

desirable. Much of the line is uninhabited, especially the exceedingly rocky and rugged parts of it, and they will necessarily remain so. The upper part of Bouchette is unoccupied, so also is Maniwaki, excepting at the Desert, and it will long continue so, unless steps be taken for its survey and sale, which is very much to be desired.

It is to be regretted that Maniwaki, probably the best township for settlement on the Gatineau, should, where good land is so scarce, remain not only unoccupied, but a barrier to the progress of settlement in that direction.

From the river Desert upwards, the Gatineau road should be continued for colonization purposes, on the east side of the river up through the townships of Kensington, Anmond and Sicotte to Lake Baskatong in the township of that name; above the river Desert the west side of the Gatineau becomes less favorable for settlement than the east side. Above lake Baskatong, crystalline limestone is said to prevail up the river Baskatooshin.

The river Gatineau drains an area of about ten thousand square miles, and is probably about four hundred miles in length. In general, one quarter of the land in the known parts of the valley of the Gatineau may be estimated as fit for settlement, in the present acceptance of the expression, though more of it may eventually be occupied.

To describe the lands fit for settlement, I would quote the words of Peter Aylen, Esquire. His opinion is based on twenty-eight years personal acquaintance with the Gatineau country, which, in connection with his lumbering operations, he explored more extensively than any other person. He says the lands fit for settlement "are generally of an unusually rich and durable soil, and though stony in places consists of deep loam on the tables that form the hill tops, and clayey flats in the valleys, often covered with deep black earth, and admitting of drainage where requiring it, poor sandy soil being of rare occurrence."

As one of the causes of fertility, I would mention that I found crystalline limestone the most commonly prevailing rock along the Gatineau for upwards of sixty miles below the river Desert. There are farms on the Gatineau presenting upwards of two hundred acres of the richest alluvial fields in front, and in rear hills of crystalline limestone, valuable alike for building and as a manure for the soil, and covered with valuable wood, pine for building and hardwood for fuel. In the finest parts of Canada those advantages are seldom found together.

But the greater part of the Gatineau country, as is the case on the north side of the Ottawa, generally consists of rugged, unarable hilly land with occasional sandy plains, the good lands occurring in veins, irregular tracts, and isolated spots.

It is of the utmost importance, therefore, in the projection of settlement roads, that the extent and position of those favorable tracts, and the best means of connecting them, if not already definitely ascertained, should be carefully determined by cursory exploration and the road lines adapted accordingly, as any other system of projection otherwise based, will be sure to end in utter failure.

As the rugged and inferior lands are generally covered with a good growth of valuable timber, in the manufacture of which, much farm produce is consumed, creating a market on the spot, and high prices, it is evident that the value of the remaining quarter for settlement and cultivation is thereby very much increased. By careful selection, the extensive forest regions, unfit for cultivation, might be left untouched, while continuous lines of settlement might be formed on the intervening veins and tracts suitable for cultivation, and settlers be placed where they would derive the greatest benefit from the lumber trade, and at the same time the poor and unarable regions of the Ottawa be preserved for ever in their character as the greatest lumber forests in the world.

Grain, potatoes and other vegetables are successfully cultivated on large lumbering farms at thirty and forty miles north of the river Desert. In the settlement on the latter, fall wheat is cultivated with success.

Though but remotely connected with the subject of this report, it is worthy of remark that it has been well ascertained that behind the high country of the Laurentides, that is, at from about a hundred varying to two hundred miles north of the Ottawa, the country becomes lower, and that in this great depression, which is about a hundred miles in breadth, and of an unascertained length from east to west, containing the upper three hundred and fifty miles of the Ottawa's course, there is much land suitable for cultivation, said by those