

exceeds it; that the population is sparse, and from the nature of the ground, but small increase can be anticipated; while, on the other hand the country lying to the south of the Ottawa, or within the Province of Ontario, offers peculiar facilities for a line of railway, being comparatively level, with but few rivers to cross, and a fine agricultural district, well settled, and promising a considerable amount of local freight in addition to the great lumber traffic.

How far the foregoing characteristics have been realized, our investigations will presently show.

We will first give a brief description of the line and country explored along the north side, afterwards of that on the south, with comparative statement of the principal products, &c., &c.

Leaving the upper end of the Carillon and Grenville Railway, no difficulty is experienced in reaching the mouth of the River Rouge; at this point a spur of the Laurentian chain approaches within a short distance of the Ottawa River, but with a sufficient space of plateau between for several lines of rails, at an ample height above high water. From the Rouge to Papineauville, the plateau or space existing between the Ottawa and base of the Laurentides varies from one-fourth of a mile to a mile in width, with a height of from 20 to 40 feet above the river. The soil is clay, nearly all cleared and cultivated, and admirably adapted both in grades and directness of line for a first-class railway. In this distance but few gullies, and those containing only small brooks or streams, are encountered, presenting no difficulty in crossing.

From Papineauville to Buckingham the same general character of country is found, but with a considerably wider plateau, in some places possessing a width of six miles. The plateau, in fact, is divided into a series of terraces of from 20 to 30 feet in height, and each upwards of half a mile in width, running parallel to each other, and also to the Ottawa river. The line of railway could follow on either of the terraces so formed with equal facility, but as the most favourable point for reaching the Nation River exists near its mouth, it is probable that the lower terrace would be the most desirable one to adopt, affording, as it does, ample height over the flood waters of the Ottawa. We were greatly struck with the agricultural capacity of this section, much of which is under cultivation. The large and flourishing village of Buckingham, with a population of 2,000 souls, is situated several miles back from the mouth of the Riviere du Lievre, and is about 100 miles distant from Montreal. The village possesses several very extensive establishments for the manufacture of sawn lumber, with an enormous water power yet available. The lumber is carried several miles by slides from the mills to the Ottawa river, where it is either rafted or placed on barges for transportation to market. The railway line could pass through

the village, and short sidings be placed in immediate connection with the mills, or by following the lower terrace, easy access can be had to the piling grounds at the ends of the slides and points of shipment.

From Buckingham to Hull, opposite Ottawa city, a distance of nearly 20 miles, the same favourable conditions for a first-class road still continue, with a fine fertile belt of from seven to fifteen miles between the Laurentian Hills and the Ottawa River. The Gatineau, one of the most considerable streams encountered, enters the Ottawa at Hull. Its average width is upwards of 600 feet, with level banks and fine approaches for crossing.

It is navigable for several miles from its mouth by barges, &c., to the lumber piling grounds of Messrs. Gilmour & Co. The most favourable point of crossing, both with reference to grades, and access to Hull and Ottawa, will be found near the mouth of the stream; here either a high level bridge to permit barges, &c., to pass underneath to Messrs. Gilmour's depots, or one at a lower level, with a swing bridge, may be placed.

By keeping the line further north, on a higher plateau, or above the head of navigation, the river may be crossed by an ordinary fixed bridge. The line into Hull by this latter route will not, however, be so direct, or perhaps so cheap, as that by the front.

Arriving at Hull, a connection can be had with the Canada Central Railway, on the Ontario side of the Ottawa River, by a low level fixed bridge placed a short distance above the Chaudiere Falls. The total width of the river at this place is in the neighbourhood of 4,100 feet, but it is very shallow, with rock bottom, and may be crossed in the greater part of the distance by slight embankments, as the adjoining banks are low, and the main channel only about 100 feet wide. Timber and saw logs being the only things passing this point, the lower side of the bridge requires to be elevated only a small height above high water. This point of crossing the Ottawa by a railway bridge will neither interfere with buildings nor streets, and is, in our opinion, by far the cheapest and best site for the purpose between St. Auns and Ottawa city.

From Hull to Aylmer village the line will follow the margin of the river, over a direct and level route. The road, so located, will present great facilities of communication with steam sawmills to be placed on the banks of the Ottawa, and drawing their supplies of logs from the upper river.

Between Hull and Aylmer a very good agricultural country is found, and many fine farms already exist. We were informed that the next county to the west, Pontiac, was even superior and well settled, offering great inducements for carrying the railway through it, and crossing into Ontario at Portage du Fort; but as Aylmer was the western limit of our explorations, we had no opportunity of a personal examination of that county.