

high and précipitous. Except for this, the Line, which would be about seven miles to South-west Margaree, would be a very favourable one, with light work, and a descending gradient of, probably, from 12 to 15 feet to the mile, which is about the rate of declivity of the river. This route would be also more central, besides its greater directness to the North.

24. Cheticamp Harbour is about three miles long and from 1,000 feet to 1,500 feet wide, with deep water close along both sides. A bar exists at the mouth, but a channel has been dredged by Government and steamers enter without difficulty, and discharge and load at the wharf at "Eastern Harbour." The channel can easily be widened if necessary, as the bottom is said to consist of soft mud and sand. Cheticamp Island, which rises to a height of about 150 feet above the water along nearly its whole length, affords complete shelter to the harbour. At its south end, which is connected with the mainland by a wide gravel beach, is situated the fishery establishment of Charles Robins & Co., of Jersey, whose operations have been carried on there for more than 100 years. Here, vessels load, unload, and ride at anchor outside the harbour during the season of navigation, except in severe storms. Margaree Harbour has, ordinarily, not more than five to eight feet of water over the bar, and owing to the sluggish flow of the river for some distance above its mouth, and the exposed condition of the place to the Gulf storms, it is not likely that a good harbour can ever be made there for large vessels.

Cheticamp and
Margaree har-
bours.

COMPARISON OF ROUTES.

25. There being much difference of opinion with respect to the best route to adopt for a railway line to Northern Inverness, it will be necessary, in order to demonstrate which that is, to make a comparison, as far as that can be fairly done, between the two principal ones that have been proposed and surveyed recently, viz: the "Coast" line, from the Straits of Canso, via Port Hood, and the "Orangedale" line, from that station on the Cape Breton Railway, via Whycocomagh, both reaching Lake Ainslie, and extending on to Margaree and Cheticamp.

Necessity for
comparison of
two routes.

26. The reasons urged for the adoption of the Coast line were, mainly, two. The 1st., "that forty miles of it, from Port Hood coal mines to Chimney Corner coal mines, run along the best coal areas in Cape Breton;" the 2nd., "that it would relieve the Dominion Government of the responsibility of constructing piers and making artificial harbours, which, without the railway, are indispensably necessary to develop the vast resources of the County of Inverness."

Two main rea-
sons for the
coast line.

27. The line surveyed for this Railway, passed close to the Mine at Port Hood. It was not within seven miles of the Cape Mabou Coal Mine, the next Coal Area to the North, though an alternative line proposed, crossing the mouth of Mabou Harbour, may there bring it within

The Surry failed
to reach three
out of the four
coal fields.