

On the Battle river which flows into the Peace river, gold has been found, carried down from the mountains, and is reported upon as being suitable for working with dredges, and further west in the Athabaska, Peace and Saskatchewan rivers we know that there is gold. In the central portion of the map, the province of Saskatchewan, there is very little reason to doubt that the Huronian formation exists in several parts, round about Reindeer lake, &c. North of Lake Athabaska particularly is likely to prove a very important mining section. Mr. Durnford expressed the opinion that nickel and its associated minerals, and no doubt iron ore will be found, and there is also every possibility of finding cobalt and silver in the country north of Lake Athabaska.

#### CLIMATE.

Mr. Durnford pointed out that the climate varies considerably. He drew attention to the fact that the further south we go the better the stamina of the men we find there. The witness had travelled quite largely in India, and found the nearer he approached the Himalayas the finer the class of men. The men from the mountains, the Sikhs, are men of magnificent physique. You find this applies also as regards the Esquimaux, who appear to be a fine race physically, kindly in their disposition and nature, not cruel to the same extent as those of more southern latitudes, and you find the same thing down in Patagonia. Towards the limit, as you may say, at which men or cereals can be grown you find the best. That had been brought to the notice of the witness very strongly living out in India. Rice is the staple grain of that country, and grows well, yet we find in Carolina a much better quality. The nearer to the poles it is possible for plants or the human species to survive, there the best of their species are found, and so, though the northern climate is rigorous it is habitable.

Mr. Durnford quoted the experience of Mr. Hanbry, who started from Churchill and went north and along the Chesterfield Inlet up to the Arctic ocean, travelled west along the Arctic ocean and up the Coppermine river to Great Bear lake, passing two years amongst the Eskimos in 1904 and 1905. He collected some very valuable information as regards the climate of that northern country. Its people, of course, have been used to the rigours of the climate. He says that new-born children are laid on the snow by their mothers, without their receiving injuries, and he makes a statement which would at first seem almost a fairy story did we not know that he had been living among the Esquimaux in their snow houses. He says that a temperature in that very dry climate of 23 degrees is equivalent to 60 degrees in a more humid one, and that when the temperature reached 28 above zero, they had to cut a hole in the snow house because they found it uncomfortably warm. It is a strange but very valuable statement as tending to show that though the first persons to go into our north country, for instance, natives of the old country might suffer through ignorance, those who learn how to live there would undergo no greater inconvenience than they would in a climate such as we have in Ottawa.

#### SETTLEMENTS.

Throughout that northern country the only settlements are Hudson bay settlements. There is a small settlement at Churchill and a Hudson bay post on Split lake, one at Nelson House and one at Red lake—they are scattered all over that territory. The people grow only what is necessary for their own use. The people who are dependent upon them have to be fed, and as they have meat it matters not whether they raise large quantities of vegetables or not. There are comparatively few cattle kept. At Cumberland and Norway Houses they have a few, and at one time they used to have a large number. Now that they are nearer markets, they probably purchase their supplies. They are not an agricultural people and do not care to keep cattle. Of course in that country cattle would need shelter, whether at Churchill or Norway