

structing a line which would bring Quebec within easy distance of the port of St. John, and presuming that this consideration will not be undervalued by any intelligent man, I have only to show that there is good ground for believing that by a thorough examination of the more difficult part of the country through which the Central routes must necessarily pass, there can yet be discovered a means of avoiding the more serious obstructions, and greatly reducing the maximum of the grades. That such a route can be found is the opinion of some of the most intelligent surveyors, who have visited the districts in question. According to Major Robinson, the direct distance from the coast of Nova Scotia to the St. Lawrence is 360 miles, while by any proposed Northern route, the distance from River du Loup to Halifax is about 200 miles more. Amongst the many difficulties to be encountered in the construction of the line by this route, may be mentioned those of the only practicable pass through the Restigouche mountains. Of this valley, that of the Metapedia River, Captain Henderson, who explored the ground, says in general terms: "From the broken and rocky character of this section of country, some portions of this part of the line will be expensive, especially the first twenty miles of the ascent, in which the hills in many places come out boldly to the river, and will render it necessary to cross it in several places." Mr. Fleming, in his report of the survey of 1864, says in reference to the same section of country: "Although the chaining and levels were carried through to St. Flavia, on the shore of the St. Lawrence, a total distance of nearly 100 miles, the line surveyed may be said to terminate at 70 miles north from the Restigouche; from thence northerly the country is only imperfectly explored." "The difficulties met in crossing the Metis Valley, were not anticipated, as they are scarcely alluded to in the reports on the survey made in 1848. Yet my present impression is that they are perhaps the most serious on the Bay Chaleurs route. At a place called 'the Lewis Rocks,' the river takes several sudden twists, and it will be necessary either to form a tunnel through the Lewis Rocks, 1300 feet long, or divert the river. The latter would prove the cheapest, and is recommended. Above this point, for about a third of a mile, the channel of the river will require again to be changed. The works of excavation for about a mile in length, in the neighbourhood of the Lewis Rocks, will be unusually heavy." But, as our object is not to prove the impracticability of this or any other route, it is not necessary to continue quotations, which might easily be multiplied, all tending to prove that the