

one or both points, so that the people of the Eastern Townships might have a direct Communication with Quebec.

*Mr. Ruggles Wright*, appeared before your Committee and answered as follows :

Q. Have you had any and what means of knowing the quality of the soil and the climate of the tract of country lying between the St. Maurice and the Ottawa ? and if so is the said Country susceptible of being cultivated ?

A. I have travelled over part of the lands in question, and have found as well from my own personal experience as by information obtained from the Indians, that there exists a very great similarity throughout : I am of opinion that these lands are susceptible of being cultivated to advantage in a variety of ways, and are highly to be recommended for grazing.—The ridges capable of affording the richest feed for horned cattle, sheep, &c. and the vallies being composed of rich soils would be productive of hay, wheat, pease and oats in great abundance, the climate on the St. Maurice is similar to that of Quebec, and is more favourable or approaching the Ottawa River, being nearly a south-west course.

Q. In what manner have the Crown and Clergy Reserves been distributed throughout the Townships ?

A. The Crown and Clergy Reserves on the north side of the Ottawa River have been distributed generally by commencing with a Reserve, then three lots for settlers and so on, throughout the whole Township.

Q. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the said distribution ?

A. In my opinion there are no advantages whatever, but on the contrary very great disadvantages to the settler in such a distribution (as alluded to in my second answer.)—1st. The Reserves generally remain wholly uncultivated for many years, the wood growing thereon shades a considerable portion of the adjoining cultivated lot, much to the detriment of its settler, and serves as a harbour for beasts of prey destructive to the crop.—2ndly. No provision whatever being made to obtain roads through the Reserves, except by the labour which can be afforded by the settlers, who have quite enough at home to occupy their attention during our short season, and—3dly. The want of settlers upon these Reserves creates a heavy tax on the industrious settler adjoining, who is obliged to make the whole of the fence along the division lines at his own expense—when the reserves are leased they are commonly occupied by persons without capital who soon become a nuisance to the settlement—and the short term for which the leases are granted prevents capitalists or industrious men from applying for them, fearful that at the close of the lease their improvements may be taxed by an enhancement of the rents.

Q. How could these lands be most advantageously distributed for the settlers in the said Townships ?

A. By placing the Reserves in a block, vizt :—The Crown Reserves