

utilized, in the second by what highways such regions may be most easily reached.

A glance at the map will show, that while many of the larger unexplored areas may be affirmed to lie to the north of the limit of profitable agriculture, considerable regions situated to the south of this limit still await examination. Large districts, again, in which no farmer will ever voluntarily settle, may afford timber which the world will be glad to get when the white pine of our nearer forests shall become more nearly exhausted, while with respect to mineral resources, it is probable that in the grand aggregate the value of these which exist in the unexplored regions will be found, area for area, to be equal to those of the known regions, comparing each particular geological formation with its nearest representative. On the grounds alone, therefore, of geographical knowledge, and of the discovery and definition of the reserves of the country in timber and minerals, the exploration of all these unknown or little-known regions may be amply justified.

Taking a line drawn north and south in the longitude of the Red River valley, which is, as nearly as may be, the centre of Canada from east to west, it may confidently be stated that by far the larger part of the country in which agricultural settlement is possible lies to the west, while the great bulk of the actual population lies to the east of this line. Looking to this grand fundamental fact, I believe it may safely be affirmed that some members of this audience will live to see the day when these conditions with respect to population will be boldly reversed and in which the greater number of our representatives in Parliament gathering here will come from this great western region.

This disposition of the cultivable land depends partly upon the physical characteristics of the country, and in part on its climatic conditions. Beyond Winnipeg, and stretching therefrom to the west and north-west, is the great area of prairie, plain and plateau which, wider near the forty-ninth parallel than elsewhere on the continent, runs on in one form or other, though with diminishing width, to the Arctic Ocean. This is, generally speaking, an alluvial region, and one of fertile soils. Very fortunately, and as though by a beneficent provision of nature, the climatic features favour the utilization of this belt.