Split lake, and extends westward along the Churchill river to the Athabaska river, which is as far as witness knows. The eastern side of the tract in question would be the Nelson river. He was not east of the river—with the exception of about 20 or 30 miles. He does not know the country. That belt of forest is for the most part excellent agricultural land. As far as the observations of witness goes, he believed that that country, while a little harder to settle up, and not so productive to settlers who are going in and looking for farms ready made and cleared for them and ready to put the wheat in, that forest belt will be as fine an agricultural tract of land as there is in the northwest.

Everywhere in travelling through it, the evidence of rich vegetation was abundant, and everywhere where gardens or any kind of agriculture or horticulture had been attempted in this forest belt it had been eminently successful.

It is a forest country, a spruce covered country, and is southwest of Hudson bay and the Nelson river, north of the Saskatchewan river and extends to the Mackenzie and Athabaska rivers. It would be about 200 miles wide from north to south. Witness did not remember the length of it. It is similar land to Ontario, and will grow practically everything that will grow in Ontario, except possibly down in the southern peninsula of Ontario.

The summer is warm. The winter does not count, because things do not grow in winter. There is a good rainfall. A small part of the district is park country, half wooded. It is a continuation northward of the Saskatchewan country.

Mr. Tyrrell said he had seen growing in that country all the garden products that they grow in Ontario—potatoes, carrots, turnips, cabbage, cauliflowers and all the ordinary garden produce. He saw excellent potatoes in the district around Nelson House. He could not say what time they were planted, because he was not there.

INDIAN AGRICULTURE.

The Indians, constantly in hunting, plant little patches of potatoes here and there in the spring and leave them all summer and go back in the fall and dig them up when they go back to their hunting grounds, and use them for their winter supply. The witness had gone out and dug a pail of beautiful potatoes on several occasions out of these little Indian patches buried in the woods. They had never been hoed or cultivated in any way. They are not looked after from the time they are planted in the spring until they are dug in the fall. The potatoes seem to be able to grow sufficiently to keep down the weeds. As a protection against wild animals these potato patches are usually planted on islands. Witness had not actually seen wheat, barley and oats grown in that country. He has fairly good evidence that they are grown there, but as far as he remembered he had not seen any himself. He had been told and believed that they grow there.

There is no doubt whatever that the country described will support quite a thick population.

North of Lake Winnipeg there is another magnificent area of from five to ten thousand square miles of as fine country as there is in Manitoba or anywhere else.

That is on the proposed line of the Hudson bay railway. When the witness came out of there a number of years ago, after spending a summer there, and said there was a rich agricultural country north of Lake Winnipeg, the Hudson bay men and