

The streams run along these vallies parallel with the course of the St. Lawrence until meeting some obstruction they turn suddenly off and find their way over precipices and falls to the main river.

Having described such of the physical features of the country which form *obstacles* in the way of the lines under consideration, it is proper next to describe those features and other resources which are advantages, and should be *sought* for by competing lines.

The geological systems which prevail through the intermediate country to the mountain ranges are the carboniferous and new red sandstone.

They include large deposits of red marl, limestone, gypsum, free stone of excellent quality for building purposes, and extensive beds of coal. Indications of the latter are met with in abundance from the banks of Gay's River (twenty miles from Halifax), up to the Restigouche River, and along the shores of the Bay Chaleurs.

Wherever these systems and minerals are found, a strong and productive soil favourable for agricultural pursuits and settlement, is sure to accompany them.

The surface of such a country too is generally low or moderately undulating, and therefore the more of such a district that a line can be led through, the better for it.

In Nova Scotia this formation occupies its northern section, and amounts to nearly one-third of its whole area. It then extends all over the southern and eastern parts of New Brunswick.

In this respect, therefore, the Route No. 2 has a decided advantage.

The greatest and most valuable coal-field is that of Pictou.

It is situated on the south side of that harbour. The exact extent of the bed is not known, as it is broken by a great (geological) fault. It occupies however, an area of many square miles.

The coal is bituminous, of good quality, and the veins of most unusual thickness.

Mines in it are extensively worked, and large exports from them are made to the United States. Iron ore is abundant.

This is an advantage in favour of the Whitehaven and direct route.

The next great coal district is the Cumberland field, and it is second only in importance to that of Pictou.

It is supposed to extend from the Macon River, west of Amherst, over to Tatmagouche in the Straits of Northumberland.

Some mines in it have been recently opened, and promise to be very productive.

The Line No. 2 passes over this field for miles, and may be considered from that circumstance, as not being deprived altogether of an advantage possessed by the other route.

The *great* agricultural capabilities of the eastern counties of New Brunswick have been described in the reports of Mr. Perley, the Government Emigration agent, which were presented to the New Brunswick Legislature in February 1847, and ordered to be printed.

One most important object to be attained by the construction of the railroad is the settlement of the public lands, and the encouragement of emigration from the mother country.

As bearing very strongly upon this point in the choice of the best direction for the line, I subjoin the following extract taken from Bouchette's *Work on Canada*, vol. 1, page 331. It is a quotation made by him from "The Commissioners Report of 1821."

"The Bay of Gaspé, and particularly the *Bay des Chaleurs*, are susceptible of the most improved agriculture. For the establishment of emigrants no part in Canada offers such immediate resources of livelihood as may be derived from the fisheries. It is a fact worthy of notice, that in the year 1816, when the lower parts of the province were afflicted with a famine from the destruction of the harvest by frost, no such inconvenience was experienced at Paspébiac, nor at any other place within the level tract above mentioned."

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