

In descending the noble Exploits River from the junction of Noel Paul's, I was more impressed than ever with the wealth of forest and land fit for settlements along this beautiful valley. In this connection I cannot do better than quote the words of my predecessor, Mr. Murray, from his report of 1871:

"No observant person, visiting the valley of the Exploits, could fail to be impressed with the manifold advantages it presents for the prosecution of industrial pursuits, such as lumbering and agriculture. With a splendid river, abundant timber, and a fertile soil, the region that is now a wilderness, might, by energy and enterprise, be soon converted into a thriving settlement, maintaining a large population."

Should the railway system now talked of, ever become a *fait accompli*, and the western extension thereof, traverse this magnificent valley on its course to St. George's Bay, then we may look forward to the fulfilment of Mr. Murray's prognostication, but not till then. It will be fortunate, in the meantime, if the wealth of timber be not destroyed by fire. It has had many narrow escapes from such a calamity in recent times, and indeed a partial fire last June, which swept several square miles near the Badger River, came very near accomplishing the total destruction of the entire forest. I have shown in a previous report for 1882, that such a calamity did, at one time, overtake the forest of this valley, nearly two hundred years ago; and that the present growth only replaces a much larger one, originally occupying this fine region.

#### DESCRIPTIVE GEOLOGY.

Under this head I propose to give in a general way the purely geological features of the rock formations met with in journeying across the country. The plumbaginous slates steel grey finely Micaceous sand-stones, quartzites, conglomerates, serpentines, dolomites, &c., described by Mr. Murray, in his report for 1870, as occupying the Bay East River Valley, and on the shores around Bay D'E-poir, were attributed by him to the Quebec division of the Lower Silurian, now more generally included in the Cambrian formation. In their eastern extension, these rocks were met with last season, on the head waters of the Bay-de-Nord River of Fortune Bay, and were found to butt up against the coarse granitic ridge which forms the chain of hills, of which Mount Sylvester is