

or somewhere else, and is a low valley perhaps two or three miles wide, covered with prairie, and that all one has to do is to sow the grain in the ground, and harrow it in without ploughing or any cultivation, and raise 150 bushels to the acre. But those residing there do not find any such condition as that.

FLAT AND TABLE LAND.

The river bottom proper only consists of points or flats in the bottom of the bed of the river, which 'bottom' is practically about two miles in width, whereas the great Peace river valley proper, what is properly called the Peace river valley, is in reality a broad tract of country. When you once get on to the height of land, this so-called 'valley' covers 300 miles in width, and extends from the Rocky mountains on to Lake Athabaska, into which the Peace river drains. The banks are very high where the Peace river leaves the mountains—that is the banks of the river to get up on what is spoken of as the height of land. At Fort St. John the banks are about 1,000 feet in height, and it would be quite a problem for a farmer living up on the height of land to get water from the river. When you reach the Peace river crossing, which at present is the terminus of the road or trail from Edmonton, the usual route to the north, the banks are 800 feet in height, and where the road winds down the bank to get into the valley or bottom of the Peace river, it is about one mile long, that length being necessary to get suitable grade to get down to the bottom of the river.

From the Peace river crossing as the river swings to the north and east, the banks gradually become lower, and when Wolverine Point, about 200 miles to the northeast of the Peace river crossing is reached, the banks are about 200 feet in height. From thence to Fort Vermilion the banks become lower, and at Fort Vermilion you find the banks from 100 to 150 feet in height.

You will find the same conditions in the upper part of the river as in the lower. It makes great bends, and on alternate sides of the river you find wide flats, where there is probably the richest soil there is in that northern country, made up of alluvial deposits, all black soil. There are places on the lower parts of these points which get flooded, perhaps once in seven or eight years. Nearly all the points, however, are above the high water mark, and when these flats are cultivated, the soil yields the heaviest of crops. On these flats cultivation of the soil was first undertaken in that part of the country, and it was supposed by many that they comprised the only part of the Peace river or northern country from Edmonton into the north that was suitable for cultivation. For many years experiments were carried on on the flats. People supposed that when they undertook the cultivation of grain on the height of land they would get into the muskeg and swamp that adjoined the river in many places, and grain could not be raised; but this has been proved to be a fallacy. The sample of grain witness had produced, was largely taken from the height of land or table land near Fort Vermilion. The table land is sometimes called 'bench land,' and this bench land in some places is very wide. There are places in it, as at the south of Fort Vermilion, and to the north and west, where there is 100 miles of this land on each side of the river before you come to the mountains.

This land is not all suitable for cultivation. It has its swamps and its muskeg, and its low patches of land, that you will find in almost any country where you have a large growth of scrub timber, but the larger part of this land as the witness had found by travelling over the country away from the river, is suitable for settlement.

Witness produced photographs of the grain raised on the soil that was formerly covered by timber—low land and timber. One was a photograph taken last fall of grain that was raised on land which had formerly been covered with bush. It was low land that appeared to be of no use whatever, covered with a thick growth of poplar and willow. Witness also showed a photograph taken by himself of wheat cut during the first week in August.