

is generally flat and the soil usually stony and liable from its nature to be wet in rainy seasons; nevertheless, certain tracts, once cleared and brought under cultivation, form perhaps the strongest and best soil in the country for hay and cereals. It is possible, since some of these tracts are near the southwestern limit of the Silurian plain just described, that portions of the calcareous material from the latter may have been transported thither in the Ice Age, which, in some degree, they may owe their fertility.

Trees on crystalline belt.

Respecting the forests on the area described, it may be remarked that a difference is at once apparent to a botanical eye when the compared with those of the Silurian area. Hemlock spruce, spruce, white and red pine, and other trees, which are rare altogether absent on the latter, in some localities, are here common forms. Hardwood ridges are less frequent and great stretches of interior hilly country are barren and almost denuded of forest fires. Heath plants are more abundant in the valley bottoms and bogs among the hills.

Soil on Lower Carboniferous.

The narrow band of Lower Carboniferous sediments, which border the main triangular-shaped area of the Middle Carboniferous formation, crumbles down into a rich, friable soil, containing, usually, considerable quantities of calcareous matter. A wide area of the reddish beds occurs in the Tobique valley, and a smaller one on Beccaguimic. In some places the belts are so narrow that they are wholly overlapped by *débris* from contiguous rocks; but, in general, the presence of materials derived from them is easily recognised, owing to their reddish color and their effect upon the fertility of the district. The agricultural capabilities of the Tobique outlier have been much extolled by Gesner, Hind and others. During an exploration of the river, in the summer of 1884, it was noticed, however, that many farms in the district, after having been partly cleared and buildings erected thereon, were subsequently abandoned. The cause of this was not ascertained, but it cannot be denied that, while the region is of a highly fertile character, its remoteness and inaccessibility militate against successful settlement. Portions, however, are flat and imperfectly drained, the result of the existence of a clayey hard-pan forming the sub-soil. Only where the land has sufficient slope to drain it well, are really good farms available, and in localities characterized by a succession of this kind there are some thriving settlements.

The bands of these rocks, stretching along the southwestern rim of the middle Carboniferous basin in York, Sunbury, Kings and Albert counties, comprise tracts of excellent farming lands, which have been described in previous reports.

The mineral fertilizers occurring in them are gypsum, at the Pla