

talked with many men who have spent months and years in that locality, and they describe the grand prairie of the Peace River country as one of the most fertile spots in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. W. WRIGHT. Did I understand the hon. gentleman to say that the people who have traded there and made money are now residents of Alberta?

Mr. PETER TALBOT. Some of those who made considerable fortunes up there are now residents of Edmonton, Calgary and other places in southern Alberta. I gave some information the other evening relating to that portion of the country. I believed at the time, and I believe yet, that the information was correct. I received it from a gentleman whom I have known for twelve or thirteen years, almost ever since I went to the Northwest Territories, a gentleman who has for several years traded along the Athabaska River and the Peace River, and who has seen the mills and the schools and the churches there.

Mr. INGRAM. Would the hon. gentleman object to stating who the man is?

Mr. PETER TALBOT. Certainly not. He is a member of one of the most prominent Conservative families in the valley of the St. Lawrence in Ontario. His name is F. W. Breden, a nephew of Lt.-Col. Breden, a very prominent Conservative. Mr. Breden gave me the following information respecting that portion of the country. The proposed constituency of Athabaska has twenty-four stores, thirteen churches, eight schools, four saw mills, three shingle mills, two planing mills, one flour mill, seven steamboats and three Northwest Mounted Police posts. The proposed Peace River constituency has eighteen stores, ten churches, six schools, four saw mills, five shingle mills, three planing mills, five flour mills (one of them a fifty-barrel roller mill and four stone mills), three steamboats, one Northwest Mounted Police post and three steam threshers.

Mr. INGRAM. Is the hon. gentleman quite sure all these are to be found in the territories he speaks of, or any of them in British Columbia?

Mr. PETER TALBOT. I have only the information Mr. Breden gave me. Of course, there is a population in British Columbia which is close to the Peace River, but I have never heard of any farming operations being carried on there. I have seen grain grown in the Peace River country of good quality.

Mr. INGRAM. Nobody disputes that, but there is little of it.

Mr. PETER TALBOT. If there was so little grain there, they would not take into the locality three steam threshers.

Mr. P. TALBOT.

Mr. INGRAM. What proof have you of the three steam threshers?

Mr. PETER TALBOT. My friend's word.

Mr. BARKER. The government reports do not show anything of that kind; they show the opposite.

Mr. PETER TALBOT. We can hardly accept the government reports from that new country as being very complete. I know localities where, at the time of the census, there was not a single individual, and where there are now thriving towns and settlements.

Mr. BARKER. We have government reports up to 1903.

Mr. PETER TALBOT. I know places where, in 1903, there was scarcely anybody, and now there are large settlements. Take the Barr colony, take Vagreville, go all through my constituency on the Canadian Northern Railway, take the proposed line of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Westaskiwin east, now laying rails on the first fifty miles, take also the line followed by the same company from Lacombe east, with rails laid for the first fifty miles—we have hundreds of settlers coming into that country a hundred miles ahead of the railway. There is the difference between our northern country and the southern country. In the southern country the railways precede settlement; in the northern part, in the agricultural part of the country, settlers precede the railway.

Mr. BARKER. Does the hon. gentleman not know that the government reports prepared in 1904 include the whole of 1903, and are so minute that they give the actual names of the farmers?

Mr. PETER TALBOT. I want to say that if any portion of the proposed province of Alberta is going to be under represented, it is the constituency that I have the honour to represent. That constituency is 200 miles wide and some 300 miles long, four railways are being built at the present time throughout its length, and it is known all over the country as the part which has the largest stretches of fertile land in the world. If we were to look forward at all and pay any attention to what we may expect in the future, we should have far more representation in the north than we are getting by this schedule.

Mr. INGRAM. The hon. member for Strathcona says that if there is any constituency that suffers by reason of insufficient representation, it is Strathcona.

Mr. PETER TALBOT. I mean that if there is any portion of the province of Alberta that is not receiving as large a representation under this schedule as it should, it is certainly the district of Strathcona.