

Towards the head of Random Sound it is very rugged, the hill-ranges running out of the water side are cut up by deep ravines, through which flow considerable streams. Upper and Lower Shoal Harbor, as well as Clarendville, are thriving settlements. Although the soil is not very good, still the clearings of the settlers here afford them a good stock of vegetables and hay for their cattle. On Random Island, opposite Shoal Harbor, and again down along the north side of Smith's Sound, the country partakes of a very much better character. The soil, for the most part, is much superior to any yet seen. This district of country has been frequently reported upon, especially in the years 1869-70. In the latter report it was shown that, owing to the manner in which these lands were being squatted upon and the absence of any systematic plan of settlement, all the frontage was being occupied without leaving any reserves for roads; consequently the lands in the rear were rendered inaccessible, and it was strongly urged that something should be done to remedy this evil ere it was too late. During the present season another equally reprehensible practice was brought under my notice by some of the settlers, viz.: that certain parties had succeeded in obtaining grants, or otherwise claimed, all the available land fronting on the shore without apparently any intention of clearing or occupying the same—thereby shutting out many would-be settlers who were desirous of going into the cultivation of the land. These and other similar draw-backs have been the means of effectually precluding settlement on any extensive scale, and it appears to me a matter well worthy the attention of the Government to remove, if possible, all such barriers. There can be no question were such action to take place, and were the rear lands rendered accessible by roads leading from the shore at suitable points, this fine tract of country would soon be occupied. A little industry on the part of the settlers would, in course of a short time, render it a thriving and prosperous locality. The facilities which the Northern and Western Railway now offers for marketing surplus produce could not fail to prove a great incentive to the utilization of all the ground capable of cultivation. The timber trade, fisheries, slate quarries, brick-making, lime-burning, &c., with possibly other industries likely to spring up in this favoured locality, could scarcely fail in time to add greatly to the prosperity of the inhabitants, and render their position a highly satisfactory one.