

Iron is one of the great staples of this region, and the ores are everywhere found. The magnetic iron ore of the Laurentian system occurs at different points upon the River St. Maurice, and in the interior country ; its colour is a deep black, with some metallic lustre.

The bog ore, a species of the granular brown oxide of iron, exists both in beds and veins; it occurs in grains nearly round, of various sizes, generally compact, but occasionally quite loose, and when smelted yields a good tenacious iron. The beds of this species have been traced from the Cap de la Madelaine to the River Croche, their usual length being from ten chains to half a mile, and width from 50 to 200 feet ; the depth in those localities which have been worked varies from three to six feet. The swamp ore likewise occurs in extensive beds in the calcareous formations of the Batiscan River. It is to be regretted that the smelting of iron ores has not yet received that attention here which the value and abundance of the material would warrant, there being at present iron works of any note in only two localities—the ancient well-known “St. Maurice Forges,” and the new “Radnor Forges;” the latter so peculiarly favoured by nature. There are found associated, wood for charcoal, the iron ore, the sand and lime-stone for flux and moulding, and the refractory clay for constructing the interior brick work of the furnaces. The river upon which the works are situated makes its passage through cliffs of limestone.

As we go to the north from the Matawin River, the syenitic rock of quartz, feldspar and hornblende prevails. This formation occasionally passes into gneiss, hardly distinguishable from granite, saving by an experienced geologist. Plumbago occurs in the gneiss formations of the Con-cou-cache, and about the head lakes of the Rat River ; it is found in soft disseminated pieces of a grey colour, and is believed to be of a suitable quality for making pencils.

A deposit of lead exists on the Trenche River, where a vein of about two feet in width penetrates a ledge of rocks some 50 or 60 feet high, and extends to an unknown depth. The ore has a metallic aspect, is black in the mass and also when pulverized, and is believed to be galena, or sulphuret of lead. The presence of the calcareous spar and mica slate alternating with the granite formation between the Trenche River and Radnor Forges, would seem to indicate the existence of this ore in masses that may become the object of mining.

Copper pyrites also occur in the same district, and sulphuret of iron. The specimens found have a metallic appearance, and a bronze yellow colour ; the rock in which the vein lies appears as of the gneiss or granite formation.

Nickel, associated with the ore of cobalt, occurs in the rear part of the Cap de la Madelaine ; the specimens found are of a grey colour, hard, fine-grained, and malleable ; occurring in syenitic and gneiss formations. The ore is believed to be rich in nickel.

The mineral springs of the St. Maurice, at St. Leon, Caxton, Cap de la Madelaine, and the Forges, are well known. Strong chalybeate springs are also met with in different parts of the territory.

No reflecting person can be otherwise than convinced that the St. Maurice must, sooner or latter, assume an important rank in the commerce and revenue