

best lands in the country have already been sold.* With this unexpected and startling announcement before us, we are justified in assuming that the present surveyed lands of the Province on the north side of the St. Lawrence, determine with considerable accuracy the boundaries of the portion likely ever to be settled with an agricultural population, and, until manufactures spring up, they are a rude measure of the future increase in our population through immigration.

Lumbering operations are constantly retreating farther North, and must soon find their limits; but they merely sweep the wilderness of its best forest growth, and do not lead to permanent agricultural settlements if the soil be not favourable. Emigrants prefer to go farther West in search of good land, and if this is not to be found in Canada they must betake themselves to the United States, or to Central British America. We cannot look to mining enterprise as at all likely to lead to centres of population in the back country north of the St. Lawrence, for very many years to come. Iron and copper ores exist in almost unlimited quantities within a few miles of the shores of the Great Lakes or great rivers, and, indeed, in Lower Canada, within easy reach of the Grand Trunk Railway, and they are much nearer to coal, and to markets, than the mineral wealth of the back country.

That part of the valley of the St. Lawrence which lies within the limits of Canada, occupies about 330,000 square miles, and of this portion 280,000 square miles lie wholly on the north side of the St. Lawrence. By far the greater portion of this vast region is intersected with lakes, and "the profusion in which the lakes exist, with, in some instances, only a short interval of land between them, though they may belong to different river-systems, affords with the aid of birch-bark canoes, a ready means of passing from one navigable stream to another, in whatever part an explorer may be; and then, if he is well acquainted with the country, he can reach almost any position he may wish to attain without any very great deviation from a direct route."†

The length of the Province of Canada from Quebec to the Fort William, on Lake Superior, is about 1100 miles, and the greatest

* It is the fact that the best lands of the Crown in both sections of the Province have already been sold. The quantity of really good land now open for sale, is, notwithstanding recent surveys, much less than formerly, and is rapidly diminishing.—*Report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for 1862.*

† Report on the Geology of Canada.—By Sir W. E. Logan, F.R.S.