

lands, thereby increasing the revenues of the Government and giving a powerful impetus to the great work of colonization, which are the two principal objects I am striving to attain in the administration of this department.

Ideas more or less erroneous are generally entertained regarding the geography or rather the superficial geology of the province of Quebec: because the estuary of the St. Lawrence is bordered by two ranges of mountains, it is concluded that the country traversed by these heights is everywhere mountainous, rocky and barren; and, in very many minds, the notion is rooted that we have no good arable lands outside of the immediate valley of the great river, which does not amount to a fourth of the total extent of the province. I trust that the present publication will remove these false impressions, since it clearly establishes that, between these ranges of hills, there are immense plains, with a soil, to say the least, as rich and as easy to cultivate as that of the great St. Lawrence valley itself, which is designated by our geologists under the name of the Champlain region.

An analysis of the reports of surveys and explorations shows that behind the mountain chain, extending from Cape Tourmente to the Ottawa a little above Hull, there is an immense plain which stretches to the eastward through the valley of the river Matawin to the neighborhood of the St. Maurice. The general level of this plain is not more than 250 or 300 feet over that of the sea and is only broken at rare intervals by small rocky ridges or hills. On striking the region of the Matawin, the general direction of this plain trends towards the north north-east and then continues by the fine plateau between the rivers Trenche and Windigo to Lake St. John, where it connects with that splendid valley bounded by the mountains bordering the Saguenay on the north-east. The length of this belt of level lands, mostly of remarkable fertility, is close upon 400 miles and its average breadth approaches 60, which forms an area of 24,000 miles or 15,360,000 square acres. The region drained by the part of the Ottawa, comprised between the headwaters of that river and Lake Temiscamingue as far as the height of lands, forms another plateau lying 600 or 700 feet

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