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GENERAL CONDITIONS.

TOPOGRAPHY.

The Athabaska river from Athabaska Crossing flows easterly to Ft. Assiniboine. Here it turns and runs north seventy miles to Mirror Landing at the mouth of the Lesser Slave river. Thence it flows easterly again twenty miles before making the big bend down to Athabaska Landing. The country lying to the north and west of this part of the river is that examined last season.



Photo. F. McVickar, 1911.

PLATE 3.--Packing.

The Athabaska river flows between banks 100 to 600 feet high, covered on their slopes with poplar or spruce. Behind, on the general level of the country, are large areas of muskeg stretching to the interior hill country or to the watersheds of other water systems. These muskegs are largely burnt.

The Lesser Slave river lies in a valley eight to ten miles wide consisting of flat burnt muskeg country with interspersed gravel or boulder-clay ridges.

Lesser Slave lake, notwithstanding its area, is very shallow. The north shore is even, composed of stones. Back from the lake on the northeast corner is Martin mountain, which in reality is a plateau, 1,000 feet above the lake at its highest point. This elevation stretches easterly to Moose lake by low ridges. This plateau is composed of a very thick blanket of the omnipresent boulder-clay, underlain by shales of Cretaceous origin. The country-rock, however, is never exposed. West of Martin mountain the country is lower, flattening down to muskeg west of the narrows of the lake. Long, low gravel or sand ridges form islands in the general muskeg.

South of Lesser Slave Lake, at a distance of about 10 miles back from it, is another high plateau country known as the higher than Martin mountain. The northern edge is well defined, and the plateau averages 500 to 1,000 feet country, broken by deep valleys. The ed by the presence of numerous spur-