

utilized so readily for agricultural purposes, and it lies, besides, off the proposed route of the railway, and is not likely to be opened up for some time. Still, it is a country I have every reason to believe will be eventually occupied by an agricultural population.

Q. You speak of the northern part of the interior—north of what parallel of latitude would that be?—It would be chiefly north of the 51st parallel, and west of the Fraser River in the basin of the Nechaco and its tributaries. The coast region is of course not liable to any of these difficulties of drought or occasional summer frost that some of the higher regions of the interior are exposed to. The climate is exceedingly mild, and in the aggregate there is a large quantity of agricultural land. On the Island of Vancouver, Mr. T. Hunter, who prepared a report on this subject for the C.P. Railway Report of 1880, estimated that there are 389,000 acres of agricultural land, of which about 300,000 acres are well suited for agriculture. Of this, only about 10,000 are so far cultivated, but a great portion of the flat country which is suitable for agriculture in Vancouver Island is in the same way very densely covered with forests, and, owing to the high price of labor at the present time, and the comparatively small number of people in the country, it is not economically advantageous to clear these forests or bring the lands under cultivation now. On the Queen Charlotte Islands there are some 700,000 acres of low land on the north-east coast, a great part of which may eventually be brought under tillage, but it is also covered densely with forests at present, of very fine trees, and its immediate value is as a timber producing region. At the mouth of the Fraser River, the flat land probably amounts to more than the whole in the Island of Vancouver, and some of it is of very excellent quality. Generally, the soils of British Columbia, where they are cultivable at all, are exceedingly fertile, and the crops produced on the mainland and on Vancouver Island are very large. Wheat, as an example, averages 30 to 40 bushels to an acre on land at all well cultivated.

Q. Will you please inform the Committee as to the timber resources of British Columbia, the country over which the Douglas pine occurs, and other timber trees at present or likely in future to be of value? The Douglas pine, I understand, is of the greatest commercial value just at present?—This map (produced, published in Report of Geological Survey 1879-80) will illustrate some of these points. It shows the range of the Douglas fir and some of the other important timber trees. So far, the Douglas fir or Oregon pine, as it is also called, is the only tree that has attracted much commercial attention. It has been largely cut and exported. It is found on the whole eastern coast of Vancouver Island and on the coast of the mainland opposite to it. It extends northward a little back from the coast as far as the Skeena River, and in the northern part of the interior of the Province as far north as Tula and Babine Lakes. The timber which occurs immediately on the coast is, however, indisputably the best. There are magnificent forests there, composed almost entirely of the Douglas fir, and naturally, on account of the facilities for shipment, they have attracted the most attention. The quality of the timber is excellent and the size of the trees is great. One that was cut down at Burrard Inlet for the Philadelphia Exhibition, of which a section is in the Parliament grounds now, was measured to be 365 ft. in height, had a thickness of 8 ft. 4 in., 20 ft. above the ground, and was perfectly sound throughout. Many of these logs measure as much. Commercially speaking, the medium sized logs are more useful in the mill than these exceedingly large ones. The localities chosen for the mills are selected in regard to facility of shipment, and those now working are chiefly situated on Burrard Inlet. In addition to the Douglas fir, there are a number of other trees in British Columbia which are exceedingly valuable, and which will eventually attract a great deal of attention. There is the cedar, which sometimes attains a diameter of 17 feet, though generally these very large trees are more or less hollow. There is the spruce, which is an excellent wood, not so soft as our spruce on this side of the continent, and a different species; the white pine, not the same as the eastern Vancouver is considerably greater than Queen Charlotte Islands, doubtless the timber