

sioner of Crown Lands has been enabled to furnish the Company with a definite statement of the area of good lands to be opened up to settlement by the road. By this official information it is now established that within a radius of about forty miles from the proposed location of the road, and around Lake St. John, there are 6,000,000 acres of land, of which 3,000,000 acres, chiefly formed of an alluvial deposit, are well adapted for colonization and farming, and the balance of great value for lumbering purposes.

The immense importance of this territory, and its capability of development may be judged from the fact that the total area of cleared lands in the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, sustaining a population of over 670,000 souls, is only 2,800,000 acres.

#### LEGISLATION.

During the last session of the Provincial Legislature a bill was adopted allowing the Company to make some changes in the location of the road, which had been recommended by the Engineers. A clause was inserted by the Legislature in this bill, limiting the time for the completion of the road as far as the foot of the Island of Lake Edward to 31st December, 1882, or in default thereof cancelling the charter of the Company for the balance of the road. The length of this section will be about 45 miles, so that in order to comply with the law it will be necessary to put it under contract at once, and push the works vigorously during the two seasons which are allowed for that purpose.

#### SUBSIDIES.

Negotiations are now in progress with the Provincial Government, which it is hoped will lead to their subsidy being placed upon a more satisfactory footing; more particularly as this road will run, for almost its entire length, through Crown property, and as roads on the South shore, much inferior in point of construction, have—through the division amongst them of the lapsed subsidy of the Baie des Chaleurs Railway—received a larger subsidy than this Company.

The subscription of the city of Quebec, although pledged to the Company for the entire length of the road to Lake St. John, has so far only been voted by by-law from Quebec to St. Raymond. The carrying out of this subscription for the remaining sections will have to be arranged before the works of construction can be commenced beyond St. Raymond.

Negotiations have been and are being carried on with the view of obtaining from the Federal Government a guarantee of interest upon the Company's debentures. It is hoped that these efforts will not be without result.

During last year, the Contracting Company sent two delegates to London and Paris for the purpose of making arrangements for the capital required to complete the whole line. Although no definite arrangements were made, the most satisfactory assurances were received, that so soon as the financial basis of the scheme is established, by the completion of the subsidies above referred to, the necessary capital will be furnished on very favorable terms. In the meantime the Contracting Company are prepared to push on the next section, so as to complete it by December, 1882—as soon as these subsidies have been voted. It is to be hoped that this will be done before the spring, in order that the working season of 1881 may not be lost.

#### TRAFFIC.

The prospects for traffic upon the opening of the line are satisfactory. Some 20,000 cords of firewood for the Quebec and Montreal markets are being got out, and considerable quantities of other descriptions of lumber are being made.

#### LAKE ST. JOHN.

In August last, Messrs. E. Beaudet, M. P. P., and J. G. Ross, Directors of the Contracting Company, accompanied by the Hon. J. G. Robertson, Provincial Treasurer, the Hon. P. de la Bruère, M. L. C., and representatives of the press, made a visit to Lake St. John, going to the furthest extremity of the district where settlement has been commenced. These gentlemen returned deeply impressed with the fertility and extent of the country and its great capability of development when opened to settlement by means of railway communication.