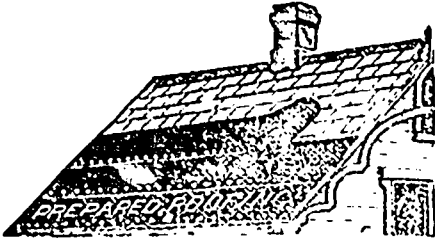


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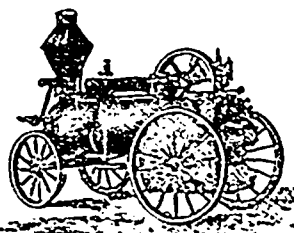
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**MINING.**

THE GEOLOGY OF CAPE BRETON—THE LOWER SILURIAN.

By EDWIN GILPIN, JR., LL. D., F. R. S. C., ETC., INSPECTOR OF MINES.

Read before the Nova Scotian Institute of Science 9th May, 1892.

(CONCLUDED)

On the shore at Long Island there is a good section of these measures exposed, but the beds are so disturbed by folding, vaults, etc., that no estimate of thickness can be given. The following from Mr. Fletcher's measurements at this point will serve to show the general character of the rocks met here.

Sea green, and blue purple, whitish and gray, laminated, calcareous, hematitic felsites, micaceous slates and argillites, one color passing into another, with thin beds of compact felsite and quartzite. Red, orange, calcareous sandstone, alternating with greenish, laminated, micaceous, pitted marl, in contorted rolls, from which the layers may be removed like the coats of an onion. Greenish and blue papery slates, often contorted. White wavy, closed grained quartzite and quartzite sandstone, sometimes felspathic. Mottled fine grained, ferruginous sandstone, arenaceous shale, and argillite, intersected by quartz and calc spar veins. A very common rock is a compact and slaty grey or bluish grey felsite, sometimes calcareous. In places the Pre-Cambrian Syenite has lying directly on it a fine grained felsite, greenish, with glittering specks, and films of hematite. Many of the argillites of this district are comparatively unaltered, and are frequently mistaken for Carboniferous shales, so that explorations have been carried on in them in the expectation of striking coal. Limestone is not abundant, but the beds are at many points decidedly calcareous. At McLean's Point there are many reticulating veins of calc spar in the rocks, which sometimes form compact beds of limestone, having in places a cone in cone structure.

At many points there are conglomerates frequently resting on the Laurentian rocks. They are of various degrees of coarseness, and consist of felsites, syenites, porphyries, gneisses, etc, from the rocks they rest on. It is possible that further investigations may result in the separation of the lower members of this series into a sub-horizon. The present facies of the rocks of this formation and their fossils show their accumulation in comparatively shallow border waters, having a comparatively mild temperature. Presumably the outline of Cape Breton was then as now indicated most strikingly by the comparatively elevated lands of the precambrian, which, together with the older rocks of Newfoundland, protected the Gulf of St. Lawrence and gave sheltered waters for the accumulation of the Silurian slates and marls, some of which we now find comparatively unaffected by metamorphic action.

This set of rocks in Cape Breton has not yet been found to carry any important mineral deposits. Mr. Fletcher speaks of the abundant presence of iron oxide in the rocks between the Brasois and McSween's Brook on St. Andrew's Channel. In one or two places it impregnates the rocks so strongly as to form beds of iron ore which, however, on being traced, proved to become of inferior quality. At one place near McLean's point an opening has been made into a bed of red hematite of excellent quality, and a few tons extracted. Although irregular at the surface the bed appeared to become more defined in depth. On analysis it proved to contain—

Metallic iron, per cent.....	62.50
Silica, " .....	7.82
Phosphorus, " .....	0.9
Sulphur, " .....	traces
Magnesia, " .....	.88
Lime, " .....	.67
Water, " .....	1.10

I am not aware of any other deposits of iron in rocks of this age which promise to be of value. No mineral is more deceptive than iron ore. Its oxide spread in a thin film over boulders in a conglomerate and forming the cement of the mass has often led to the waste of large sums of money. A bed may be met giving the characteristic streak, color, &c, of an excellent hematite, but a further examination shows that, perhaps, a few inches of the rock has been partially replaced by iron oxide, and that often yards away it has only enough iron in it to give a red color.

Traces of copper pyrites have been found at a few points in these rocks, but there does not seem to have been any igneous action paralleling that of the well-known copper fields of Lake Superior, and bringing up the metal from lower depths. It may, however, be found on further search that faults along lines of junction with the older rocks have permitted the accumulation of workable bodies of copper ore in these measures. Iron pyrites is not uncommon in layers of nodules, which at numerous places have made small beds of b iron ore, a mineral not of much value until local furnaces are built. The soil overlying the Silurian strata is generally thin and cold, and in many places stony. Hitherto it has not attracted any appreciable amount of farming except at some points in the Mira River Valley, where presumably the presence of limestone, &c., has given the soil some little superiority.

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