

## DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE.

The length of the Great Western Railway\*, is as follows:

|                                                                                                                      |             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| MAIN LINE, . . . —From the City of Hamilton, through the Town of<br>London, to Port Windsor, opposite Detroit, . . . | 184 miles.  |
| EASTERN BRANCH,—From the City of Hamilton to the Niagara River, . . .                                                | 42 "        |
|                                                                                                                      | <hr/> 226   |
| WESTERN DITTO, —From the Town of London to Port Samia, . . . . .                                                     | 49 "        |
|                                                                                                                      | <hr/> 275 " |

The whole course of THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY lies within the British Territory, and in traversing the most fertile and populous portions of Upper Canada, passes through the Niagara, London, Gore, and other Districts†, containing numerous towns and villages, with a rapidly increasing population.

The importance of such a line for national purposes, as well as for provincial interests, is obvious; and it has ensured the favour and support of the Government of Canada. For, at the same time, that THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY forms a direct Trunk Line for the traffic of the principal towns and districts of Canada with one another, and with the Seat of Government; it will be the main channel for the stream of passengers and emigration, which flows from this country, to the Western sections of the Province, by the way of the St. Lawrence.‡

The principal feature, however, of THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY OF CANADA, as a HIGHLY REMUNERATIVE COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE,—consists in its uniting this character of a main artery for the local and provincial traffic of Canada, with that of a COMPLETING LINK in the great system of THROUGH COMMUNICATION between the North Western States of America and the Upper Valley of the Mississippi on the one hand, and the cities of New York and Boston and the sea-board of the Atlantic, on the other§.

A reference to the map will show, that the vicinity of the Niagara River, at the Terminus of the Eastern Branch of the Great Western Railway of Canada, is the focus of the various communications, by which the traffic of the interior is conveyed to the Atlantic. Among these channels of communication may be mentioned—the Erie Canal,—the New York and Erie Railroad, 400 miles in length, from New York to the Niagara River,—the direct line of Railways from Boston to the same point, 500 miles in length,—and various other lines of railroad, which radiate in different directions through the States of New England and New York§.

Detroit, opposite Port Windsor, the WESTERN Terminus of the Main Line, is in like manner, the focus of the extensive Railway and Canal communications of the North-western States, including Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, and the upper part of Ohio§. A large portion of these important communications are already completed, and in successful operation.

Michigan, for instance, although one of the latest settled and least populous of those States, has already 700 miles of Railway completed or in progress. Among these, a Main Trunk Line of 200 miles in length, in direct continuation of THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY of Canada; from Detroit to New Buffalo, on the Michigan Lake is now open, and has paid highly remunerative dividends, with a rapidly increasing traffic.

The stream of traffic between Detroit and the State of New York is at present carried on entirely by the circuitous and dangerous navigation of Lake Erie, which is closed during half the year.

The importance of this traffic may be judged of from the fact, that upwards of eighty large steamers, averaging 450 tons burthen, and whose estimated cost is £ 1,560,000,—a sum exceeding the estimated cost of The Great Western Railway,—are employed on Lake Erie, in addition to upwards of 400 other vessels, of different classes; and it appears from official returns, that the number of passengers carried, to and from Detroit direct, during the season of navigation in 1850, was 146,000, independent of the large numbers carried beyond Detroit, by the Upper Lake Steamers, which may fairly be estimated at double the number of passengers, landing at, and departing from Detroit.

The passage between Detroit and Buffalo, by first class steamers, occupies, under most favourable circumstances, about 36 hours. But the navigation is suspended by the ice during half the year; while during the remainder, it is liable to frequent interruptions, from the storms|| to which Lake Erie is peculiarly subject. By the RAILWAY, the journey will be performed AT ALL SEASONS in TWELVE or FOURTEEN hours.

There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that the Great Western Railway will at once absorb the greater portion of this traffic, and will become, in connection with the system of railway communication at either extremity, the high road for the traffic of the Western States with the Atlantic.

\* See the annexed Map, No. I.

† These Districts comprise the Counties of Halton, Wentworth, Lincoln, Haldimand, Welland, Norfolk, Middlesex, Oxford, Kent, Essex, Lambton, Huron, Perth and Waterloo. Some evidence of the increase of their population will be found in Note A, at the end of this Prospectus.

‡ See Sketch, No. II.

§ See Sketch, No. III.

|| See Note B, respecting the dangerous navigation of Lake Erie.