

QUALITY OF LANDS ON THE MADAWASKA, &c.

It may be of interest to some of our readers to learn the situation and quality of the Government Lands offered for settlement north of the Counties of Addington, Hastings, &c. Contradictory statements are abroad, and it is therefore the more important to ascertain the real facts, and to make them known. The statements of the Minister of Agriculture will be found on our advertising sheet, but the following remarks on the character of the land on the Addington Road are from the pen of Mr. Perry, the Government Agent, who has traversed the country of which he speaks. His remarks are in answer to the following questions submitted by a friend who wished to make use of the information in a publication he is preparing:—

QUESTIONS.

1st.—Are the lands in the Back Country of Addington and Frontenac, of a quality to reward the Agriculturist for his labors?

2nd.—Are not the lands so broken by the granite hills as to isolate the Settlers, and thus mar the social interchanges of life?

3rd.—What chance has the Settlement in getting supplies, and which is the best road to the land?

4th.—How and where will settlers dispose of their surplus if they have any?

5th.—What is the probable future of the Settlement?

To question 1st.—“Are the lands in the Back Country of a quality to reward the Agriculturist for his labors?”

In my opinion they are. The soil is a sandy loam, more or less covered with vegetable mould. It is made up of the decomposed granite hills that crop out at stated intervals all over the back regions. The silica of those rocks is crumbled to atoms by the agency of the acids contained in rain and snow water—by the solvents in atmospheric air—and by the aid of a little obtrusive plant called lichen which thrives in our driest weather on the bare granite, and without seeming effort, by the action of its root detaches small particles, and deposits them at the base of the rocks in debris. Thus in my opinion, the soil is made up of the silica or sand of the surrounding rocks. There is a feature in the growth of the timber on the lands in question, in connection with the fertility of the soil, that I do not understand. Where hard wood predominates, the soil is a dark loamy sand; where pine takes the lead, a pale yellow sand is found. The whole drift has one common origin. The yellow sand bears by far the most lofty and gigantic trees; some having yielded to the lumbermen seven thirteen feet logs, the lumber of which was fit for the American market; and one stump which I measured and found it to be five feet two inches across, not including the bark; and yet the yellow sand gives a much less yield of grain to the farmer. Where dark loams have had a fair trial, the yield has been equal to the most favored soils of the frontier Townships—wheat, rye, oats, peas, barley and Indian corn, all flourish; potatoes and other bulbous roots exceed the growth in older Townships. I have in no instance seen clover tried, but am of opinion that at no distant day, if attention is turned towards it, that clover seed will be one of the staples of this section of the country.

The next or second question asked—Is not the land so broken by the granite hills as to isolate the settlers, and thus mar the social interchange of life? I think that if I say no to this question, I shall be fully borne out by facts; the granite ranges run nearly east and west and consequently the valleys that lie between here and the Madawaska; the first and largest valley is found beyond the rocky range, or fourteen miles north of the river Clare. This range of rocks, over which the Addington road runs by winding through its gulches, is nearly a barren waste; then you come on land that is not fit for settlement; it is about five miles from where the rocky range loses itself, to the rear of Kaladar; about six miles of the road lots are entered for settlement, making a distance of eleven miles across the valley, that in all probability will be settled. Nor is this all; many lots beyond those taken, afforded a sufficient amount of plough land to ensure their settlement before you come to the next broken range, which occurs at the head of the