

Department of Crown Lands,

QUEBEC, 28th JULY, 1880.

JAMES G. SCOTT, Esq.,

Secretary, Quebec and Lake St. John Railway,

QUEBEC.

SIR,—In answer to your letter of the 20th instant, requesting that certain information be furnished to the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway Company, relative to that section of country traversed by their proposed railroad, I have the honor to inform you that the territory to be thus opened comprises an area of about 6,800,000 acres, which may be divided into two regions, having, with regard to soil, distinct physical features.

1st.—The superficies of that part of Lake St. John and Chicoutimi basin, formed of an extensive and almost continuous alluvial deposit, to be within a short period benefitted by the construction of the contemplated railway, may be set down at 3,500,000 acres.

2nd.—That of the Batiscan region, cut up by large streams and lakes intermingling in their courses, and running in opposite directions: some in Lake Saint John, others in the Saint Maurice, and in the River Saint Lawrence, with restricted areas of alluvial flats, covers an extent of about 2,800,000 acres. Both sections of country being shewn and distinguished by letters A and B on the map of the Province of Quebec herewith accompanying.

Out of the first of these sections, 2,200,000 acres can be counted on as well fitted for colonization and farming. Of the second, about 800,000 acres will be found arable, and that principally along the line of the projected railway.

Up to date, 475,310 acres have been sold by the Crown for purposes of settlement: 387,631 acres in the Lake Saint John and Chicoutimi territory, and 87,679 acres in the County of Portneuf, at the Southern extremity of the Batiscan region; forming, with the 174,000 acres of Siegniorial grants, included in the same County, a total of 649,310 acres alienated.

Up to the present, from the best data which can be obtained, about 180,000 of the 6,800,000 above stated have been cleared, more or less improved, and settled upon; the remainder consists of forests or wild lands, of which 3,000,000 acres are under license or permit to cut timber.

The predominating forest trees covering the greatest part of this extent of territory, are the spruce, tamarac, white pine, cypress, (a kind of pitch pine of a dwarf species), white birch, black birch and cedar. As a rule the spruce is found the most abundant, and other trees in accordance to the order in which they are now given.

Whosoever settlements cannot, on account of the soil, extend over a whole country, as in the Batiscan region, these timbered lands, if judiciously managed, will be found an everlasting source of revenue; as is well established in Canada, that tracts of land covered with spruce, fit for saw logs, can be cut over every thirty or forty years.

I regret exceedingly that the records of this office do not contain information, such as to enable you to form a correct idea of the amount of timber, which in the territory above described, has been, and can be derived from a given area.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed),

E. E TACHÉ,

Assistant Commissioner