

HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA, 26th March, 1884.

The select Committee on Geological Surveys met this morning, Mr. HALL in the Chair. FRANCIS BENNETTS, Esq, Mining Engineer, of Ascot, P. Q. was called and examined

By the Chairman:

Q. How long have you been connected with the mining industries of Canada?—About thirty years altogether.

Q. Before coming to Canada had you any experience in mines in Great Britain, and if so, what?—I have gone through every department of mining, and had about eleven years of practical experience in Great Britain.

Q. Will you state briefly your experience in this country? I believe you have had some experience in the Lake Superior region?—I have examined some of the mines there—the Bruce and Silver Islet Mines.

Q. What has been your principal occupation here in Canada?—I have been twenty years in the Ascot Mines, in the Eastern Townships. I am the representative in this country, of the Canadian Copper and Sulphur Company, (Limited), whose headquarters are in Glasgow, but their affairs are managed by John Taylor & Sons, the eminent mining agents, of Queen street, London.

Q. Will you state to the Committee, briefly, what actual mining operations are now being conducted in the Eastern Townships?—There is the Canadian Copper and Sulphur Company (Limited), the Orford Copper and Sulphur Company, the Union Company and Messrs. G. H. Nicholls & Co.

Q. These operations are all carried on very near each other, are they not?—Yes, within a radius of ten miles, in the neighborhood of Ascot.

Q. How many men are employed in these mining industries there?—About 500 hands, boys and men.

Q. What population would that represent?—The population immediately supported by mining there, is about 2,000.

Q. What is the output of the mines there?—From 4,500 to 5,000 tons. It has increased from a few hundred tons to about 5,000 tons a month.

Q. What depth have you reached in your own mine?—The Orford mine is below ours, on the continuation of the same vein. They are down about 1,000 feet.

Q. For the last ten or fifteen years, are you aware that that section of country has ever been visited by any one from the Geological Survey of Canada?—I have no knowledge of any of them being there. I have looked over the reports of the Survey and see no reference to these mines having been examined by the Geological Survey. There is, in the last volume of reports for 1880-81-82, two pages devoted to the copper mines of the Province of Quebec, but they contain no reference whatever to the three principal mines to which I have referred.

Q. How much cash do you think is expended in connection with those mines in the Ascot district?—In the mines that I am immediately connected with and in the vicinity, I should think there was an expenditure of about \$250,000 a year for all purposes, or from \$20,000 to \$25,000 a month.

Q. Please give to the Committee some general idea as to the value and extent of the mineral deposits in the Eastern Townships?—They are simply immense. They are connected with the lower grade ores. The deposits include iron and copper, and there is also what I call sulphur pyrites.

Q. The iron deposits are of vast extent, are they not?—Yes.

Q. And of great richness?—Yes; a very high per cent. of iron ore.

Q. These immense iron deposits have not, thus far, been practically utilized, owing to the difficulty of smelting, and to the expense of getting fuel, but there is no question as to their richness and ultimate value?—No; I should think not.

Q. As to the copper interests, is it equally true that there is a vast amount of copper ore?—Yes; the copper ore is associated with sulphur. What we use is the 3 to 3½ per cent. of copper, but it also contains a large amount of sulphur, from 35 to 42 per cent.