

BRITISH
NORTH AMERICA.

It must be premised that a branch railway from the city of St. John is contemplated to pass up the Valley of the Kennebecasis, and connect with the main trunk at the Bay of Shediac.

The survey of this line, ordered by the Provincial Government, is in progress ; and from the latest information received, the line promises most favourably.

The total population of New Brunswick has been estimated to amount, at the beginning of 1848, to 208,012, distributed in the proportions as under :—

County of Restigouche	.	.	.	4,214	
„ Gloucester	.	.	.	10,334	
„ Northumberland	.	.	.	19,493	
„ Kent	.	.	.	9,769	
					43,810
„ Westmoreland and Albert	.	.	.	23,581	
„ Kings	.	.	.	19,285	
„ St. John	.	.	.	43,942	
					86,808
„ Queens	.	.	.	10,976	
„ Sunbury	.	.	.	5,680	
					16,656
„ York	.	.	.	18,660	
„ Carleton	.	.	.	17,841	
					36,501
„ Charlotte	.	.	.	.	24,237
Total	.	.	.	.	208,012

Of these, the first four, amounting to 43,810, are on the line of the proposed route No. 2, and will be entirely thrown out by the adoption of the other.

Campbellton, Dalhousie, Bathurst, Chatham on the Miramichi, and Richibucto—sea-ports and shipping places of consequence on the Gulf shore, all of them susceptible of the greatest development, will be left isolated and cut off.

These ports are ice-bound during the winter months ; and railway communication will be to them of the greatest importance.

It will affect most materially the interests of the city of St. John, and the receipts upon their branch railway.

It will affect also most sensibly the receipts of the main trunk line.

Along the south bank of the St. Lawrence, from Quebec to Metis, there are settled along it, in what can be only compared to one continued village for 200 miles, 75,000 inhabitants.

Of these also a large population, probably 12,000 in number, residing between the Rimouski and Metis River, will be deprived of the benefit of the railway if the direct line be adopted.

To counterbalance the serious detriment which would thus be caused, this line would diminish the length of the branch line likely to be made to connect it with Fredericton, which is the seat of Government, and contains about 6000 inhabitants.

The population of Nova Scotia may be estimated to be about, viz. :—

City of Halifax and County	.	.	.	40,000
County of Cumberland	.	.	.	10,600
„ Colchester	.	.	.	14,900
„ Pictou	.	.	.	30,300
„ Sydney and Guysborough	.	.	.	23,200
Remaining Counties	.	.	.	111,260
Total	.	.	.	230,200

The population of Cape Breton is estimated at 49,600.

Of the above, if the Whitehaven and direct route be adopted, the city of Halifax and county, amounting to 40,000, will be excluded from the benefit of the line.

If the Halifax and Eastern line (route No. 2) be adopted, then the population of Sydney and Pictou, amounting to 53,500, will be excluded.

To the population in the southern or remaining counties (111,200), the Halifax route will be of essential benefit.

From the other route they would derive no advantage whatever.

It is now proposed to give an account of the explorations and their results.

The dotted lines on the General Plan, No. 1, show where these were made, and the courses taken.

In the season of 1846, the Cumberland Hills were very carefully examined ; sections with the theodolite were made, and barometrical observations taken, to ascertain the lowest and most favourable point for crossing them.

The line which had been cut out and explored for the military road was followed from the Bend of Petitcodiac to Boistown.

From Boistown the general course was followed, and levelled as far as the Tobique River, but the country was so unfavourable that new courses had to be constantly sought out.

A new line altogether was tried from the Tobique, as far as the Wagan Portage.