

the value of the northern portion of this continent. The same remark will apply to the Mackenzie Basin. Everything in that country is grand and promising, but like every new country, the land requires settlers, and until it is opened up and organized we cannot form a just estimate of its value. The immense area of arable lands is, of itself, a sufficient guarantee for the future of that country; but there is also the further inducement of abundance of game and fish to contribute to the comfort and wealth of those who settle there. Fresh-water fish is to be found in all the lakes and streams in great abundance and of excellent quality. The fisheries of the Mackenzie Basin will be one of the great sources of supply for a large portion of the North American continent in future years. The sea fisheries at the mouth of the Mackenzie River are also very valuable. Amongst others is a species of salmon, locally called the Inconnu, which exists there in vast numbers. The forests contain timber suitable for all purposes connected with house and ship building, for mining, railways and bridge purposes, far in excess of the requirements of the country, and of great prospective value to the treeless regions of Canada and the United States to the south. I shall take the liberty, in order to make my case a little stronger, to quote some of the evidence given before a committee of this House two years ago. I shall not quote it at any length, but I want to carry conviction to the minds of hon. gentlemen that there is a good basis for what I ask in the resolution before the House. In the investigation that I have referred to the question was asked of Mr. Christie, an old Hudson Bay factor, a gentleman of the highest respectability who passed a life of adventure in that country, as inspector of the Hudson Bay Company posts: "In what respect can the basin of the Mackenzie be considered of value to the Dominion? Is it a mineral country." Mr. Christie, who had no interest in that country then, as he had left the employ of the Hudson Bay Company and was living in Ontario, replied:

"I will answer that question this way: It will depend on what discoveries may be made. It is a known fact that all the streams from the mountains south of the Saskatchewan even, and going north, are auriferous—that is to say, indications of gold are found in them. I make that statement from what I am told by miners who have gone up as far north as the Liard into the mountains. Then we have from

the journals of the Arctic expeditions—Franklin, Richardson and others—that on the Coppermine River copper exists in large quantities."

Further on he was asked about the Upper Peace River country, and he answers:

"The Upper Peace River, at Vermilion, is a splendid country. I rode with Governor Dallas sixty miles through a most magnificent country. The soil was a different dark loam, as we saw by the mole hills, and we were struck with the charming appearance of the country."

Again he is asked if there is enough land there to make a new Province, to which he replies:

"Yes. I sometimes hear the opinion expressed that our country may ere long become over populated, but there is not the slightest danger of that. You need not be afraid how many immigrants come into the country to settle. You may bring all the immigrants that Europe can send you. There is room for all in the Saskatchewan and Peace River country. There is a vast extent of splendid country from Prince Albert on the whole north side of the Saskatchewan going away up until you come near Fort Pitt, keeping a little to the north. Then when you come to the route of Green Lake there is two days journey through a magnificent country, beautifully timbered, well watered and supplied with abundance of fish. As I travelled through it, I remarked to one of my men, 'What a splendid country to settle in.'"

It is not necessary to call the attention of the House to all the advantages offered by the Mackenzie Basin for settlement. I have referred to the inestimable value of the fisheries. The mines have not yet been explored, but valuable minerals are in abundance—not only gold, but other valuable and economic minerals. I would refer hon. gentlemen on this point also to the report made last year to the Department of the Interior by Mr. Ogilvie, in which he says:

"It appears, therefore, that from Dunvegan, on the north side of Peace River, down the river to Peace Point, and thence to Salt River, on the Great Slave, there is a tract of country about six hundred miles in length and forty miles wide of which a large percentage is fit for immediate settlement, and a great deal more could be very easily cleared.

"At Dunvegan, notwithstanding the severity of the frosts, the crops are very good, both in quality and quantity. When I was there the Roman Catholic missionaries had threshed their grain, samples of which I brought back. The yield was as follows:—Fifty pounds of wheat were sown on the 16th April and reaped on the 20th August, and twenty-seven bushels threshed of good clean grain; fifteen pounds of Egyptian barley sown on the 18th April and reaped 20th August, and fifteen bushels threshed, weighing fully sixty pounds to the bushel. The Hudson's Bay Company and Episcopal Mission had not threshed, and could not give their returns; but they were well satisfied with their crops of all kinds. The Rev. Mr. Brick, of the Episcopal Mission, was already using bread when I was there made from wheat of the present year's growth.

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