

## THE LABRADOR AREA.

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INTRODUCTION.—Dr. Dawson in his paper, read before the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club in 1890, estimated the unexplored area of the Labrador Peninsula at 389,000 square miles out of a total area of 511,000 square miles, making it the greatest unexplored area in the Dominion. Since that date we have run exploratory lines from east to west and from north to south through this great area, so that it is now divided into six smaller areas ; and allowing, as in the previous paper, that a line through any region gives a knowledge of the country for twenty-five miles on both sides of it, the total area is now reduced to less than 200,000 square miles. At the least, we can now claim to have a fair idea of the climate, distribution of the forest and *some of the natural resources of this vast region*, and have found that although poor enough, it is not the desolate wilderness of rock and snow which it was popularly supposed to be up to a recent date.

During the past five seasons it has been my duty to undertake explorations in the Labrador Peninsula, and the total length of the surveys through the unexplored area is approximately 3,500 miles, made up as follows:—In 1892, 500 miles ; in 1893, 700 miles ; in 1894, 1,300 miles ; in 1895, 400 miles, and in 1896, 500 miles. Much of this work was commenced far from railways and civilization, so that the total amount of travel in canoes and boats, or on foot, not counting railway or ship transport, amounts to upwards of 8,000 miles.

In 1892 I was assisted by Mr. A. H. D. Ross, and we started from Lake St. John, which is situated about one hundred miles north of Quebec city, at the end of the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway. From there the Ashouapmouchouan River was ascended in a north-west course, some two hundred miles to its head, at the watershed dividing the rivers flowing south into the St. Lawrence from those flowing westward into Hudson Bay.