

get reciprocity with the United States, to keep Dominion lands for the settler. The whole world would have watched with interest if the present government had attempted that task. Was the task attempted? Every man in Canada knew it had not. They had gone back on all their policies, blazoned forth so loudly in opposition. In ten years, from 1896 to 1906, customs taxation rose from \$19,833,000 to \$46,064,000, excise from \$7,000,000 to \$14,000,000. The per capita tax rose from \$5.46 in 1896 to \$10 in 1906, and \$11 or \$12 in 1908. During ten years of Conservative rule the total taxes were \$287,000,000. It rose in ten Liberal years to \$430,000,000. In 1896, Mr. Foster said, the Conservatives took out of the people in taxation \$76,000 daily. In 1908 the Liberals took \$200,000 a day.

Mr. Foster dwelt at length on the reckless extravagance of the present government. He read quotations from speeches of Laurier and Cartwright in which these gentlemen, when in opposition, had gone up the side lines and concessions making the welkin ring because the Conservative government spent annually \$30,000,000. What did these men think of the \$130,000,000 which was now found necessary to keep the wheels running?

**The Debt.**

Taking up the matter of the debt, Mr. Foster said Mr. Fielding slid over the taxation and expenditure. The ice was very thin. Why did not the debt increase? Simply because the people were taxed to the hilt. The debt would increase, however, in the future, because a limit must come to the taxation of the people. The mad, reckless looting of the public must terminate. Then Mr. Fielding would find the debt would go up. It was easy to keep the debt from going up if the burden of taxation was put on the people. The Conservatives preferred to increase a debt of \$31,000,000 and drop taxation of the people. It was not fair to take out of a young country more than was absolutely necessary. Mr. Foster declared the only right way was to borrow the capital for large undertakings and spread the payment of interest over generations equally, and fairly. It was nice to see Mr. Fielding, even at this late hour, putting his faith in Providence, which he hoped "would bless Canada with good crops." This arm-in-arm familiarity with Providence was somewhat of a somersault.

Taking up the financial obligations of the country, Mr. Foster said between today and October, 1913, one hundred million dollars had

to be met in the way of renewing loans. That was a tremendous responsibility. Mr. Fielding had gone on madly piling up obligations without a thought of the morrow. Not a step had been taken to diminish the obligations. The minister had given no estimate of the cost of the Transcontinental between Moncton and Winnipeg. Yet he was calling for millions more. Was he putting off the evil day? Where were the mountains of information the Premier had boasted about?

Mr. Foster said all kinds of unthought of and unheard of expenditures were cropping up in the Transcontinental work. He prophesied that before it was finished the line from Moncton to Winnipeg would cost \$130,000,000. The Finance Minister had to face the problem of \$100,000,000 for renewing loans and \$1,000,000 for building the Transcontinental. These were tremendous obligations to be faced within the next five or ten years. Mr. Foster doubted whether the minister realized the seriousness of the situation. He entered upon it with too gay and facile a mind.

Mr. Foster compared Canada with the United States. The customs and excise tax per head in the United States was \$6.50, in

Canada \$11 a head. On expenditures on ordinary account, the United States was \$6.66 a head, and in Canada \$12 a head. The present administration must not think it had Heaven-given powers.

**As to the Banks**

As to the dealings with the banks, Mr. Foster said the banks, as shown by the minister, did not want the imposed assistance. Then the minister came to the rescue by breaking the law of the country. He had entered the treasury, locked by the law of the country, and taken the legal reserve. This was, in Mr. Foster's opinion, a rash act. There was no absolute crisis to warrant this. Mr. Foster strongly condemned the action of the minister in not coming to Parliament before this to get a bill of indemnity. Parliament had been sitting now for four months. Was Parliament making the laws, or just a committee doing that work? It was a dangerous precedent.

Of the surplus or supposed surplus, Mr. Foster said that it was mythical, swallowed up. Mr. Fielding's anxiety for surplus had led him to pay bounties out of capital instead of revenue. If, by a change of bookkeeping, millions were added to a surplus, it was surely not a matter for boasting.

Reckless expenditure was Mr. Foster's next theme. The old rules in this regard had been obliterated. Today it was found that there was an obliteration of the line between public and private interest. For ten years large public expenditures had been made to assist private parties. Why had the Arctic made three voyages at a cost of \$400,000; what were the results? Practically nil. Why, then, was this money of the people expended on so worthless an object? The North Atlantic Trading company was paid \$370,000. To whom was it paid? Then what about that pretty pickle of fish, the Ross rifle? The Quebec bridge was also an example of the extravagant recklessness of the government. If a national work was to be built, why hand it over to the middleman? If Mr. Parent had not been such a friend of the Premier, the Bridge company would never have started that great undertaking.

Mr. Foster pointed to the mint as an example of misrepresentation or lack of information. The total deficit in the management of the Yukon from 1900 to 1906 was \$3,648,899. The telegraph line into the Yukon was another example. From 1899 to 1906 the revenue was \$707,000 and the expenditure \$1,326,000, a deficit of \$620,000.

# Exploratory Survey of Peace River Country

Report in Connection With Selection of Lands.



**R. J. A. MACDONELL**, who carried on an exploratory survey in the Peace River district in connection with the location and selection of the 3,500,000 acres granted to the Dominion government by British Columbia, made the following report bearing on general conditions.

The soil of the Peace River district consists principally of a yellow clay loam carrying from four inches to twelve inches of a rich top soil and varying all over from the greater depth to the lesser depth mentioned. It carries finely distributed throughout its mass lime in the form of Selenite, and it is evident from the growth upon its surface that it is comparatively a rich and nutritious soil. This soil is universally distributed over the entire Peace River district.

The distribution of water, as far as we could judge, is not sufficient for the requirements of a newer settlement.

In many parts of the district the clay loam surface is from 50 feet to 150 feet in depth, and in most places evidently holds water which would yield an abundant supply if wells were sunk into it, but this is only supposition, as we did not test for water on our trip.

On Pouce Coupe prairie it is well watered by many streams; at about 100 feet in depth the banks show a gravel sub-soil from which water percolates into the various streams, almost from the beginning of such streams until they become quite deep in their channels of over 150 feet in depth below the prairie. When you penetrate to that depth you almost invariably penetrate the shale, and water procured there is so strongly alkaline as to be unfit for any use, of either man or animal.

The prairie surface consists generally of a moderately rolling plain, intersected by deep ravines where they cut through it on their way to join the Peace river. This fact will render railway locations in the vicinity of the river somewhat difficult, and will necessitate such locations being at a distance of 25 or 30 miles north or south of the river, in order to avoid heavy crossings, such crossings near the river being almost impossible, the ravines being 600 to 800 feet in depth and from one to two miles in width at the surface, and having badly broken and crumbling banks.

The whole of the river banks in the district are composed of shale which is in a continuous state of change through weathering and disintegration, which causes a process of denudation and constant sliding of the embankment.

**Timber**

The principal timber we saw in the country was undersized poplar averaging about four inches in diameter and from 20 to 30 inches in height. We saw a great deal of spruce on the hilltops, but it also was undersized and in the main unfit for railroad uses. There is birch and alder also to be found, but it is also undersized, the birch not averaging more than six inches in diameter and the alder four inches. The cottonwood (balm of Gilead) grows in the bottom of the Peace River valley.

These latter grow to a very large size, sometimes attaining five feet in diameter, but it is a loose shaly wood and is apparently unfit for economic uses. There is no red or white pine in the district, and although there has been some very fine spruce it has been almost without exception destroyed by fires, and nothing now remains of them but extensive windfalls, which act as impediments to progress through the country. There is an occasional ridge of jackpine where, as is the case in a few localities there is a greater proportion of sand mixed with clay soil.

The entire bush which grows in the country may be said generally to be undersized and scattering, thus leaving many prairie openings; this is characteristic of the entire district. We made progress through the country by following up the old Indian trails, and very seldom had any extra cutting to do, although these trails were sometimes unusually narrow and constructed by a minimum of labor on the part of the Indians. An occasional tree only required to be cut. One reason why the trails are so crooked is that the Indians never fol-

lowed the cutting in a straight line, but diverted from side to side always to get the nearest and easiest tree to cut. They also diverted said trails around marshy or soft places on their way, hence an Indian trail is sometimes twice as long as a white man would make the same road.

**Minerals**

We discovered a large deposit of talc on the Middle River upon the course of our first day's travel from the Pine. We discovered also two small veins of anthracite coal near the Forks; one vein was about six inches in thickness, the other vein was not well developed. We also discovered coal on the Kiskapiskow river on Pouce Coupe prairie, but did not trace up these discoveries, there being evidences of coal everywhere in the district of Peace river on the south side, or in that portion of it from which the selection is to be made.

There is also gold in the gravel bars of the Peace river, and it has formerly been secured there and panned out, yielding from \$15 to \$50 a day, but the period during which gold can be taken from the bars does not exceed two months or two months and a half of each season, and up to the present the difficulties and the cost of supplies have been so great as to discourage the miner. We discovered nothing else of economic value in the way of minerals in the country.

**Climate.**

The climate is thoroughly endurable; the summers not being so hot, nor the winters so cold as in Manitoba and Ontario. The summer nights are cool enough to enable one to sleep comfortably covered by a blanket. The winters are also endurable, not reaching the extreme low temperatures of Manitoba, nor even that of Ontario. There appears to be a liability to early frosts, which liability will likely disappear through cultivation and settlement. I would not, however, advise any one to attempt to settle in the country until a railroad first penetrated and opened it up.

In the month of May the thermometer registered as the greatest degree of heat at 1.30 p.m., 78 degrees. During the month of June, 72 degrees. During the month of July, 84 degrees on one day only. During the month of August, 78 degrees on two days only. During the month of September, 70 degrees on one day only. During the month of October, 56 degrees on one day only. All of these being registered above zero, and being for the summer of 1905.

During the month of November it registered 3 below at 7 a.m. On the 29th it registered 24 below at 5 a.m., and on the 30th, 20 below at 7 a.m. On December 1st, it registered 20 below at 6.30 a.m. From December 2nd to the 6th it registered from 4 below to 4 above. From the 6th to the 8th it registered from 6 below to 6 above. From the 8th to the 10th it registered an average of about 16 above. On the 10th it registered 4 to 5 below. On the 20th it registered 8 degrees below. On the 21st it registered 10 degrees below. From the 21st to the 29th it averaged about 20 degrees above. On the 29th it registered 10 degrees below. On the 29th, 30th and 31st it averaged about 5 degrees below. On January 1st, 1906, it registered 3 above. From January 1st to January 11th it averaged about 25 degrees above. On January 11th it registered 17 degrees below. On January 12th, 16 below. From January 12th to the 25th it averaged about 30 degrees below. From January 26th to February 1st it averaged about 30 degrees above zero. On February 5th to the 10th it averaged about 15 above. From February 4th it registered 10 degrees below. On February 5th to the 10th it averaged about 15 above. From February 13th it averaged from 10 above and 5 below and 12 below, and 15 and 27 above, alternating above and below the zero point, for the balance of the month. During the month of March the temperature alternated between 42 above as the highest registered temperature, to 18 below, as the lowest registered temperature. During the month of April the highest registered temperature was 72 degrees, which occurred upon one day only. During the month of May the highest registered temperature was 78 degrees, which occurred during our exploration travels on the middle branch of the Pine river. During the

month of June the highest registered temperature was 72 and 75 degrees, occurring on the plateau at Graves Creek, also in the course of our travels. During the month of July the highest registered temperatures were 82 and 92 degrees, which also occurred upon the upper plateau during the course of our travels, in the year 1906.

The first winter the thickness of the ice upon the river did not exceed two feet and a half, at the utmost three feet six inches. During the year 1906 the thickness of the ice upon the Peace river was four feet generally. In some places it exceeded that thickness.

During the course of our travels upon the plateau in the months of May and June, 1906, we were visited with frost upon several occasions during the night. The registrations of the thermometer were taken at six in the morning, the thermometer apparently not registering quite the lowest temperature which had apparently been obtained through the night. On the 3rd and 4th of May it registered 30 degrees. On May 6th it registered 30 degrees. On the 7th of May it registered 25 degrees. On June 15th it registered 34 degrees, with evidence of frost upon the vegetation.

The above statement of fact applies only to that portion of the Peace River territory comprised within the land selection, and is not intended to apply to the balance of the Peace River territory within the Northwest Territories. So far as we were able to judge, the balance of the Peace River enjoys a somewhat milder climate, as is evidenced by the successful growth of cereals and vegetables therein.

I made a close comparison of temperatures between Dunvegan and Spirit River. Spirit River is south of Dunvegan about 25 miles, and situated upon the plateau of the prairie about 800 feet higher than Dunvegan, which is situated in the valley of the river and immediately adjacent to the river. The temperatures were reported by travelers coming into Dunvegan from Spirit River. No record was kept of these temperatures, but they showed generally a difference of about eight degrees of lower temperature at Spirit River. During the winter no record was kept of the summer temperatures or of the difference between the upper elevation of the banks and the valley below. But it is safe to assume that the difference in temperature was pretty constant both summer and winter.

During 1906 there was a fair distribution on the lower Peace river from Vermilion to Dunvegan, but the rainfall above Dunvegan was deficient, and the majority of the garden stuff grown in this district was a failure in consequence.

During the year 1905 the snowfall was quite heavy. During the month of January it measured about two feet and a half in the bush, and about two feet in depth on the open prairie. During the year 1906 the snowfall did not exceed three inches in depth either in the bush or upon the open prairie, and there was really no sleighing during the entire winter, excepting upon rivers.

**Ranching**

Hay grows finely over the entire district of Peace River and affords good pasture wherever the open prairie exists. Much of the country is covered with an undersized growth of poplar, jackpine, birch, alder and spruce. Throughout the growth of this timber, hay also grows, and in places in sufficient quantity to afford some feed, but not in sufficient quantity to be relied upon as regular pasture, nor to afford hay. About a four to five months' supply of hay should be provided to carry cattle safely through the winter. At the very least, four tons per head should be allowed for cattle, and about three tons for horses. We carried our horses over the winter at Fort St. John upon a supply of three tons per head. Pigs are easily raised. The pigs in the country run wild during the summer and live principally on roots and by grazing. Very little attention is given them by their owners, but they would require to be fed from November until April.

**Agriculture**

On arriving at Fort St. John on May 8th, 1905, I at once proceeded to plough, cultivate and plant land for an experimental farm.

On the 17th started breaking and hauling logs for the necessary building.

Started planting potatoes on May 27th, sowed radishes, lettuce, turnips, carrots, parsnips, beets, peas, corn, onions, pumpkin, cucumber and squash.

The turnips and radishes grew finely, also the beans, radishes and lettuce; the corn matured and ripened; the principal portion of the beans also matured and ripened; the peas ripened but were entirely destroyed by the chipmunks, which devoured them as rapidly as they matured.

The lettuce grew well and was deliciously tender; the onions also grew well; the pumpkin, cucumber and squash were not a success, although they have during occasional seasons been grown successfully upon the Hudson Bay side of the river.

Oats were successfully ripened upon the Hudson Bay side of the river. Cauliflower was not a success; many of the cabbage matured, some did not do so.

The corn matured and was uninjured by the succeeding frost. Our potatoes were very good and gave sufficient yield for what we planted, about one acre, the return being between four and five hundred bushels. Upon the Hudson Bay side of the river they succeeded in growing the finest potatoes I have ever seen.

They selected from the growth upon a half acre of ground about four bushels of potatoes the majority of which weighed seven pounds, actual tested weight, this weight being phenomenal weight for the vegetables mentioned.

The potatoes were sound and generally in good condition.

In case this statement might be doubted I may mention that I speak from personal observation and a personal test of the weights.

Being busily employed in doing some general work, the first fall frost caught us unprepared and destroyed some of our garden stuff, although everything in the garden was in shape to be housed and taken care of.

The corn and beans being ripe at the time were uninjured.

We also sowed a variety of flowers such as are usually contained in Ferry's seed packets. They grew wonderfully well, all coming into bloom, and many of them lingering until after the third and fourth frost. Sunflowers grew vigorously and blossomed and ripened their seeds.

Watermelons grew upon the Hudson Bay side of the river, but developed fruit only about one-fourth in size of that which grows in Ontario. Unnecessary to say that it did not ripen.

I might here mention that over this entire section of country, the cut worm was remarkably developed during the year 1906, and caused much destruction to garden stuffs by its ravages. Its development was not confined to any one district of the Peace River, but seemed to prevail universally.

Oats which were sown for feed upon the Hudson Bay side of the river matured and were harvested about a month in advance of the frost.

There was scarcely sufficient rainfall, and we were compelled to provide additional moisture for growing of plants and vegetables by carrying water up from the river.

The distribution of moisture over the country is unequal.

During 1905 there was a fair distribution of rainfall over the entire Peace River district. Unfortunately, we did not have seeds of any of the cereal crops with us. The country is subject to summer frosts, which would appear to some extent, especially on the higher plateaus in the vicinity of St. John, and from there to the mountains, to be detrimental to the universally successful growth of such crops, although oats have always ripened in the valley of the Peace River at Fort St. John where they have been grown for a rough feed. Wheat has not been grown there, and its successful growth in this vicinity is not to be depended upon, although the soil is apparently well adapted to the successful growth of all cereals. Down the river, about 100 miles below St. John, such crops are successfully raised, and wheat, oats and barley yield well, although this territory also is visited by occasional summer frosts.

Frost struck us upon the 4th of September, 1905, and affected everything growing in the garden. The potato vines were frozen to the ground. It struck us again on the 15th inst., so severely that the growing vegetables were all frozen deep in the ground, the turnips apparently being frozen two inches in depth, the carrots/parsnips and beets being likewise similarly frozen, also the onions and cabbage; the beans and corn being thoroughly matured were not affected. We had taken up the principal quantity of potatoes and had them secured in the cellar; about one hundred bushels which we had not removed were so thoroughly frozen in the ground that we found it impossible to remove them, so they were abandoned in place.

About the last week in July, 1905, proceeded with the cutting and stacking of hay. This occupied us July and August, and a small portion of the month of September, during which period we put up by admeasurement about sixty tons, estimating that this would be an ample supply to feed our horses through the winter.

We fed about eighteen horses, averaging about three tons per horse for the winter's feed.

We had about four hundred pounds of hay left unfed when we went for the horses during the last week of April, 1906. The grass was well developed on the hillside. At this time the horses were feeding on the hillside of the North Pine River, where we had wintered them.

About the 2nd of September we returned to St. John, completed our building, and got everything in shape for the winter.

While the ice was making upon the river, we were busily engaged laying up firewood.

Animal life is represented principally in the country by moose, black bear and cinnamon bear, the wild cat or lynx, the coyote or ordinary prairie wolf, the black or timber wolf, the common rabbit, fox and skunk. Among the smaller animals are to be found the beaver, the mink, the marten, the common Canadian red squirrel, the chipmunk, a species of rat called the wood or bush tailed rat, and mice of a different species from the mouse found in Manitoba and the larger portion of the Northwest. The moose is becoming scarce, and has almost disappeared from the immediate vicinity of the Peace River. Indians have now to penetrate back from the river about thirty miles in order to secure food. The bear is disappearing from the immediate vicinity of the Peace River. The beaver is also becoming a very rare animal.

**Fish**

In the Peace River proper, fish are somewhat scarce, an occasional trout only is caught in the river. The most common fish is called the squaw fish. It is about the size of an Ontario chub, and much like it in general appearance. It is insipid to the taste, and very bony. It is eaten by the Indians, but white men, when they catch it usually throw it away.

The next most common fish is the sucker, which is a soft fish and not much relished either by the white men. The next fish, which is but seldom caught, is the ling, or maria, as it is most commonly called. This fish is sometimes eaten by both Indians and white men.

Upon reaching the upper tributaries of the Peace River, the water is always clear and there are abundant trout in the various streams. We caught trout from two to five pounds in weight.

Pike and white fish exist in the lakes, and pike in the lakes and running water. There are four kinds of trout speckled trout (bull trout), weighing up to 5-12 pounds or more; the trout called the Arctic trout, a beautifully mottled fish; the rainbow trout, a trout carrying a rainbow band longitudinally along both sides of the body; a black speckled trout, growing to about two pounds in weight; all being a well flavored, firm, edible fish.

"Dora, would you be willing to marry a young man who has to make his own way in the world, and who has nothing but his love for you to recommend him?"

"Certainly, Gerald, if I cared enough for him but at present I don't know of any such young man. Frosty weather, isn't it?"—Chicago Tribune.