

scattered birch, poplar, tamarack and maple. The soil of this vast region is mostly sand, approaching, in some instances, to a light loam, but of such a stony and rocky character as to afford but slight hopes of its ever being brought under cultivation.

"The country is well watered by small tributary streams, and innumerable small and large lakes, but their vallies are narrow and limited in extent. The fixed rock is all of a granitic formation, and in no instance did I observe any appearance of minerals or stratification.

"There are no extensive groves of pine in this country, but considerable quantities scattered over the hills, bordering the rivers and lakes chiefly upon the waters of the Bostonais and Croche; much of this timber is sound and good, but, as a general rule, they were faulty, from wind shakes and *spunk knotts*, and more suitable for saw logs than squared timber. If the information I received can be relied upon, the great pine bearing country of the St. Maurice lies to the west of that river.

"The idea that there existed a large and extensive valley connecting the St. Maurice with Lake St. John was quite a mistaken one; the fact is, it is an elevated water shed with ranges of hills dividing the several streams. These hills, which have a considerable elevation near the main streams, gradually diminish towards the height of land, the country rising gently to the dividing ridge and descending in a similar manner on the opposite side.

"From the foregoing description of the country lying between the River St. Maurice and the settlements of the Upper Saguenay, it cannot but be observed that from the broken and mountainous character of the land, and the arid nature of the soil, but slender hopes can be entertained of its ever being made available for purposes of colonization;—many spots of comparatively good land were met with in my exploration, but so limited in extent and isolated in position, that they could not be made available for settlement. The only prospect for any connected or continuous settlement would be, in my opinion, by the valley of the River Croche, where the alluvial along the banks of that stream offer the only advantage for such a purpose.

"Information has no doubt been furnished to the department upon this subject, by Mr. Arcand, P. L. S., whose special duty it was to explore and report upon this river.

"By an inspection of the accompanying plan, it will be seen that my exploring line followed nearly along the dividing ridge, between the waters of the Croche and the Bastonais, and consequently passed over the most elevated ground in the range; it would therefore offer considerable difficulty to the construction of a road, from the broken nature of the ground in the vicinity; but I should think, by following up the valley of the Croche to near the height of lands, and thence either to descend the valley of the Oûitachounish, which was explored by Mr. Arcand, but whether reported upon favorably or otherwise I do not know, not having seen his report upon this section of the survey.

"Of the latter route I cannot speak with any degree of accuracy, not having explored that section lying between the head waters of the Croche and the great Oûitachouan lake; but I have every reason to believe it would be found similar in character to that traversed by the line surveyed.

"In reviewing the object of the present exploration, namely, the opening of a road between the settlements on the St. Maurice and those of the Upper Saguenay, I am of opinion that for at least some years to come, it will not be made available."

JOSEPH BOUCHETTE,
Dep. Sur. Gen.

DEPARTMENT OF CROWN LANDS,
Quebec, 81st December, 1861.