

APPENDIX No. 4

miles of our grand Northwest to be part of the American desert—that is this section of country down here (indicating on the map). I said: 'There is no desert, it (Southern Saskatchewan and Alberta) is all fertile.' Colonel Dennis suppressed the map, and there are houses in this city that are lined with those maps on the inside as a substitute for felt. That was how 'the issuance of a map, showing a great part of the Canadian West to be desert land, was stopped in 1879. Then, in 1880, they said: 'Professor Macoun has got to go to the plains again.' This time, Col. Dennis took a map and placed a blue line on it and said. 'Macoun, you have got to follow that line.' The blue line started south of Brandon and passed through all the bad spots, as then understood. That year I travelled 1,800 miles, following the blue line, and discovered no desert.

THE EXPLORATION AND FINDINGS OF 1906.

Gentlemen, since that time we have learned more than was known then. With all the information that has since been obtained, I undertook my journey last year joyfully. Why? Because I said: 'Now I shall know whether my ideas of twenty-five years ago are right, and if they are not right, I will try and put them right.' When we went the first time, I had a nephew with me, and I directed my nephew every half hour on the journey to dig into the ground to the sub-soil, and we did that for over a thousand miles that season. There was much discussion as to the character of the soil, and some said it was 'this, that and the other thing. It was maintained by some that this country about Long lake (indicating on the map) was all gravel and of no use. The reason was, the men who examined the country had not the sense to know that the strong winds that blow over the prairie had blown away the fine particles of dust. Of course, where badgers had made holes in the ground, earth and gravel were thrown up, the lighter material being blown away and the gravel remained. Because of this, these wiseacres said: 'The whole country is gravel, and it is not fit for anything.'

Now we know that the Long Lake country is first-class. Well, as I say, on a former occasion we dug into the soil. This year we had nothing of that to do, and why? Because the people were on it and had cropped the land. I am giving you an account of the country now and am not guessing at it. I can tell you all I thought about the country before and all that I formerly said is nothing in comparison to the reality. There is a country that is nearly a thousand miles wide, and there is little of it that will not grow first-rate crops. It may be sandy, but it will produce crops. For nearly a thousand miles we have a country that is almost fit now for the plough going west and going north. We have a country 500 miles deep and we do not know it—we have not touched it yet. I left this point (indicating on the map), Portage la Prairie, on June 11, 1906, and we passed through Macgregor and Sydney and up on to the Big Plain north of Carberry.

The Grand Trunk Pacific passes through the centre of the plain about ten miles north of Carberry, and goes through a better country east of the Assiniboine than the Canadian Pacific Railway traverses, by a great deal. The former will pass through the centre of a first-class country, whereas the other line goes along the face of the sand-hills. Away back of the sand-hills the country ten miles north of Carberry is as fine a country as ever you looked at. Well, the line passes through this country nearly up to Birtle. It then descends into the valley of the Assiniboine. This point is Fort Ellice, and after we pass here the line begins to go up to the north. You will notice the points that I have marked on the map. This point is the Touchwood Hills post. All this section of country is pretty well settled. It consists of forest, prairie and sloughs and ponds. The country through which we passed this year from Hamiota up towards Yorkton and from Yorkton in the direction of (indicating on map) Beaver Hills and Touchwood Hills, is an exceedingly rich country, and the farms everywhere were first-class. The country was not like the prairie country where you could break