

REPORT

Of a Reconnaissance of the country in the Province of Quebec, from Hull, opposite Ottawa, to Pembroke and the Deep River, made with a view to examine its capabilities for Railway purposes.

This district, consisting of the Counties of Pontiac and the Western half of Ottawa, has long suffered from the want of communication with the markets of the Dominion, and hence its settlement has been somewhat retarded, and its progress impeded. It mainly consists of the front Townships of Hull, Bristol, Onslow, Clarendon, Litchfield, Mansfield, Chichester and Sheen. As a rule, the land at the base of the trend of the Laurentian range of hills is of excellent description, and is in general in good state of cultivation. The hills in question run at the rear of these Townships, strike the North bank of the Deep River, a reach of the Ottawa seventeen miles above Pembroke, and they continue along the stream with some ruggedness. Settlement, however, has gone back among them Northwards, in varied extent, some twenty-five miles. West of the Conlonge the distance settled is somewhat less. It is anticipated that as the inducements of a larger market and better prices are given to the settler, the many fertile valleys of the range where the crystalline limestones or marble deposits are to be met, will doubtless be populated with the same rapidity with which the lower townships have filled up, notwithstanding the small and unimportant outaid hitherto given to further their progress. In the spring and fall, as this district is now circumstanced, the general mass of the population are confined to the locality in which they live. The roads of winter, however, afford them some assistance. In summer, a steamboat leaves Aylmer daily and runs to the foot of the Chats Rapids, a distance of twenty-four and a half miles. Three miles of a horse railway carry the passengers and freight to an upper navigation of a further twenty-eight miles to Portage du Fort, between which place and Aylmer the return daily connection is likewise made. The rapids which intervene both to the North and South of Calumet Island, cause another break in the navigation. On the Ontario shore the Ottawa is entirely abandoned to Pembroke, a distance of about thirty miles. The stage takes the passengers to Mud Lake, whence a steamer carries them to Pembroke. On the Quebec shore there is an unnavigable distance of seven miles, from Portage du Fort to Havelock, a small town opposite Ile Calumet, whence a steamer runs to the Chapeau Village, on Ile