

7 EDWARD VII., A. 1907

Q. What is the extent of the country up there that you speak of?

A. It extends—this is a guess, you know, gentlemen, I am not sure,—but to my mind there is no reason why that country should not extend away up to the Liard.

Q. Have you been up to—

A. No, but there is no reason why it should not extend across to the Liard, there, taking that whole country that runs up the Slave river to old Fort Simpson, and across from Vermilion to the Liard.

Q. About how many miles is that?

A. I cannot say, it may be a couple of hundred or much more.

*By Mr. Lewis:*

Q. Has not that county been travelled over?

A. People have been along the rivers, but the men who have been there have not been there for the purpose of making observations.

*By Mr. Thompson:*

Q. What is the limit of altitude at which wheat can be grown in any part of Canada?

A. That is a question that time is going to settle. I would not doubt that in time to come, when the country is cleared up and settled, that this altitude I speak of in the Peace river as being too high will produce good wheat.

Q. The hills at Dunvegan are 700 feet higher than the valley, is it possible that good wheat can be grown there?

A. I have not the slightest doubt but that some years it will be successfully grown and other years it will not. It will be uncertain, but the day will come when it will not be uncertain. Depend upon it that the wheat itself is to-day becoming acclimated, that is the wheat you are growing in the Northwest is changing in its conditions and it is ripening itself earlier than it formerly did. Sooner or later, from whatever cause, that will be the result, conditions are changing and I found it so this year. When I started out from Portage la Prairie, I commenced to talk to the farmers to get them to tell me when they sowed their grain, so that when I reached Edmonton I could find the difference between the times at which it ripened. It was just as good and as early a little out of Edmonton as it was in Manitoba, if not better. In the Peace River country we have an immense tract down there in that low region that will produce anything and that is going to support a big population in the future.

*By Mr. Chisholm (Huron):*

Q. There is a difference in the altitude even between Edmonton and Vermilion?

A. There is 1,228 feet difference.

Q. Yes, that will account for the difference in the prospects of raising wheat?

A. Yes, I think the prospects are more certain because there is no freezing down there; that is a point I forgot to mention. There is no possibility of freezing in the north at night, owing to the long day.

Q. But you may have frost there on the high mountains?

A. You will have frost here away up at a high altitude, but when you get down to the low level it does not cool off enough at night to freeze.

Q. It is the frost that is the danger?

A. That is what we call the white frost. This is always local.

*By Mr. Schell (Oxford):*

Q. How far north of Edmonton is the point at which you got samples of wheat for the Centennial?

A. Edmonton is in latitude 53° 53'. It will be 5 degrees north of Edmonton. I obtained the sample of wheat at latitude 59°. That will be 360 miles due north from Edmonton, where I got wheat with five grains in the fascicle across the ear. I put the ears in bottles and sent them down to the Exposition at Philadelphia in 1876. They had never seen such wheat before.