

occupying the attention of legislators and of the press, the mineral resources of Canada have, at least previous to the accidental discovery of the Eastern Township copper mines, formed but a rare subject of legislative action or newspaper comment.

When we reflect upon the immense importance attached to iron mining in Great Britain and the United States; when we compute the incalculable value of the annual production of iron in all its different forms by the manufacturers of Sheffield, Birmingham, Glasgow, and other cities in Great Britain, and in the United States, by the artisans of almost every state in the Union; we must naturally conclude that the discovery and prudent development of beds of the same rich material within the limits of this province, should interest and encourage every Canadian who desires the prosperity of the land in which he lives.

With this object in view, we shall proceed to the consideration of our subject, dividing it into the branches laid down in the title of this article.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE IRON MINES OF THE ST. MAURICE TERRITORY.

From the date of the discovery of Canada, by Jacques Cartier, in the year 1534, until the subsequent exploration of its territory by parties and companies from France, during a period of a century, we have but few reliable records, even on the subject of the topography of the central portion of the country. We are informed, however, by the Jesuit Fathers, who have undoubtedly proved themselves to be the pioneers of inland exploration, that in the year 1617, Monsieur de Champlain and Father Joseph (Jesuit) sailed for France, after sending Father Jean D'Olbeau and Frère Pacifique Duplessis to the post of Trois Rivières.

In 1650, Father Dreuilletes succeeded in converting to the Christian religion a large number of the Attikamegues tribe of Indians who lived to the north of Trois Rivières. The first account we can find of the settlement of the post of Trois Rivières is in the years 1617 and 1618. It was found desirable, by the French authorities at Kebec, to establish a central trading port on the St. Lawrence, midway between Hochelaga and Stadacona, respectively named Mont Royal and Kebec. The point selected for this settlement was a densely wooded elevation at the confluence of the great northern river, called by the Indians "Métaberoutin," and named by the French, Les Trois Rivières, with the River St. Lawrence; the latter had given this name to the Métaberoutin river, owing to the peculiarity of its opening on the St. Lawrence. When the French