

as that of the Ottawa country, it may be safely inferred that the whole country is fit for settlement.

But the facilities for a railroad are still more remarkable. From Ottawa to the mouth of the Montreal river, 280 miles, the country, which is well known, presents no serious obstacle. The watershed at the north angle of the Montreal river, 100 miles further on, in lat. 48° 6'; long. 81° 20', and the highest point between Ottawa and (probably) Nipigon river, is only 830 feet above the sea. The ground explored here for 105 miles due west, and to within a distance of 280 miles of the river Nipigon in long. 88° 25', was found to be "most favourable," and the surveys made in the latter neighbourhood and extending twenty miles back from Lake Superior, show the country to be "still more even."

It has even been suggested, that a railroad might be carried in a direct line from Quebec to Nipigon river, along the watershed between the St. Lawrence and Hudson's Bay; thus avoiding 300 miles of frontier line by the existing railroad along the St. Lawrence, and shortening the total distance across the Continent some 120 miles. But there has been no survey of this portion of the country; the length of road to be built would be increased 250 miles, entailing an extra expense of two millions and a half sterling; and besides this very serious objection, and those arising from the absence of population, a more northern latitude, and greater elevation, the Port of Quebec is closed during the winter, thus presenting no advantage over that of Montreal.

Further west, a tract of country between the Nipigon river and Sturgeon Lake, where the rock-formation is Lawrentian, and another nearer the Winipeg river, north of the Lake of the Woods, with numerous dome-shaped hills composed of intrusive granite and syenite, varying from 150 to 200 feet high, might offer some difficulties, besides a considerable amount of sterile ground. But those immediately between Thunder Bay on Lake Superior (where a silver mine of surpassing richness has lately been discovered), and the Lake of the Woods, are not by any means what has been said, or what is still very generally believed. The whole country in this direction was carefully explored in 1858-9 at the expense of the Canadian Government, and a line of communication to Fort Garry laid down by Mr. Dawson, the well-known engineer; by Dog Lake, Savanne river, the Lake of a thousand lakes, the river Seine, Rainy Lake and River, and the Lake of the Woods; in all 499 miles, of which 308 are navigable by steamers. The opening of this line and building of a dam at Dog Lake, were commenced last year, but suspended soon after the installation of the new Dominion. It would, by taking advantage of the lakes and rivers, cost (according to the plan which might be followed), from £50,000 to £80,000, of which the Red River Settlement would contribute a part; and Mr. Dawson calculates, that it would reduce the cost of conveying goods to Fort Garry, to less than 40 dols. per ton from Lake Superior, as against 100 dols. from York Factory, and 90 dols. from St. Paul, Minnesota; besides a saving of 30 per cent. on the value of