

J. MURRAY KAY, Esq.,

*Manager St. John and Maine Railway,
St. John, N. B.*

SIR,—

Having, by your direction, gone over the line of the Grand Southern Railway. This Railway, as you are aware, extends from the Carleton Branch Railway, about Stephen's Railway, about three quarters of a mile from the Town of St. Stephen, on Village of St. George, it follows closely the coast line of the Province of New Brunswick waters of the Bay of Fundy. This distance is about 46 miles, and the country, for touches the small village of Musquash, where there are two Saw Mills, which, during communication with the adjacent Port of St. John. From St. George to St. Stephen, which would use the Railway is very limited. The milling establishments along the St. George, are nearer the mouths of the small streams on which they are located therefore, to use their natural facilities rather than transportation by Railway. No traffic in the vicinity of St. George are the well known deposits of Red Granite, which are better than the granite of the Maritimes. The market for this stone, however, in the Maritime Provinces, is very limited. The United States will naturally seek water transportation, for which the facilities are good.

In treating upon the work done upon the Railway, it will be necessary to state that the tracks were intended for a gauge of three feet six inches, and that it is now the intention to change to three feet eight and a half inches.

In my remarks with reference to the Grand Southern Railway, I shall refer to the grading, embracing cuttings and embankments, its masonry, the superstructure for cars and for truck-laying.

The alignment embraces an unusual number of sharp curves. There are only two in one instance at least, if not more, a ten degree curve; these sharp curves occurring only at the end of the road.

There is an unusually, and I may add, an unnecessarily large proportion of road expensive to operate, and when considered in connection with the sharp curves, a statement marked "A," of all grades over fifty-three feet to the mile, from which it will be seen that the entire Railway. Of these heavy grades 6 4-5 miles are between 53 feet to the mile, 26 1/2 miles is over 70 feet to the mile, and of these twenty-six and a half miles no less than 15 miles maximum grade of 79 1-5 feet per mile. As in some instances these heavy grades are not necessary, it will be seen at what cost the road will be operated, if it should be completed. It is therefore, and do not favor the traffic probable on the road.

I found the grading unexpectedly deficient. With few exceptions the line is a narrow gauge railway. Many of the longer ones have never been finished, while others are down and along them. In some cases, large portions of embankment have been cut down and along them. In some cases, large portions of embankment have been cut down and along them. In some cases, large portions of embankment have been cut down and along them. In some cases, large portions of embankment have been cut down and along them.

The Rock Cuttings are almost universally narrow. I measured some that were over fourteen. Some of these were on very sharp curves which they rendered dangerous. In some places the material widened before the track can be laid through them. In some places where the stunted furze bushes still standing, and in some other places, notably for some distance, a very large sum of money will be required, in my judgment, to complete the grading and a half inch gauge.

The masonry of the smaller structures such as Box Culverts and small bridges are and unsubstantial. Some of the structures which I saw had already fallen in, and others require to be rebuilt before they would be serviceable. I saw some abutments of masonry nine to eleven feet high above the water line, and on top only six feet wide. The larger structures were built in cement, but I could not tell whether there was a full width of cement, however, where the cement had been entirely washed out, leaving joints from half an inch to one inch wide.

None of the superstructures had been attempted for either the smaller structures or the larger ones. Some of the stringers and bed plates had been delivered but they were intended for the narrow gauge. As far as I could ascertain there was no material for any superstructure of ten feet span, these there were only some half dozen pieces. I have appended a list of open culverts deposited in Government offices, to show the number and length of superstructures of the Howe Truss pattern.

I have also appended a list of Box Culverts marked "C" taken from the ground, however, while others have been added. Some of these on the list have been required.

Preparations have been made for track laying by the delivery of a considerable number of these, however, have been delivered on the line for two years and more for the narrow gauge, they are only seven feet long, and it is, therefore, doubtful whether they will be of any use for the widened gauge. A limited quantity of wood is also being delivered along the line, of considerable material importance.

In addition to those who were delivering ties and cordwood by contract, I saw several engaged in earth excavation, as many in quarrying stone, and four men at work by the Brook.

Concluding these general remarks I may say, that while the traffic of the Railway is of a character, the work already done is far from being of such a character or amount as to justify the expenditure.

I am, Sir, yours very truly

St. John N. B., 18th March, 1880.