REPORTS

ON THE COUNTIES OF

RIMOUSKI, MATANE AND TEMISCOUATA

BY

Messrs. A. BUIES H. A. TURGEON and C. E. DAMOURS

(Printed by order of the Legislative Assembly)

QUEBEC:

PRINTED BY CHARLES-FRANÇOIS LANGLOIS,

PRINTER TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

1890

RETURN

(No. 69)

To an order of the Legislative Assembly, dated the 11th December, 1890 :

For copies of the reports of Mr. Arthur Buies, on the counties of Rimouski, Matane and Temiscouata.

CHS. LANGEЛИER,

Secretary.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, }
Quebec, 11th December, 1890. }

J82807

~~3838~~

THE COUNTY OF RIMOUSKI.

HONOURABLE H. MERCIER,

Premier of the Province of Quebec.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit, in this report, the result of an expedition which I have just made in the interior of the county of Rimouski, for the purpose of examining that region from various points of view, and especially with reference to agriculture and colonization.

I

As soon as we leave the banks of the Saint Lawrence and penetrate even to a slight extent into the interior, the first thing that strikes us is the geological appearance of the soil.

We find ourselves in a country which appears mountainous, owing to the numerous and capricious upheavals of the soil, a country intersected by deep valleys which give it an appearance of infinite irregular, broken and diversified undulations, like that of great waves breaking upon a surface full of precipices and prolonged escarpments.

These mountains, which, from a certain distance, seem to be rather high, are but hills, frequently of irregular shape and rounded, regular ridges containing not a single rock but, on the contrary, a soil very rich in fertile ingredients and covered with forests of the kinds of timber which are most in demand. There are many rivers and water-courses which in most instances seem to flow at the bottom of abysses for they have had to plough deeply through the soil to find a bed and flow either into the River Saint Lawrence or the rivers into which they fall.

There is abundant evidence that the whole of the surrounding soil consists of a thick mass of alluvium, which varies in height and forms, in a great measure, the hills which we see on all sides.

We may add that in the numerous depressions of the soil, sometimes even on the sides of the mountains, we find lakes of all sizes and in such numbers that the observing traveller cannot refrain from asking whence

these deep and tranquil reservoirs have derived their origin and how they have been fed down to our day. Lakes exist in profusion over the whole continent of North America and are especially abundant in our Province.

After the glacial period which covered the greater portion of the globe and which lasted for hundreds of centuries, according to geologists, when the North American continent gradually emerged from under its icy shroud, it appeared with terrible wounds, its ribs forced in, its back broken in many places, its thick crust pierced and torn in its most vulnerable parts. It was in these gaping wounds that the ice remained, was swallowed up and melted and formed the lakes which we now come across at almost every step and to which so many eager fishermen resort.

On the other hand the mass of ice, surprised by the breaking up and borne down by its own weight, was of necessity compelled to find an outlet and to endeavour to reach the sea. Hence the rivers and water-courses which, after centuries of labour, of effort, of repeated attempts to force their way, have cut up and dredged out the soil in the easiest places, throwing out on each side enormous masses of earth, of detritus, of accumulated organic substances, which have formed the hills and apparent mountains we now see. The soil is consequently fertile as a rule and that is why the lands in the interior of our Province, those especially bordering on water-courses, are incomparably more productive than those which border the River Saint Lawrence.

Of course, I do not wish to give this explanation as irrefutable, nor as the only one which can be given for the existence of the phenomena which I mention. But, as I consider it very plausible and as it seems to be borne out by the nature and appearance of the land, I have no hesitation in giving it a place in the report which I send you, leaving to geologists the duty of contradicting or supporting it, according to their respective theories.

The traveller who wishes to reach the rear portion of the county of Rimouski and descends in a direction nearly parallel to that of the river, will take the Saint Anaclet road, called after the parish of that name, situated between Rimouski and Sainte Luce; he will follow that road as far as the fifth concession of Saint Anaclet, will turn to the left and enter the Neigette road, which will lead him to the parish of Saint Donat situated immediately in rear of the parish of Sainte Luce.

During the whole of this journey the road follows, with slight deviations, the river Neigette, which further on falls into the river Metis. Here we find ourselves in the very heart of the hilly and undulating region of which we have just spoken.

The country is so broken with mounds and ravines, that one is tempted to ask how man has been able to penetrate, to make roads and settle in it.

We find houses situated in the most extraordinary places possible. Sometimes there is not room enough on the same mound for both the house and its dependencies; we first see the house on a hill and then the barn in a ravine below, thus discovering one after the other.

The country is so broken that my driver could not avoid saying :
 " The earth dances here, Sir, it is one of Nature's quadrilles." Hill succeeds hill, one's whole time is spent in ascending and descending, and yet these hills are nothing compared to those further back in the new parishes of Sainte Angèle, Saint Gabriel and Saint Marcellin.

On arriving at the village of Saint Donat, the hills recede a little and we enter a valley where the horizon widens and there is more space.

The village is not considerable, but, on the other hand, the land is very fertile. We see the splendid fields of cereals which we recollect having seen in the best sections of the Province; we see attempts at horticulture and every appearance of comfort all along the road.

After driving about eight miles further and having passed through about two or three miles of comparatively wild land, we see before us, on the winding banks of the river Metis, at the bottom of a pleasant valley, the pretty and picturesque village of Ste Angèle, which affords a pleasant change to the eye which has gazed for so long on the broken country through which we have passed. Ste Angèle is the jewel of the interior of the county of Rimouski. Not only has Nature endowed it with special privileges and gifts which make it beautiful and attractive, but its geographical situation has made it a centre from which colonization radiates in every direction.

It is situated on the river Metis, at an equal distance (about seven miles) from two stations on the Intercolonial, Ste Flavie and St Octave. It has on one side the Matapédia road which goes from Ste Flavie to the Baie des Chaleurs, and, on the other, the new road which has been cut this year through the forest, which starts from Ste Angèle, and follows the River Metis till it reaches the large lake called by the same name, twenty-one miles further on. All around the village are hills rising gently, one above the other, which are called mountains and which can be cultivated to half or three fourths of their height.

All the land is remarkably fertile, the grain is long and heavy eared; the crops of oats and wheat are as fine as the yield of hay is good, and one is quite astonished at such a sight in a place where civilization is supposed to have but barely penetrated. But this is an erroneous idea which must at once be dispelled.

In our country the people of the new settlements are generally the most wide-awake and the most inclined to adopt progressive measures. Not being hampered by routine, by tradition, by the use of old fashioned

methods, by the impediments raised by interested persons who are prejudiced and easily alarmed at the idea of any improvement or transformation, they set up a new state of affairs based upon the new processes of farming and the recent progress therein.

You fear that, at the furthest habitations, you will meet with people who have lost all recollection of their former existence or who have always led a solitary and wild life. You imagine that they will be awestruck as you approach them and hardly know how to answer or receive you.

Undeceive yourself. The people consist precisely, with but few exceptions, of those who were most active and energetic in the old parishes. Rather than emigrate to the United States, these settlers have resolved first to try all they can do in the land of their forefathers and they have bravely and hardily penetrated into the heart of the forest. They bring with them new methods and new minds, and we see the settlements they have founded prospering much more rapidly than the old ones, endowed as they are with those modern improvements which simplify and facilitate agricultural operations.

At Ste. Angèle there are at least thirty mowers in use, besides other agricultural implements, and this amongst a population which, barely thirty years ago, was entirely without resources and greatly scattered.

At that time the Matapedia road, which has opened up to agriculture the whole of the valley of that name, had not yet been begun as it dates only from 1863.

At present there are settlements on almost its entire length, and from Sainte Flavie, which at that time was about the furthest inhabited point, to Amqui, the last township of Matane, there are several parishes between the Matapedia road and the line of the Intercolonial. While on the subject of the Matapedia road, we may say that its construction in certain parts was a very long and arduous undertaking. In some places it has cost as much as four hundred dollars an acre owing to the difficult nature of the work in consequence of the configuration of the soil and the obstacles of all kinds which it presented. At the present day it is a long and splendid means of communication and colonization, which has contributed at least as much as the Intercolonial itself towards the opening up of this region.

Not only was the Matapedia road, which preceded colonization, not in existence thirty years ago, but moreover there was no road, not even a path, leading from the shore of the Saint Lawrence to the interior.

Those who had horses and vehicles with them were obliged to ferry them across unfordable rivers upon planks laid across two canoes. They went about at haphazard, selecting land as best they might from

what they could judge of it outwardly ; they settled, without a thought of the hardships and difficulties of the future, on the spot they selected far away from all means of communication, from all assistance and, frequently also, without any definite prospect before them.

This is how it happens that, even in our day, the explorer who penetrates to some distance into the forest, sometimes finds himself unexpectedly in presence of a rudimentary settlement, commonly called a *desert*, in the vernacular of the settlers.

He asks himself how those who live there manage to exist, to communicate with other men and to derive some benefit from their labours. Almost, if not all, travelling is done in winter. The settlers drive their scanty produce to the nearest parish on the ice of the rivers ; in winter they go and work in the lumber shanties and this proves the truth of the assertion, which has only of late been made, that far from being natural adversaries, the settler and the lumber merchant work, on the contrary, for their mutual advantage. The settler, being on the spot, makes the lumberman's work easier, while reducing his expenses, and the lumber-merchant buys the produce which the settler has to sell, pays him for his work and provides for the subsistence of a man whom hardship and discouragement would soon drive away from the soil which he has so arduously cultivated.

It is in these clearings lost in the midst of these forests and which would long remain unknown, if the feverish desire which man feels to disperse and acquire, without delay, the whole of his earthly domain, did not lead him to unceasingly push forward the inhabited or known limits of that domain ; it is in these clearings, I say, that we find the true image of what our country was in its earliest days. We find men contending with everything surrounding them and we thereby learn, by seeing the details, how nations have originated which later have become highly civilized.

Those who, like me, have been able to enter the huts which give shelter to so much patient courage, so much heroic resignation ; those who, like me, have seen what can be done by these unequalled pioneers whom nothing can rebuff, whose daily fatigues overpower without discouraging them, who come into the woods frequently without the most necessary tools, without indispensable articles and who, nevertheless, hew down the forest and find, or rather invent, resources which otherwise they would never have thought of ; those finally who, like me, have been able to contemplate this touching spectacle, know all that is meant by the word " settler " which is so common and so humble that it brings up only an indistinct idea of a cabin in the depth of the woods and a pile of smoking trees around it until some blades of wheat sprout in the midst of the scorched stumps.

Such is the story of each successive clearing or settlement, even in our days when so much solicitude is given to colonization and when so

many different methods are employed to assist the settler, either by special grants, or by colonization societies, which pay the expense of clearing, or finally by means of lotteries like that founded some years ago by Monseigneur Labelle, the apostle of colonization.

It is not the rich man who becomes the settler, but the man who has only his axe and who, with that implement alone, succeeds in opening up wide stretches of forest, in founding new dwellings, new wealth for us, in rendering new countries fertile in which our race may more and more easily increase by conquering more and more soil. The settler is the one who deserves the greatest share of attention, solicitude and assistance from every Government, as well as colonization should be the first and most important point in every ministerial programme.

II

The parish of Ste. Angèle, whose comparative isolation prevented it from developing itself to any extent at the beginning, is barely thirty six years old and it now has a population of from one thousand to eleven hundred. Its farms are splendid. Amongst others we may mention those of Mr François Corriveau, one of those intelligent agriculturists who farm on a scientific system, who learn every day and whose example leads others to imitate them. He has hay meadows and fields of oats and wheat which are unsurpassed by the best in the country.

And yet Mr. Corriveau does not find that agriculture yields in proportion to the trouble and labour it entails.

He says that the market is too far, speaking of Ste. Flavie Station ; that he has to go seven miles to dispose of his hay and grain ; that they do better by selling their cattle which do not cost much and yield greatly, besides the fact that they are sold on the spot to cattle-drovers who come to buy them. This is another example which proves that agriculture properly speaking is not at all lucrative in this country and that judicious stock-raising can alone make our farmers wealthy.

The River Metis, which is nowhere more than ten or twelve feet deep and which can be forded in many places, runs through the whole village of Ste. Angèle and gives it that smiling and picturesque aspect which at once strikes the traveller and reminds him of some of the sites which charmed him most on the banks of the Red River in the northern townships, behind St. Jérôme.

The River Metis flows from the large lake of the same name which is, properly speaking, divided into three successive lakes of equal dimensions connected by passes or narrows. The first is called *lac Supérieur*, the second, *lac à la Croix* and the third, *lac à l'Anguille*.

In order to establish communication between Ste. Angèle and the interior of the region, the Provincial Government, at the request of Dr Fiset, M. P. and H. E. Monsignor C. Guay, A. P., a new apostle of colonization, had a road opened as far as *lac à l'Anguille*, twenty one miles from the village of Ste-Angèle, following, as closely as possible, the course of the River Metis.

Last summer, in the space of five weeks only, Messrs Corriveau and Elzéar Pelletier, who were entrusted with the undertaking, succeeded in making seventeen miles of excellent road and had to give up the work from want of funds after having expended the sum of \$600, which is assuredly very slight in comparison with a work of such importance.

I went over this road and I found isolated settlements such as those I have already mentioned. Hitherto the people living there could only get to Sainte Angèle in winter on the ice of the River Metis, to take their produce down and bring back their supplies.

Most of them are employed by the firm of Price Brothers & Co., who carry on lumbering on the river and throughout the adjoining country.

Although pine has been pretty well exhausted, there still remains a great deal of spruce which the Messrs Price export largely.

About thirty years ago this section was ravaged by fire and the forests burned leaving here and there some giant trees whose trunks can still be seen along the new road which, with the permission of the Premier, we will call the Fiset road. These trees are generally black birch and their companions were fine maples, large bass-wood trees and elms with wide-spreading branches. They have all disappeared and are replaced by a second growth which, unfortunately, will never have the vigour nor the value of that which preceded it.

We are hardly out of the forest through which we have driven for seventeen miles over a colonization road, than we experience a great relief. We breathe freely as if we had emerged from a tunnel and it is with undisguised pleasure that we again see the open country, the long fields with abundant crops and the white houses which appear in the valley.

The next day after a good night's rest and a breakfast at which proudly figured the enormous new potatoes from François Corriveau's fields, and his excellent-houne made bread which was remarkably light and appetizing, we bade adieu to the parish of Sainte Angèle and at once commenced a series of formidable ascents interspersed with almost as perilous descents, in order to reach the next parish of Saint Gabriel over the excellent Taché road which was opened some years ago to enable persons to settle in rear of the old seigniories. Unfortunately no sufficient preliminary surveys were made in order to find a good line for this road, so it has been run through a region full of interminable hills, while if it had

been made a few miles back it would have run for the greater portion of its length over level ground offering every possible advantage to colonization.

As it is now, the road can only be used by bits and that it is the reason why it is so often interrupted between the county of Bellechasse, where it begins, and the county of Rimouski, where it ends. Moreover, in opening this great road in rear of the seigniorial concessions, the fact that it should be placed in communication with the parishes on the shore, was completely overlooked and this is why a great many settlers who went there full of hope for the future came away discouraged and the road, being no longer kept in order, has in many places been abandoned and filled with weeds and wild plants.

After passing several hills, we come almost unexpectedly upon the modest village of Saint Gabriel, situate on a large plateau of very good soil, yielding almost every kind of produce grown in this Province. Far away, outlined against the sky, we see the sharp peaks of the Blue Mountains, a detached spur of the Apalachian range. This chain, which is of but little height but whose deep blue shows out strongly in a clear atmosphere, produces an effect which is striking at first sight, but which afterwards becomes familiar and even agreeable.

Saint Gabriel is a small parish which dates back twenty-five years at the most. Its first inhabitant, *Père Pilon*, lived there quite alone for four or five years. In many new settlements we find these strange characters who, from love of solitude or impelled by a resistless desire to precede all others, have managed to exist, to provide for themselves and their young families, in a state of complete isolation.

This taste is, fortunately, especially remarkable in confirmed bachelors, the enemies of their race, who are on familiar terms with the beasts of the forest which they, nevertheless, hunt to the death. Until quite recently there lived an old bachelor on the slope of one of the steepest hills of St. Gabriel, in a hut separated by deep ravines from the nearest dwellings. He lost courage in the end and the contagious example of the parishioners of St. Gabriel, whose families consist, on an average, of ten or twelve children, induced him to endeavour to earn the hundred acre lot offered by the Government to model fathers. He, therefore, took a wife which had the good effect, amongst other things, of making him give up his hut and bringing him nearer his fellow-settlers.

At St. Gabriel there are still some log-houses, but they are becoming rapidly transformed and even under our eyes. The staple produce consists of oats which are sold to the lumber merchants.

The farmers who do not obtain sufficient produce from their farms for their subsistence, work in the shanties themselves or manufacture saw logs which they sell. Those who derive sufficient subsistence from their

farms are very few. Without the lumbering establishments, living would be very hard to obtain in that region. Fortunately some of the farmers can sell their cattle to passing drovers. It is not astonishing, therefore, that in this parish, which is so young and so little advanced that it would require every hand for farming, there is still a comparatively considerable emigration to the United States. How can it be otherwise? Our fellow-country men are now so numerous in the New England States, especially Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and that they constitute important colonies there, retaining their autonomy, their national character, their distinct physiognomy, their habits and their customs and, moreover, they have their own churches, convents, and hospitals, in a word, another Province of Quebec, transported to the United States, which can, in many respects, replace to advantage the Canada of their forefathers.

A young girl whom I met on the way and who had come to spend some weeks in her native place, which she had left when a child and which she had not seen for eighteen years, replied with an expressive shrug of the shoulders to some questions which I asked her respecting repatriation: "Oh yes, there is no danger. I find it very miserable here. We are so well off at Fall River; there the Canadians are at home, they live altogether, they form the whole population of a town, *La Flin*, and never have any trouble about getting work." (*La Flin* probably means Flint, the name of a small river which runs through the town of Fall River). This is how our French Canadians gallicize English names to retaliate for the anglicizing which afflicts us here.

I may be permitted to insert here some very sensible and very true remarks respecting repatriation made by a man who is a competent judge and who went last year to visit most of the Canadian centres of Massachusetts and New Hampshire:

"The French-Canadians are in a much better position than fifteen years ago. They now form important groups in each town; they have their churches, convents, advocates, physicians, merchants &c., many of whom are very wealthy. Do not imagine that they will consent to work for repatriation. On the contrary, they do all they can against it and endeavour to increase their numbers by inducing their friends to join them. They see and understand that they are gaining influence and that they will soon be in a position to make that influence felt in the House of Representatives. Their priests are also anxious to see them increase in number and influence, so that, whatever may be the pleasure they feel in seeing the Province of Quebec prosper, they will never do anything for repatriation.

"Nevertheless a good many workmen hope some day to return to Quebec with sufficient capital to settle on a farm. But as the majority belong to the poorest class, it will take some time for them to carry out their project; they are not as saving as they were in Canada, there are

many temptations to spend money and wages are low owing to great competition.

“ The young men who were born here and those who came when very young and have been brought up here will, with very few exceptions, never return to live in Quebec. They are essentially Americans and one might as well try to induce Canadians to return to the farms of old France as to induce the former to return to Canada.

“ The number of French Canadians is increasing to an astonishing extent in New England. They have immense advantages over other emigrants. Factory owners invariably give them the preference, their friends here make arrangements for their reception so that when they come, by entire families, they find their lodgings ready and can obtain credit from their fellow-countrymen for what they require during the first months of house-keeping. They obtain work at once ; generally there is a place waiting for them in the factory. Their natural increase is as rapid as in the Province of Quebec. There is no decrease whatever as regards fecundity.”

III.

Before leaving Saint Gabriel, let us cast an eye to our right upon the famous Mount Comis, with an altitude of two thousand and thirty-six feet above the level of the river and with which are connected many traditions which would be deserving of careful scientific investigation ; amongst others that shell-fish, skeletons of whales and various fishes have been discovered on it ; but as these bones could not be found again after several attempts of a more or less earnest nature, the reports remain as tradition but, nevertheless, as constant tradition.

Mount Comis is situated between Saint Donat and Saint Gabriel. By looking at it attentively one soon observes a kind of depression in its crest. In this depression, between granite flanks, lies a beautiful lake from fifteen to twenty arpents in length and of unknown depth. There is no known outlet of this lake, it is supposed that its waters flow through subterranean fissures into a second lake which has been found half way up the mountain. The upper lake has no fish in it at all while the lower one abounds in fish. At the foot of Mount Comis, on the south side, there are seven other lakes which the hardiest and most truthful of fishermen agree upon as being the wondrous home of the finest trout which exist and will ever exist in our Province.

Between Saint Gabriel and Saint Marcellin, the country presents a miserable appearance which it would be wrong, however, to attribute to the quality of the soil. Nearly all the dwellings are log-houses ; very few are of squared timber and a great many have been abandoned. They stand with their doors padlocked, their windows boarded up in the midst

of fields full of gradually decaying stumps, where the primitive vegetation has resumed its sway as soon as man deserted them.

The hills continue and succeed each other with veritable emulation. Far away we see the road ascending still higher and higher and we ask ourselves with dismay whether we will ever be able to reach those interminable heights. We succeed sometimes, but think we have travelled sixty miles. We examine the country but nowhere do we see what is called Saint Marcellin. At last, after passing a road which leads from the Taché Road, on which we are travelling, to the Neigette road, six miles lower down, a road recently opened through the efforts of Dr. Fiset and the last local member, the late Colonel Martin, the first outlet, in a word, which has been given to the Taché road, we see a few dwellings collected around an ordinary house surmounted with something resembling a steeple. This is Saint Marcellin, with its little chapel where the poor settlers meet but seldom because the priest of the nearest parish comes only at long intervals and in fact did not come here at all in the summer of 1890.

Notwithstanding the poverty of the place, the inhabitants do not yet seem too dissatisfied with their fate. They work in the shanties, weave their own cloth, keep their houses clean and when, you visit them, their countenances are beaming and cheerful. The children have an appearance of health and strength which is truly astonishing. I saw two, one from four to six years of age at the most, returning from the woods driving themselves a horse harnessed to a pair of shafts fastened to a freshly cut log.

After a short stay in Mr. Gagné's house, the house *par excellence* of Saint Marcellin, we drove four miles further on the Taché road in the forest and through high grass reaching the horse's chest.

We turned to the right and took the road to Sainte Blandine, the second outlet from the Taché road, which has only recently been opened and completed this year only.

The Taché road continues for ten or twelve miles further in the same condition as before and then it becomes quite impassable. It was in good condition some years ago, but has been abandoned since, because it had no outlet. Now, it is probable that persons will go and settle there again. The forest trees are remarkably tall and flourishing; they are most black and white birch and spruce.

The traveller is surprised with the regularity and firmness of the St. Blandine road cut through the heart of the forest and where there is no lack of hills, to a distance of about four miles from the shore.

The first six miles of the Ste. Blandine road are in the woods, then gradually the *déserts* appear, become larger, increase in number and finally

we come into the open country and the first ranges of Ste. Blandine, a parish situate nine miles in rear of Rimouski and of very inferior appearance when compared with the splendid farms we saw some time before at Ste. Angèle.

Here ends my report as regards this portion of the interior of the county of Rimouski, I will take the liberty of adding one more word in conclusion and I address it especially to you, whose ever active patriotism promises before long to renew the surface of the country and to fulfill its destinies which have long been foreseen, but which have been many times delayed.

When we shall have constructed, between the county of Bellechasse and Lake Témiscouata, a railway which will afterwards be continued to Matane and connect at that point with the Baie des Chaleurs Railway, and when, starting from Gaspé, we shall have built a railway around Gaspesia, touching at Matane and finally joining the Intercolonial, we will have surrounded the whole lower half of the southern portion of our Province with a collar of iron more precious than all the collars of pearls and diamonds, which will be the wealth of many and at the same time a great work accomplished by a Government alive to the importance of its mission and having the will to accomplish it.

I remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

ARTHUR BUIES.

Rimouski, 15th September, 1890.

THE COUNTY OF MATANE.

HONOURABLE H. MERCIER,

Premier of the Province of Quebec.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following report of a special exploration which I have just made in the new county of Matane, with a view of ascertaining the condition of that region generally and, at the same time, the reasons which justify or rather imperatively necessitate the construction of a branch of the Intercolonial between a point on the latter line, either at Saint Octave de Metis Station, or its vicinity, and the port of Matane.

I

I stopped in each of the parishes on the line of the projected branch, I carefully examined the localities, consulted everyone who was in a position to give me the best information, such as the *curés*, merchants and intelligent farmers, and I must say that the considerations which arise from the prospect of this undertaking, which is apparently only of a secondary character since it is only a branch line of about thirty miles, are so important and so numerous that they require a circumstantial and careful statement instead of a mere summary report, such as that which I am to-day obliged to submit, in order to make you acquainted as soon, as possible, with a pressing want.

I will therefore content myself with establishing a basis and setting forth the conditions which are essentially inherent to the subject.

The projected branch will cross one of the finest regions which is to be found in any part of the world, one of the regions most favoured by Nature, a region, finally, which by means of communications and the developments to which they would give rise, would be one of the most prosperous and most productive of the Province. It is barely thirty five years since this region has been settled and already eight ranges of concessions are occupied, new parishes have been formed at four or five leagues from the sea-shore in the vicinity of the Intercolonial and the parishes first established on the sea-shore, such as Sandy Bay, Rivière Blanche and Saint Jérôme de Matane, which are now looked upon as old parishes, have increased to degree unheard of for places left

to their own resources and to the natural increase of the population. When I say "Left to their own resources" I only repeat the complaint which I have heard from the *curés* and merchants of each parish who speak bitterly of the abandonment in which they have been left, purposely to all appearances, by the tory governments which have governed the Province almost uninterruptedly during the twenty years preceding your accession to power, as well as by the local members who appeared in their midst only at election times.

The back-country was completely without roads, without even rudimentary colonization roads and consequently every development, every kind of settlement would have become impossible if the construction of the Intercolonial had not compelled and rendered inevitable the settlement of this part of the country. Without communications a country remains like an embryo in its envelope.

Roads are like the arteries and veins through which the blood flows ; without circulation life is impossible ; the body becomes inert and paralyzed. In like manner agriculture without communications languishes and dies, the farmers leave in numbers ; not only do they find themselves unable to derive the slightest benefit from their farms but they even lose hope, their last support and supreme consolation.

I have no hesitation in stating that it is owing to the absence or insufficiency of communications and of real, efficient solicitude, diligently and carefully devoted to colonization, that we have suffered for so many years from the ever-increasing evil of emigration. When, as I have just done, one sees the great ravages of that evil in young counties like that of Matane, where everything invites the child to remain on the soil of his forefathers, one remains stupefied at the contagious want of intelligence and care displayed by the governments which have preceded yours.

This is not only the material but also the moral consideration upon which I wish to insist in the present report.

Without active colonization carried on with all the resources at the disposal of the Provincial Government, our race may bid adieu to the rôle which it may legitimately claim to play in the destinies of the Confederation ; we may bid adieu to the management of our affairs by ourselves, adieu to love of country and to all the strength, the resources and advantages which an enlightened patriotism can confer upon us.

I was surprised in many places to see the houses abandoned by their inhabitants. Why should there be deserted houses in a country so young and apparently so prosperous ? For, in truth, the farms in Matane are remarkably fine and delight the eye of the traveller with their appearance of fertility. It is because, now that the parishes are established, that the start has been made and each one has assumed his place, what sufficed twenty or thirty years ago for the primitive generation, does not suffice

for the new generation which finds itself isolated, lost in the midst of modern progress and paralysed as it were, even when surrounded by abundant resources, owing to the absence of railways and other means of communication to enable it to turn them to advantage. Obligated to dispose of all produce on the spot, in most cases at very low and consequently at unremunerative rates, the present population is gradually giving up agriculture, the young men go away, every enterprise languishes or dies, and parishes, which had made a splendid start, now find themselves stopped and paralyzed without any remedy and yet we must recollect that these parishes might be amongst the most populous and productive of the Province.

Starting from Saint Octave, the projected branch would, for about ten miles, follow a line and perfectly level plateau, settled for the most part by Scotchmen, who were the first to settle in the seigniorie of Metis and further on by the Canadians who founded the parish of Sandy Bay.

Mr. A. L. Light, chief engineer of the Province, who was instructed in 1888 to survey the line, expresses his opinion as follows, in a report submitted, on the 11th June of the same year, to Hon. Mr. Garneau, Commissioner of Public Works :

" From Metis the line will continue through a comparatively level and easy country, along the immediate vicinity of the Saint Lawrence, to Mataue, passing through the thriving villages of Little Metis and Sandy Bay. The total distance from the probable point of departure, from the Intercolonial Railway, is about thirty miles, in round numbers.

" All through, the country is exceptionally easy, and a good line of railway can be constructed at a moderate cost. The grading would be light and the bridging inconsiderable.

" The land along the whole distance, as far as could be seen from the highway, was generally good and well cultivated, the crops well advanced and no mountains in the immediate vicinity in sight.

" The houses are so numerous directly near the shore that their removal will be a source of considerable expenses ; and it is questionable whether it will not be desirable to fix the location on the higher plateau that exists about half a mile further back. This can only be determined by a survey."

Mr. Light estimated the cost of the constructing and putting the branch line in thorough working order at \$348,975.00, including right of way, wire fences, removal of buildings, cuttings, bridges, culverts, sheds and crossings.

II.

After leaving Little Metis, which is the summer resort of from fifteen to eighteen hundred people, who flock there to enjoy its natural beauties and the splendid climate on the shore of the St. Lawrence, which at that point is nearly forty miles wide, we come to the parish of Sandy Bay and we follow the shore without interruption as far as Ste. Félicité, ten miles below Matane, a journey of forty miles at least. Those who have not made this trip may not believe me when I say that it is impossible to conceive anything finer or more striking than the spectacle afforded by this long drive on the very beach of the St. Lawrence, on a perfectly level gray road superior in every respect to the best of macadamized roads, and which would require the most trifling repairs to be kept in the very best order in the worst of weathers. In going over this road one cannot help feeling grateful to Providence for having created so fine a country as ours and also being thankful for the fact that bountiful Nature gives us so many advantages to seek for and benefit by.

It is undoubtedly in a great measure due to the exceptional facilities offered by such a road on the shore of the St. Lawrence and to the extension of the old settlements that the parishes we have mentioned have been founded.

But, unfortunately, at the present day this is no longer sufficient and unless we construct before long the branch line from Metis to Matane and colonization roads into the interior, the Province runs the risk of seeing one of its finest sections fall into insignificance and decay.

I will now quote the very words of Rev. Mr. D. Morrisset, the parish priest of Sandy Bay, a remarkably intelligent gentleman and one who takes an interest in everything calculated to promote the welfare of the country. He says: "Sandy Bay contains about two hundred and eighty families. It is an essentially agricultural parish, but has no other means of communication than the shore-road and one or two roads leading to the concessions. It is impossible to build a wharf here because we have neither a natural port nor a suitable beach. We might profinably grow cereals and vegetables and raise cattle, but we have no market for our produce. The nearest railway station is St. Octave de Metis, thirteen miles distant. How can cattle and sheep be sold with any profit when they have to walk so far? They tire on the way, are liable to accident from the temperature or otherwise, they arrive at the station exhausted, run the risk of losing value and in any case a whole day must be lost in driving them there and other expenses incurred which take away all the profit, since the farmer is obliged to sell the cattle at the same price as the farmers of the adjacent parishes of Ste. Luce and Ste. Flavie, who have the Intercolonial at hand and sell their cattle on the spot or ship them by railway."

The same trouble exists for the farmers of Rivière Blanche and St. Jerome de Matane, two large and populous parishes whose agricultural development is arrested. The farmers of these three parishes cannot raise cattle because they cannot sell them or because they have to sell them cheap on the spot. We have, therefore, three large parishes which are entirely unable to engage in one of the most important branches of farming.

It is now admitted beyond question that the Province of Quebec cannot enrich itself by cultivating cereals. Our country is an agricultural country, of course, but in its own way; the situation must be considered from various points of view. The Province of Quebec is especially adapted for stock-raising and in this respect, the counties of Matane and Rimouski can undoubtedly be counted amongst the first.

I do not know of any part of the country, where the flesh of beefs and sheep is more tender or succulent than in these two counties; all the travellers who pass through them invariably notice this. Now it is precisely of this branch of farming, which might be so lucrative, that the inhabitants of the river-parishes of the county of Matane are deprived. Fortunately the many strangers who spend two of the summer months at Little Metis, alleviate the situation to some extent. They consume great quantities of meat and the farmers of all the neighboring parishes take advantage of this annual gathering to dispose of at least a portion of their produce; but that is not a market. We may at once state that the number of resident or visiting strangers who go to Little Metis would be undoubtedly be doubled if there was a railway there.

They would spread along the sea-shore between Little Metis and Matane, would bring abundance with them and contribute to a certain extent to arrest the evil of emigration. To them great improvements are already due, such as roads, market-gardening, etc.

Nevertheless, farming has made great progress during the past fifteen years. The inhabitants are mostly all freed from the thralldom of routine; they have educated themselves, have made themselves familiar with new methods and agricultural implements are in use on nearly every farm. The population is laborious and bright, and is only too desirous of going ahead provided it is given the means of doing so. At present the merchants themselves will not buy the farmers' produce because they do not wish to dispose of it or they buy it at their own prices. In the same manner they sell the farmers the grain they require at exorbitant prices: wheat for instance at \$2.25 per bushel of sixty pounds, while in Quebec it costs only \$1.40.

If they had a railway the farmers would procure the grain they require, at town prices. The trade in potatoes alone would make the parish of Sandy Bay wealthy. Well, they sell there for only twenty cents a bushel while they sell at fifty cents, only a few miles away, near the

Intercolonial. This is why the parishes of Ste. Flavie and St. Luce, which are in nowise more favoured by Nature than Sandy Bay, do a thriving business by selling their produce for cash as soon as it is ripe, thanks to the Intercolonial which runs through their entire length. It is even stated that the parish of Ste. Luce produces yearly some hundreds of bushels of potatoes; the same would be done at Sandy Bay and Rivière Blanche, if there was a railway there.

Without its being necessary to refer, for comparison sake, to so advanced a parish as Sainte Luce, let us take for example Saint Damase, quite a new parish in rear of Sandy Bay. Saint Damase makes much more money than the latter because it ships its produce when it likes, because it is only seven miles from a station on the Intercolonial called Saint Moïse. In rear of Saint Damase, and below it in the concessions back of Rivière Blanche the soil is splendid; but to get there one has to pass over five or six leagues of hilly and difficult roads. When once these hills are passed we come upon a fine agricultural region which stretches as far as the Baie des Chaleurs.

Sandy Bay has only had a resident priest for thirty years. In 1860 the first one, Rev. Mr. Dumas, went to reside there. At that time there were only about sixty inhabitants. It is to Mr. Dumas, to the unceasing efforts and the untiring labour of that active and intelligent priest, that we owe the foundation of the parish of Sandy Bay.

Honourable Mr. Justice Tessier told me quite recently that having occasion, some forty years ago, to go to Matane, he had to do the thirty miles between Little Metis and Matane on horseback along the beach and that when he left the shore he had to go by paths barely traced out through the woods. At present Sandy Bay has seventeen hundred communicants, notwithstanding the disastrous depopulation caused by the departure of many young and even old men; the parish of Rivière Blanche has one thousand four hundred and thirty seven communicants.

There is another thing which is of the greatest importance. The north shore of the Saint Lawrence might carry on a very profitable trade in fish with the parishes of the county of Matane if there was a railway to take the fish on its arrival and transport it to Quebec in ice. The same might be done for halibut which are taken in great quantities opposite Sandy Bay and Rivière Blanche, and this would be of great assistance to the poorer portion of the population on both shores. Schooners loaded with fish have crossed from the north to Rivière Blanche and that fish was conveyed in carts and sold along the way as far as Rimouski. But such a thing can only happen once; there is too much risk of the fish spoiling. I mention this fact to show how easy it would be by means of the Matane Branch Railway to establish a local trade between both shores of the river which would also contribute towards retaining a portion of our population in the country. At present the fish taken on the north does not come over to the south shore. There would be nothing to

gain by it and too many risks to run. A cargo would not be brought over without a certainty of its being sold at once, especially in the fall, when there is no time to lose, in going and returning, to escape bad weather.

The remarks respecting fish apply equally to lumber. At Rivière Blanche, a considerable lumber trade is carried on which would be increased ten fold by means of a railway which would convey it away at all seasons without any risk. At present those engaged in that trade are obliged to limit it to a great extent because they can ship their lumber only by schooners and in favourable weather.

The public loss suffered and the obstacles caused to colonization and agricultural and industrial development through the absence of a railway connecting with the Intercolonial are incalculable. One must go on the spot to be able to appreciate it and when one sees it with his own eyes, one cannot help feeling confident that an enlightened Government will not only not put off the carrying out of such an undertaking, but will also promote it with all possible diligence and zeal. In the concessions of Matane there are great quantities of cedar, spruce and white birch, which are utilized to a very limited extent with the exception, however, of birch, which is exported directly from Matane as we will see further on. Thus we would have on the spot the cedar required for ties on the projected branch and there would be a large trade in maple and black birch for fire-wood, a trade which would make the fortune of many people who are daily attracted to the United States.

On the other hand many small local industries could be easily developed whose aggregate results would represent a good amount and which would contribute towards keeping our population with us.

As Reverend Mr. Morrissette says: "By getting a little here and there, we would soon make every one satisfied." Mr. Morrissette has been parish priest of Sandy Bay since 1874. It is due to his repeated exhortations and the vigorous impulse he has given to his parish that it has made such remarkable progress in agriculture since he has been in charge. But at present, although much remains to be done, every effort will be useless without a railway and one of the finest parishes in the Province will be stopped while in full progress.

This can be shown by an example which comes to my mind just as I am about to finish with Sandy Bay. I have already spoken of the potato trade, and I said that the farmers of that place did not even get one half the amount paid to the farmers of municipalities on the line of the Intercolonial. There are also other kinds of produce: oats instead of selling for 55 or 60 cents, as in town, sold for 30 or 35 cents only. Rev. Mr. Morrissette is compelled to sell the proceeds of his tithes at a very low figure to the persons who work in the mills of Matane and Sainte Félicité, so that it is only some local industries in the neighborhood which enable the

inhabitants of Sandy Bay to dispose of that portion of their produce which exceeds their own consumption.

The caplin fishery on the beach and the preparation of sea-weed might yield a large quantity of manure sufficient to fertilize a considerable portion of the county of Matane, but what is the use of taking any trouble about this when at the present moment there is a great deal of produce which cannot be sold?

Let us now proceed to Rivière Blanche. We need not dwell at any length on it, since we would have very nearly the same remarks to make with reference to the lumber trade, agricultural produce and cattle raising. We may however state that there would be considerable trade in lumber here if there was a railway, that the railway would find abundant supplies and great quantities of shingles would be manufactured.

At the present moment a good business is done with the latter, considering that the shingles can be shipped only by schooner, during a very short period of the year and only to Quebec, which is not at all a market for that article. Consequently it is sacrificed. If there was a branch of the Intercolonial passing through Rivière Blanche, shingles, cedar and fire-wood could be shipped at any season to all parts of America, and before long the trade would be increased to three or four times its actual volume.

At Rivière Blanche we have also the question of roads to consider. It is really painful to see to what extent and how culpably, I might say, this fine parish has been neglected in that respect. Until within the past few years, there was but one road leading to the concessions and this was four miles below the church, so that the priest when called upon to minister to the sick, living at a distance of three or four miles in a straight line from the church, was obliged to proceed to the only existing road which I have just mentioned, go up that road, then return by the concession road, making about eleven miles, while he would have only had three or four to go over, had there been a road starting directly from the church as in most other parishes.

It may seem childish, at first sight, to mention such a fact, but this impression disappears when we reflect that this is one of the many characteristic features of the inveterate carelessness, one might say the studied neglect, of the conservative governments in connection with everything affecting colonization and agricultural progress in the Province.

Roads used to be commenced in many places, a certain number of men were set to work who were kept at hand as electoral instruments, only the quantity of work was done which was required to keep up the good feeling, and the hopes of the various localities, roads were opened at random, more by favour, by privilege or from political motives than to meet the wants of colonization. The result was that localities which were only beginning their existence, which had been lured by the most

magnificent promises of colonization roads during election times and which were afterwards abandoned to their own resources, found themselves rapidly deserted by their first settlers or reduced to wait in poverty and servitude for the completion of the miserable roads commenced some time before.

While on this subject I cannot lay too much stress on one important point and that is that, with our modest provincial resources and the impossibility in which we find ourselves of opening all the necessary means of communication, we must absolutely confine ourselves to making and especially to completing a certain number of roads rather than commence a greater number to please more people and satisfy more exigencies and then be compelled to leave them uncompleted. The completed roads, at least, are of use where they are made, while commencements of roads are useless everywhere and do nothing but cause discontent amongst the population of the newly settled parts of the country.

III.

We have now reached Matane, one of the most remarkable places in Province and certainly one of those whose future is the most promising and assured.

The traveller, on arriving at Matane, on observing its port, the river which falls into it, the numerous and extensive buildings in the village or rather the small town, the large stores, the saw mills, the animation which prevails everywhere, the enormous piles of deals on the wharves ready to be transported in lighters to the ships anchored in the offing, on observing, I say, this spectacle to which he has been unaccustomed since he left the large and populous centres, he asks himself how it happens that such a place should still be so far from railway communication and his mind naturally reverts to the Provinces of Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, where many places, which some years ago were lost in the forest, but situated where the spirit of enterprise and an intelligent forecast of the future held out well founded hopes, are now provided with branch lines putting them in communication with the principal cities and find their population increasing to such an extent as to make them towns of the third or fourth order.

We see before us an important town of the future. Jacques Cartier, on his third voyage to Canada, had remarked and especially mentioned the port of Matane. Afterwards, Captain Bayfield, who took soundings in all the waters of the St Lawrence and who compiled charts which have since been used by all navigators, stated that on the south shore there were only two sea-ports, at Matane and at Bic; the latter is dreaded by seamen because in ten and fifteen fathoms of water there are enormous boulders which are a source of great danger, while there exists nothing of the kind at Matane.

It is true that there is another place, Mont Louis, much further down on the Gaspé coast, but the mere sight of this port to which the Shickshock chain runs down in formidable capes and promontories is sufficient to repel the hardiest seamen. Therefore, only the port of Matane remains. Open a chart and you will at once observe that the natural route of ships coming up from the Gulf and which invariably steer for Pointe-des-Monts is from the latter point to Matane.

In 1878, the McKenzie Government undertook the construction of an immense jetty which would have made a remarkable port of Matane, a port of shelter where vessels could put in and obtain supplies, a port for river and ocean trade which would have served for the whole of the Lower St. Lawrence and the immense peninsula of Gaspesia. Unfortunately this undertaking was not carried out, after nearly four hundred feet of the jetty had been built, as, on the fall of the McKenzie Government, the work was discontinued, no one knows why.

The current of the Matane river is very swift. It carries down with it great quantities of sand which it heaps up at the mouth of the river so as to form a bar. A little inside the bar the Messrs Price have built a wharf for shipping their deals to the vessels at anchor. Between this wharf and the jetty there is a space of about eight hundred feet which would have to be filled up to unite the two wharves, so that the current, confined between the shore on one side and the jetty on the other, without a break, would be rendered still more rapid and carry the sand much further out, or it would so scatter it that the bar would be formed at a greater distance and in deeper water.

The Federal Government has recently sent two engineers on the spot to ascertain whether the interrupted work should be resumed. It is intended, it is said, to add one hundred and fifty feet to the first section of the jetty but this cannot be productive of any lasting result or change the present state of things to any extent. If the Matane River were utilized as it might be, if the country were developed on a large scale, it would offer unique advantages. It is the only one which affords a passage through the Shickshock chain of mountains, so that by following its course we might open up a wide colonization road or in time build a railway from Matane to the Baie des Chaleurs. Moreover, by means of this river and the chain of lakes to which it gives access, one can go as far as Gaspé Bay itself.

A road of any kind into the interior through so vast a country where merchantable timber is to be found in incalculable quantities and where the soil, especially beyond the Shickshocks, is of a great fertility, would completely alter this region and make it one of the most productive in the country. It is needless to say how such a result would be obtained; there are some things which are self-evident and with reference to which it is mere childishness to enter into details.

By means of a branch line connecting the Intercolonial with the port of Matane, we would greatly develop river navigation, decrease the distance which separates this port from the great centres and give to the whole region of Gaspesia, and even the north shore of the Saint Lawrence an industrial and agricultural development hitherto unknown. We might also, and with reason, make Matane a port for shipping cattle to Europe. For that purpose, extensive pastures could be obtained in the neighborhood where the cattle could remain some days and be shipped to Europe quite rested from their fatigues and in perfect health. Finally, thanks to the improvements made to its port, Matane would become a stopping place where transatlantic steamers would take or leave the mails, and as Matane is sixty miles from Rimouski, there would be gain of three or four hours in sending and receiving the mails. All the captains of Ocean steamers who anchor off Matane, are unanimous in saying that the construction of a branch railway leading to it would bring about the making of a harbour, the prolongation of navigation to the month of December and its opening before the end of March.

At Matane there are, besides the saw-mills and mills for cutting spools, which are shipped direct to Europe, some other industries, such as tanneries, a spinning mill, &c., to which the construction of a railway would give a great impetus.

Apart from these considerations, there is another which is also of great importance; I mean Matane as a watering-place. Every summer there would be sure to be a great influx of visitors, as the place possesses every attraction one can imagine and all the advantages required even for a lengthened stay, bathing, fishing, driving, boating on the Saint Lawrence or on the Matane, in a word everything calculated to attract and keep the people from the cities.

This is assuredly not a consideration to be overlooked, even as regards only the profits which the projected branch line would derive therefrom, besides the fact that the accomplishment of what I have just mentioned in detail would not only impart new life and an extraordinary development to the whole of that section of the country, but would also contribute above all to keep our people with us, which is the first object we have in view.

At present, although there is still too much emigration from Matane, there is less to complain of there than in other parts of the county, because fortunately there are local industries there which keep a good many people employed and if, nevertheless, far too many still leave, about an equal number return and the evil is fought step by step.

The chief industry of Matane is lumbering and the timber consists principally of cedar, spruce and white birch. Of the latter spools are made, which are shipped direct to Europe.

There are two mills at Matane for that purpose. There are others, ten miles lower down, at Ste. Félicité; further still, and as far as Ste. Anne des Monts. Messrs Russell & Co., who own one of the two mills at Matane and Ste. Félicité, have others at Cap à la Baleine, Sam's Creek and Cap Chat; Mr. Charles Bertrand has mills at Capucins, Marten River and Ste. Anne des Monts, where Mr. Théodore Lamontagne also has some.

The birch is got out of the woods in the winter and sawn in the spring, for, when once the month of July is passed, it "sours" as they say in Matane, the ends turn blue and it deteriorates greatly in value. Therefore it can only be exported early, in the absence of a railway, or it must be shipped early in schooners, which is altogether insufficient.

The Messrs Price manufacture a considerable quantity of spruce deals for exportation; also a good deal of cedar and a comparatively small quantity of pine.

Cedar is the timber chiefly dealt in by the merchants of Matane. Mr. Joseph Levassieur, one of the merchants of the best standing in the place told me that last year he had made seven hundred dollars worth and that the other merchants had made about as much. But this timber has to be shipped in schooners which is one of the reasons why this trade does not develop as it is a source of delay and deteriorates the value of the article.

About the middle of summer, it sometimes happens that there is a fall in the market and one half of the manufactured cedar remains on the hands of the merchants until the following spring, after having lost a good deal of its value from exposure to the weather and other causes.

It is calculated that last winter about 125,000 feet of cedar were cut for the local trade and from four to five millions feet of birch for exportation. If there was a railway there would be at least three times the quantity of cedar cut. At present, the Matane merchants, who do a comparatively good business but who, after all, are not millionnaires, are obliged to make heavy advances of provisions and materials to the men who work in the shanties in the autumn and winter, and then have to wait until the following summer before they are repaid. It is therefore quite evident that if they could ship their cedar in winter, or sell it on the spot, they would do very much better. The Matane merchants also get out a great deal of square spruce, forty feet average, which they ship to Quebec, in schooners. The spruce must be sent up in the spring, otherwise it loses value like the cedar. The same may be said of shingles which might be exported in unlimited quantities; but they have to wait until summer and then the trade is very limited as there are only four schooners at Matane suitable for carrying timber, to say nothing of the obstacles and delays caused by a bad season and the many other difficulties in the way of river navigation.

The result of all this is that Matane, notwithstanding the activity of the population and its local industries, is placed, owing to the absence of

a branch railway, in a very inferior position compared with other places equally well situated in the other Provinces.

In rear of the village and to a long distance inland along the river, stretches a narrow valley which might contain ten parishes; there are only two at present because the farmers have no market for their produce or for their lumber. If they could be sure that they would reap benefits proportionate to their labour, they would pay cash for all their purchases; local trade would be greatly increased; stock raising would become a source of wealth; spinning mills would be established and with the assistance of the harbour works, the population of Matane, which is very wide-awake, intelligent and active, would have occupation and realize profits throughout the year; not only would it be no longer impoverished and reduced by emigration but it would increase rapidly and to a considerable degree.

Here also potatoes sell for only twenty cents a bushel, while they sell for fifty and sixty cents along the Intercolonial and notwithstanding all this, the inhabitants of Matane make some money on them. What would happen if they could sell them for three, four and even five times the price as is done at Ste. Flavie and Ste. Lucie?

While I was at Matane, I was given one instance, among a hundred others, of the natural wealth which abounds in the country and which, if suitably utilized, would form a considerable aggregate. The country behind Matane contains a number of lakes most of which are full of fish. Last summer three fishermen went to lake Taonagadoc, twenty five or thirty miles back from the River St. Lawrence, and returned with one hundred and nine dozen of large trout caught with the rod in the space of three days. They filled nine large sacks and sold them along the road, as far as Rimouski, sixty miles away.

This instance is, of course, not of very great importance, but it forms one of many which are, in the aggregate, of great importance and it is not inadvisable to add to more weighty considerations certain others of a secondary nature, calculated to show the public what unemployed, disdained and even unknown sources of wealth are possessed by our country, decimated as it is by a plague which governments themselves have often done their best to spread.

I have now finished giving in detail the many decisive reasons in favour of constructing, as rapidly as possible, a branch railway from the Intercolonial, between St. Orlève de Metis and Matane. Notwithstanding the repeated efforts of Dr. J. B. R. Fiset, the member for the county in the House of Commons, and a petition signed by at least one half the members of Parliament, both conservatives and liberals, the Federal Government has invariably turned a deaf ear and has not hitherto thought proper to do more in favour of the Matane Branch than to acknowledge, on the

28th February, 1890, the receipt of the memorial presented by Dr. Fiset and of the petition accompanying the memorial.

You alone, Sir, recognizing at once the importance of such an undertaking, after reading a very summary statement of the facts submitted by the member for Rimouski, on the 21st May, 1888, resolved to give every possible support to the project and got the Legislative Assembly of Quebec to vote a subsidy of ten thousand acres of land per mile, to the company organized for the purpose of constructing the Branch Line.

I think, I may say, that one of the patriotic projects, which is uppermost in your mind, is the construction of a railway around the Gaspé Peninsula, in the section most favorable for colonization, that is to say, at some distance from the shore on the other side of the Shickshock and Notre Dame ranges of mountains. Now, the Matane branch would be the starting point of the Gaspé loop-line.

As I have already stated, the best or rather the only pass through the Shickshocks is that afforded by the Matane river. By means of this pass and when once on the southern slope of the Notre Dame Mountains, a loop-line might be built almost in a straight line to Gaspé Basin, thence run around the peninsula and connect with the Baie des Chaleurs Railway. This would not prevent the Matapedia valley being placed in direct communication with the loop-line by a branch line from near Trout River, to Amqui, or Causapscal, on the Intercolonial.

Beyond a doubt, we will before long see this idea carried out. By increased communications not only will our country assume a new aspect, but the spirit of the population will assume a new nature, will find itself impelled by a powerful impulse and be animated with an unknown energy.

I hope that the reading of this report will contribute to some extent, howsoever small it may be, to the accomplishment of the projects which you have generously assisted, while at the same time it will, in exchange, assure you the gratitude and support of a numerous and vigorous population.

I have the honour &c ,

(Signed) ARTHUR BUIES.

Rimouski, 5th October, 1890.

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

REPORTS ON THE COUNTIES OF RIMOUSKI AND MATANE.

HONOURABLE MR. MERCIER.

Premier of the Province of Quebec,

Sir,

The advanced state of the season, the frequent rains or premature cold weather, accompanied by heavy fogs, which spread over the country, hiding it from view, prevented me from completing this year the study which I had undertaken of the counties of Rimouski and Matane.

I set out three times to visit the upper portion of Rimouski, in rear of the parishes of St. Simon and St. Fabien, and three times I was compelled to retrace my steps, owing to the impracticable condition of the roads and to the fact that the bad weather made it impossible for me to examine the localities.

Nevertheless, these three attempts, however disagreeable and rather expensive they may have been, were far from useless and have afforded me still further information. Our country is so little known, especially to ourselves, that places which are comparatively near seem to be so many discoveries made at each step we take. This is inevitable in a young country where new parishes, new missions and new groups of settlements are founded every year, but it is none the less true that we are wanting in the essential elements, the necessary geographical basis for guiding the traveller who wishes to study and examine with advantage the regions which he visits. He is obliged to rely upon the information, mostly of a very vague nature, frequently incorrect and contradictory, which he gathers as he passes.

The surface of the country having as yet been only imperfectly studied, there being no monographic maps, he finds himself without a compass and without a base. He has to create everything for himself as he advances, correct even the information he obtains and make a personal map, which has the great defect that it cannot be followed by the reader. Expeditions such as those I undertake should be conducted to a certain extent in a scientific manner, so as to present as many distinct and accurate monographs of each region and each county, but it is impossible with our present resources to think of carrying out so extensive and perfect

a plan ; we have to content ourselves with setting forth, with every possible attention and care, whatever we may see and to do the best we can for the preparatory instruction of our fellow countrymen.

You may have observed in my previous reports the importance and the future prospects of the two vast counties of Rimouski and Matane, and still they are as yet but very imperfectly known ; there are still vast extents unexplored and which remain a dead letter not only to the public but also to men who study. We do not require to go back beyond the present century to find the origin of the oldest parishes of the county of Rimouski, the oldest of the two. I recollect when the parishes of St. Simon and St. Fabien, which are now so flourishing and so populous, had not even a cart-road between them. To go from one to the other, one had to make a *portage*, like between two lakes, and people who ventured into that still primitive and uncultivated region were obliged to go six miles on foot through the woods over a corduroy road through a swamp full of sloughs. Only heavy carts were used, out of which a portion of the baggage had to be taken and carried on one's back, often even the horses had to be unharnessed so as to take them and the carts by less swampy paths, and when, after much labour and hardship, the first houses of the two young parishes were reached, the day was spent and one thought only of resting. At present the swamps and sloughs have disappeared ; a fine road runs through this region which was formerly unapproachable ; farming is everywhere fully productive ; the fields succeed each other without interruption and one might fancy himself in the midst of the oldest settled parts of the country.

Quite close to the road runs the Intercolonial Railway, which enables the farmers to ship their produce at once and in rear are five or six ranges of concessions connected with the main road by various colonization roads.

New parishes have been established in the interior and at certain points, between the counties of Rimouski and Temiscouata, we find parishes which extend nearly to the frontier of New-Brunswick. They are easy of access, although the country looks mountainous, but as we have already stated, properly speaking there are no chains of mountains on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, but merely elevations, more or less high, which can easily be ploughed. We must, however, except here and there some spots where Nature has indulged in astonishing freaks and where it has left that mark of fantastic grandeur and formidable appearance which is peculiar to our country. Thus, the parish of St. Fabien, where we now are, has hid itself from the view of the River St. Lawrence and looks as if protected against it by an enormous mass of rocks, five or six hundred feet in height, which border the shore and fall perpendicularly into the river in the most varied and striking forms, and which for that reason are called the " Walls of St-Fabien." Whoever has not seen these walls does not know one of the finest granite formations in the country and yet no description has been given, no mention made of them, except

in a report accompanied by descriptive plans formerly drawn up by Mr. Michaud, an engineer in the service of the Federal Government. Unfortunately, this report and the plans were destroyed in the fire which consumed the Provincial Library in 1883, and we have thus lost the only document containing technical and positive information upon what we might call one of the phenomena of Canadian Nature.

This enormous mass of granite rocks piled one above the other, cuts abruptly across the line of country which follows almost without interruption on the south shore of the river. It would seem as if the whole efforts of the eruptive phenomena, elsewhere contained and held back on the shore, had concentrated at this point and caused the explosion, casting up from the bosom of the world everything which oppressed and retained it. When, in sailing down the river, we observe this formidable array of rocky titans which seem to present an unassailable line of battle, we cannot avoid a mysterious dread, that overpowering shrinking of the soul which we feel at the foot of high mountains which overtop us, crush us with their height and seem to attract us beneath their mass. We feel as if unable to penetrate or even approach them. Where can there be an accessible beach at the foot of those savage mountains, those perpendicular, frowning and threatening cliffs, enveloped in impenetrable shadow? Is there a place where man can freely set foot on that apparently invisible shore? But when we get over this first impression, the first feeling of dread and the desire to get away and when we dare to approach, the most agreeable and pleasant surprise awaits us. Partly veiling their wild appearance, the mountains seem to welcome and offer a refuge in their many bays and creeks; the graceful form of their bays, their bright smiling shores lighted by a summer's day, resplendent in their adornment of green verdure, offer the most attractive of contrasts; one might almost say that they are children's smiles on monsters' faces.

The innumerable inequalities of the soil give rise to the most startling surprises, the most varied and unexpected of picturesque aspects. Far from being inaccessible, the shores slope down gently and harmoniously under our feet; behind them are sometimes outlined slight ridges like the earth's swollen veins; these are hillocks only a few yards in height, of admirable design which offer their rounded summits for man's residence and lend themselves with the greatest docility to cultivation. At other times the mountains, leaving calm and wide intervals between them, allow the land to extend freely and form small fields in which a few isolated men living by fishing and a little agricultural labour have already ripening crops. A fine road runs along the shore following its innumerable windings, each of which suddenly presents a new spectacle; sometimes there are islands abruptly rising from the bosom of a little bay till then hidden by the broken nature of the ground; sometimes there are enormous capes which look as if they had been violently thrown up from the womb of the earth and which have not yet been perceived. These capes, amongst others Cap à l'Original, celebrated amongst seamen, can be seen from far off on the river; they assume the shape of a

semi-circular line of knolls, each one more bristling than the other, but from the land they can be seen only when they seem to be on the point of crashing down on us. In the very bowels of this formidable fringe of mountains, which from afar seems to have no break nor variety of aspect, Nature has excavated a bay, the most admirable, the most perfect, the most attractive in its wild and picturesque grandeur which the eye can contemplate. This is Ha ! Ha ! Bay which no doubt owes its name to the cry of admiration which burst from the lips of the first men who saw it. This bay is nearly a mile long by half a mile wide. It is perfectly wild and uninhabited, although it offers the safest and most charming of shelters.

Beyond the shore, the mountains which have opened to let it pass, do not close again ; on the contrary, they leave a wide space between them which extends to another shore further away. Here are the finest fields and the most picturesque dwelling places of this strange corner of the earth. The whole of this space is remarkably level, with only a slight hill which seems to have been placed there expressly for the purpose of receiving picturesque country houses and of giving their inhabitants a more extended and fuller view of the surrounding scenery. One is tempted to think that this space was formerly covered with water, but let us leave this hypothesis to geologists and let us say, in the words of a simple traveller, familiar with the natural beauties of his country, that there is no better place for a summer residence than Ha ! Ha ! Bay, in St. Fabien, which is as yet so little known and which is nevertheless so deserving of praise. The name of Ha ! Ha ! Bay has been extended to the whole region which we have just described and people generally say that they are going to Ha ! Ha ! Bay and not to the Walls of St. Fabien.

This is a drawback, because travellers and American tourists are much more familiar with Ha ! Ha ! Bay, in the Saguenay river and which is much larger but not nearly so picturesque as that of St. Fabien.

When once the latter is known, it will become a favorite summer resort. Some families have come to reside there within late years, but its distance and the difficulty of communication have prevented them from returning. From the St. Fabien main road to Ha ! Ha ! Bay there is only a rough, steep and rocky road. Two vehicles cannot pass each other in it and it is difficult for even a single vehicle to proceed without accident down the hill, filled with boulders, which leads to the beach.

There has lately been some talk of building a branch railway from Bic Station, at Bic, the parish nearest to St. Fabien, to Ha ! Ha ! Bay by following the sea-shore for a short distance. This project will, I believe, be carried out before long. It was our duty to inform the public of one of the most enchanting sites in our country, to induce families who desire above all to enjoy our Canadian scenery in its finest and grandest aspects to go there and we seized the opportunity to give a description of the place and thereby enjoy a pleasant change from our professional duties.

The two parishes of St. Fabien and St. Simon form the upper portion of the county of Rimouski. In rear of the latter is the interesting parish of St. Mathieu, founded only twenty-four years ago and which seems to have a brilliant future before it, owing to the excellence of its soil, the beauty of its site, its extensive quarries of red stone which are only just commencing to be worked and, finally, to the beautiful lake which crosses it through almost its entire length, which has for many years been celebrated as one of the finest lakes and one most abounding in fish of the whole Province. It seems to be inexhaustible and might easily be made a profitable means of providing subsistence for many people. Lake St. Mathieu empties into the South-West river which in its turn falls into the St. Lawrence at Bic, after a very capricious course of about twenty miles navigable without interruption. This parish is remarkable for the fertility of its soil, its situation and its peculiar features which seem full of vigour and originality. Whoever has seen Lake St. Mathieu will long remember it, for it is one of those which leave an impression on the mind which becomes more and more defined with time; such are also Lakes Temiscouata, Temiscamingue, Archambault and finally Lake St. John. Their aspect pleases us and when no longer before us, the mind reverts to them with pleasure and gladly dwells upon the picture they present.

Notwithstanding all these advantages, the parish of St. Mathieu has not made rapid progress. This is due to the plague of emigration which decimates our country parts from one end of the Province to the other. Nevertheless, the plague has a tendency to diminish a little in the parish of St. Mathieu. Its present population is nearly one thousand souls, but unfortunately the young men care less and less for agriculture. They prefer to work in the factories; they go far away and the parish deprived of its most robust elements, can only increase slowly and does not develop in proportion to the many advantages it enjoys.

THE TEMISCOUATA REGION.

I

Let us now proceed to another place in the immediate vicinity of where we now are, but one of far greater importance and whose progress is such that we will see before long in a region still comparatively deserted, a new province arise incorporated in the old one just as at Lake Temiscamingue, at the present, time and Lake St. John in years past. I mean the back country of the county of Temiscouata, which for a long distance borders on the Province of New-Brunswick and almost touches the State of Maine.

The county of Temiscouata occupies a large portion of the public domain. It has seen, on the shore of the river, a place come into existence and increase in size which, from its geographical position and the combination of circumstances, is destined to become a commercial town of the first order. That place is Fraserville, still also called Rivière-du-Loup, from the name of the river which runs through it in a succession of cascades.

For a long time there were no settlements in Temiscouata in rear of the old seigniorial concessions, but, since the building of the Intercolonial Railway and especially since a large population of French Canadians has settled on the River Saint John, which separates New Brunswick from Maine, an almost uninterrupted communication has been established between the interior of the county and the shore. The two portions met each other half way, the Canadian parishes on the Saint John River endeavoring to increase their relations with Rivière-du-Loup and the latter on its side seeking to stretch further and further backwards as the wants of colonization required. These mutual efforts to obtain uninterrupted communication soon gave rise to the settlement of several small groups in the most suitable spots. These groups now constitute parishes to the number of seven or eight, which extend, with slight intervals of course, between Fraserville and Edmundston the county town of the county of Madawaska, in New Brunswick. The development of the Temiscouata region will increase still more now that the new railway between Fraserville and Edmundston has come into operation. It is not that the new parishes along the line can contribute very much to the development of the region, for these parishes are not very remarkable for the fertility of their soil and their prospects are limited, but this new Temiscouata Railway brings the whole country in direct and daily communication with New Brunswick and the United States.

More than half a century ago, the Imperial Government wishing to forward its troops as rapidly as possible in winter from Halifax to Quebec, had a military road opened which was for a long time the only means of communication through the forests of Temiscouata to New-Brunswick. At the same time the troops were cantoned at different stations along the road, amongst others at a place called Fort Ingall, six miles from Lake

Temiscouata, where the remains of a building are still to be seen, in which one hundred soldiers were stationed, while one hundred others were at Ste. Rose du Dégelé, at the other end of Lake Temiscouata. The Americans on their side erected barracks forty miles further at Fort Kent at the place where Fish River falls into the St. John River. This state of affairs lasted until 1842 when Great Britain, by the Ashburton treaty, ceded to the United States a considerable portion of New Brunswick on the south bank of the St. John River. Not only were posts established here and there along the road, but the Canadian Government lodged some families there to whom it gave a certain quantity of provisions, just as it now does in the various light houses on the St. Lawrence. Travellers from Canada to New-Brunswick, and *vice-versa*, stopped at these posts where they eat and slept on payment of a small amount and even did not pay at all when they brought their own provisions.

Antoine Dumont, the oldest inhabitant of this region who made the first clearing at Ste. Rose, in 1837 is one of those who used to keep these posts. For a long time his was the only dwelling at the place now called Ste. Rose. His nearest neighbour lived in a cabin nine miles away. Twelve miles further, lived one George Doll, whose chief duty was to mark out with trees the winter road on Lake Temiscouata so that the postman who carried the mail every fortnight and travellers should be able to find their way.

The old military road was roughly made through the forest. In summer it was used only between Rivière du Loup and Lake Temiscouata, a distance of about fifty miles which took three days to get over. From the lake to Edmundston, travellers went by canoe on the Madawaska River, which carries the waters of the Lake to River Saint John, thirty miles further. This canoe voyage was very easy and pleasant in a river without rapids and whose low but very picturesque shores form a narrow and remarkably fertile valley. There was, however, a portage to be made on arriving at Edmundston, which for that reason was called "Little Falls." It is a very modest rapid through which the Madawaska falls into the Saint John. Sometimes even the rapids could be jumped. At this place which for a long time was called "Little Falls" and which is now Edmundston, there was only one house inhabited by a man named Belanger. Five miles lower down, where now stands the fine and flourishing parish of Saint Basile on the New Brunswick bank, opposite the State of Maine, there was only a mile and a half of road which was practicable and one saw nothing but canoes at the church door on Sundays. The old military road soon became insufficient for the increasing relations between the inhabitants of Rivière du Loup and the people of Madawaska, as they were then called. Moreover, this road had properly speaking, been opened on the territory of the old Province of Lower Canada only between Rivière du Loup and the head of Lake Temiscouata. It had also been made rather at haphazard, without preliminary survey and had many unnecessary lengths and turnings. I

therefore became necessary to straighten it and put it in good order, besides extending it to the Canadian settlements, on the River Saint John.

This the Government undertook to do, in 1860. It caused, what is now known as the new Temiscouata road, to be built, which is nothing but the old road improved and straightened over more or less considerable distances, and carried it to the frontier of New-Brunswick. This new road was completely finished and open to traffic in 1862. It was an admirable road over which a considerable trade was carried on between Madawaska and Rivière-du-Loup ; to it the latter owes its present prosperity and one of the strongest arguments in favour of the construction of the Temiscouata Railway which was opened to traffic in 1889. At the present time it takes about three hours for the journey between Rivière-du-Loup and Lake Temiscouata, which formerly occupied three days. The country here is not very interesting: it must be admitted. Most of the journey is through a poor kind of forest and there is nothing in the surrounding scenery to attract the traveller's eye. It is a succession of heights and ravines with a stunted growth of timber, of granite rocks through which many cuttings have had to be made to allow the railway to pass and which, from time to time, assume the appearance of small bare-topped mountains, whose sides are sparsely covered with a stunted vegetation resembling a worn and ragged garment. Here and there are clearings cut out of the forest presenting to the view only calcined stumps and large boulders which leave but little room for the plough to pass.

The forest was formerly splendid and extensive, but the speculation and greediness of the lumber-merchants have devastated it, to say nothing of the injury done by fire which has destroyed even to the very roots and has left wide stretches containing only the burnt, blackened skeletons of trees, stripped of their branches, awaiting only the hand of man to stretch them on the ground. Still the forest occasionally shows some of its former splendour and gives rise to momentary illusions, but the irregular rocks, the rugged and steep heights which show up in the distance like wrinkles on a withered face, soon re-appear and thrust their ugly features on the sad looking scenery.

Several parishes are passed without even suspecting their existence, for the line runs nearly always through the woods, through rocks, along gorges or clearings which convey no idea of the rather advanced cultivation close by. We pass St. Modeste, St. François, St. Honoré and arrive at St. Louis, whose church appears on a rocky height contending with dried stumps and dominating by a few feet a thin line of houses very distant from each other and buttressed on the rugged soil, as if defending themselves against the forest which surrounds them on all sides. But here the spectacle will promptly change. We approach Cabano, the spot on which are the ruins of "Fort Ingall" and which takes its name from the river which at that place falls into Lake Temiscouata.

The forest thickens along the line, becomes covered with leaves, raises up its large trunks and uncovers its vast shoulders. We see here the majestic types of Canadian trees and find the reason of the existence of those saw-mills and shanties which we see half hidden as we proceed and which cut up an enormous quantity of raw material, and are the factors of a very extensive industry.

Although the place where we now are is called Cabano, the name of the station is Fort Ingall, and we are always in the parish of St. Louis de Ha! Ha! We discover the line and admirable Lake Temiscouata along whose shores we run for over fifteen miles, passing through numerous cuttings in the solid rock, making an infinite number of turnings following the sinuosities of the shore. Two elegant hotels in the modern style attract our attention. We are not long surprised to see them built in this spot which still retains its primitive appearance, for many tourists and fishermen go to Lake Temiscouata in the summer season. Many travellers formerly used to stop at this place before the railway was built. Cabano was an excellent post for all of them, but now it has given place in a great measure to Notre-Dame du Lac, an important parish, the largest in the whole of this region. We reach it in a few minutes after running over the distance which separates Fort Ingall from Cloutier Station, at the far end of the lake.

II

Notre-Dame du Lac is built on a height which overlooks Lake Temiscouata and whence the view extends to an equal distance on the right and left. Beneath us spreads that splendid sheet of water which looks like a majestic river calmly flowing between familiar banks. In fine summer days, the lake looks asleep in the repose of ages and lies calm in its deep bed; but if the lightest wind arises it becomes angry and over its vast back roll pressing waves like a mane on a lion's neck. There are no mountains on either side but only elevations of greater or lesser height, and in the whole scenery there is a harmony at once wild and gentle which particularly pleases the eye. Only one of the shores is inhabited, the west one on which we stand and which contains the parishes of St. Louis, Notre-Dame and a portion of Ste. Rose. The other shore is still in a wild state. There lies the seigniory of Madawaska, which formerly belonged to the heirs Languedoc and which is now owned by different strangers.

The seigniors of Madawaska are not anxious to dispose of their lands because they find it more profitable to cut the timber on it. The whole of that shore is therefore uncultivated and we hardly distinguish one isolated roof on the shore of the lake. Nevertheless some miles ahead we see in the direction of the upper end a dwelling of rather considerable appearance in the midst of fields. This is the solitary farm of Mr. Levite Therriault, at the mouth of the River Touladi, the largest of all the water-courses which fall into Lake Temiscouata. This river abounds in fish to

an extraordinary extent ; in it are caught quantities of fresh water her-
ring, touladi, a species of grey trout which weighs from five to six pounds,
and *pointu*, a variety of trout generally unknown elsewhere. Much higher
up and farther than we can see, at the very head of the lake, is the river
Ashberish, which after collecting the waters of seven tributary lakes of
varying size, pours them into Lake Temiscouata, which is also fed on the
west by other rivers of secondary importance, such as the Catano, Perch
and Rabbit rivers, the two latter being much smaller than the Cabano.

As to Lake Témiscouata itself, it is one of the beauties, one of the
glories of Canadian Nature. From no point can it be better or more exten-
sively seen than from the height on which stands the fine church of Notre
Dame, or from the platform on the top of Cloutier's Hotel, which is the
elegant and fashionable resort of tourists and sportsmen, and above all of
American families attracted from afar by the ever-increasing renown of
this enchanting spot. This hotel was built seven or eight years ago.
There is not a Canadian tourist at all worthy of the name who does not
know it at least by reputation. Its elegant architecture, its elaborate ex-
terior and appearance of good taste and comfort, at once attract attention.
It stands on the shore of the lake, at a height of a hundred feet above it,
and affords a view of the lake and of the extensive country which frames
it in, which one is never tired of gazing at, especially when the hour of
departing day spreads around those mezzo-tints and shades which give
a mysterious and infinite charm to the surroundings.

Lake Temiscouata is twenty seven or twenty eight miles in length
and its average width is half a mile. Its depth is enormous and in some
places unknown ; the lead has been dropped to seven hundred and fifty
feet without finding bottom.

Lake Témiscouata possesses this trait in common with its sister lake,
Temiscamingue, which does not wish to suffer by comparison in this
respect with any other lake in the world. It is impossible as yet to decide
between the two "*Temis*" and infallible soundings can alone decide this
important question in the future.

The lake also abounds in fish ; it is the favorite resort of fishermen
and especially of Americans who go there every year in such numbers
that an association of capitalists has decided to erect, next year, another
large hotel, a hundred feet long by forty in depth and three stories high.
In the lake great quantities of trout, touladi, *pointu*, etc., are caught as
well as *queue d'anguilles* or eel's tail, a kind of fish which is found on the
muddy bottoms and weighs on an average from six to seven pounds.
Doré and white fish are also caught in the lake while, on the eastern shore,
which is still covered with dense forests, there are plenty of partridges,
hares, deer and caribou.

As already stated, there are no mountains, properly speaking, in this
country ; the heights more or less disposed at intervals and scattered or

joined together, or placed one above the other, are all suitable for cultivation. We may go still further and say that the whole region as far as the St. John River is of remarkable fertility ; its soil is especially adapted for the growth of cereals and there are fine fields of wheat and buckwheat ; besides, where the plough has not yet passed, there are forests of great commercial value. The parish of Notre-Dame du Lac in particular is remarkably fertile ; it is the largest of all the parishes in the rear part of Temiscouata ; its population is about sixteen hundred , it has several concessions in a perfect state of cultivation and a mission, called St. Eusèbe, which contains at least five hundred people and whose soil is renowned for its fertility throughout the surrounding country. Complaints are made that previous Governments would never do anything for colonization, nor open roads nor aid settlers. It is consequently said that, owing to this fatal abandonment, the mission of St. Eusèbe has not increased one-half as much as it should have done under better circumstances and with the aid of a Government having at heart the development of the country.

The parish of Notre-Dame du Lac has not been in existence more than twenty five years. It precedes on the New-Brunswick road the parish of Ste. Rose du Dégêlé, from which it is separated by a distance of nine miles.

This is quite a new parish erected only since 1885. It was formerly a mission, with a small chapel built in 1869. Adjoining the chapel was what was called the parsonage, a poor miserable dwelling twelve feet square, which resembled a pioneer settler's cabin more than anything else. At present this modest building has become the residence of the beadle. The chapel has remained the same, as poor-looking as ever, with this difference, however, that the present *curé*, Rev. Mr. Thibault, has succeeded in enlarging the interior a little by pushing back a wall which has given enough space for twelve more pews, each of which yields a revenue of ten dollars. On the other hand, the worthy priest has had a real parsonage built, in which he has lived for two years. He has built it without any assessment on his parishioners, without any plan and with only the assistance of a workman named Nadaud. Everybody has cheerfully contributed to his work. The Temiscouata Railway transported lime for him free of charge, his parishioners worked voluntarily for him and finally Sir Joseph Hickson, the manager of the Grand Trunk Railway, who owns a splendid farm not very far off, two miles in width, where his family comes to spend the summer with all its household, its carriages and a number of servants, gave the priest fifty dollars for his parsonage, which does not prevent his being a good Protestant. He has also given plenty of work to the people of the place whom he employs on his farm and has also given the priest a new bell for his chapel until the latter is replaced by a church.

This is the country for buckwheat ; the *curé* gets nearly two hundred bushels a year for his tithes ; quite a considerable amount for a parish with a population of eight hundred souls.

The *curé* also collects supplementary tithes, amounting to one twenty-fifth of all the produce that is to say, for instance, the twenty-fifth bushel of potatoes, the twenty-fifth bundle of hay, the twenty-fifth pound of sugar, etc.

The parish of Sainte Rose is twelve miles long by six deep. Behind it are fine concessions, amongst others in the township of Packington, where the mission of Saint Benoit-Abbé is situated with a population of over one hundred. The older settlers of Sainte Rose used to go to church at Saint Basile in canoes, and we have not very far to go to find them. Now the village is extending rapidly to the right and left of the chapel, a school has been opened opposite the parsonage, some hundreds of feet of sidewalks have been laid down and the *curé* who wishes to give the example in all things, has planted in his small garden the first apple-tree yet seen in the country.

The first missionary of Sainte Rose was Rev. Mr. Beaubien, and the first to draw up acts of civil status was Rev. Mr. Stevenard, who had spiritual charge of the mission fifteen years ago. The first pastoral visit was made by Bishop Langevin. The inhabitants are engaged in farming, but also to a great extent in making saw logs and shingles. A great many of them pass the winter in the woods for that purpose; they find a good deal of employment although the forests have been despoiled of all the pine they contained. Fortunately they still contain plenty of spruce, cedar and birch.

Strange to say there is no emigration to complain of here and the young parish priest is very grateful to Heaven for having preserved his parishioners from this evil and has set apart a place on a hill rising a short distance from the presbytery, where every year a solemn high Mass is celebrated in honour of the patroness of Canada, Sainte Anne. This solemnity chiefly on account of the place where it is celebrated, cannot fail to produce a grand effect and at the same time attract great numbers of people from all parts of the country. Pending the construction of a chapel on this hill, a flag has been hoisted which floats hundreds of feet up in the air and can be seen from a considerable distance.

The Madawaska River, as every one knows, is the discharge of Lake Témiscouata. It flows for a distance of about twenty four or twenty five miles and falls into the River Saint John, at Edmundston. Its banks are very low and the valley which it waters, shut in between lines of undulating hills affords a most charming view, while at the same time its soil is remarkably fertile. The valley of the Madawaska which the railway crosses throughout its entire length, is by far the most picturesque portion of the road, with the exception of the parish of Notre Dame, which is beyond comparison.

III

The Madawaska River has hardly any current and but one rapid which is called " Little Falls ", at the place where it flows into the Saint John. Nevertheless, and it is a fact which has never been explained, the Madawaska seldom freezes over in winter ; at one spot near the discharge, no ice has ever been seen. Hence the name of " Dégélé " which has been added to that of Sainte Rose to serve as a distinctive appellation for that parish. It in bright and intensely cold weather the Madawaska freezes from one bank to the other, it is never safe to venture to cross over on it with a vehicle. If the sky clouds over during the day the newly formed ice cracks in all directions and is not strong enough to bear the weight of vehicles. The fact of Lake Temiscouata taking a long time to freeze over is explained to a certain extent by its great depth, but at the "Dégélé" the water is far from deep and in very cold weather a heavy mist rises from it which has always greatly puzzled the inhabitants of the locality. Wild ducks which are quite indifferent to the phenomena of Nature, remain at the Dégélé all winter.

On leaving the parish of Ste Rose, we cross that of St-Jacques and finally arrive at Edmundston, after a charming run of twenty one miles along the Madawaska river.

Edmundston is a very pretty little town which occupies a remarkably good geographical position at the confluence of the Madawaska and St. John Rivers. Since trade and communications with the surrounding country have assumed some importance, Edmundston has rapidly increased in size. Its lumber trade is immense and grows daily. Its population is not considerable as yet but it has doubled during the past four or five years. This rapid increase is due, in the first place, to its situation, then to the construction of the Temiscouata Railway, and finally to the decadence of the place called " Grand Falls ", thirty six miles below Edmundston, on the St. John River. The Grand Falls are about a hundred feet high and over. Formerly when large quantities of saw logs floated down the river to that point, they were placed on carts constructed for the purpose and hauled overland to the foot of the falls where they were again rolled into the water. This gave employment to several hundred men and a great number of horses which made Grand Falls a business place of great importance and a great centre of activity. But now that a railway has been built along the River St. John, connecting Edmundston with all the rest of New Brunswick, the lumber sawn in the Edmundston mills is shipped by railway and the local industry of Grand Falls has, consequently, no longer any reason for its existence.

Edmundston forms part of the parish of Madawaska which, in 1881, had a population of nine hundred and now has two hundred more.

We have already said that the existence of Edmundston, as a town, dates back only a few years; we now see quite a populous quarter in which five years ago there were only seven or eight houses. Its population, three fourths of which consist of French Canadians, is nearly all engaged in the lumber trade and is remarkably active, honest and laborious.

The town is built in a kind of irregular amphitheatre, above which stands the Catholic Church, the largest in the town, at whose feet lies the beautiful and wide Saint John River, and opposite, on the other bank, is the State of Maine. On the Canadian side, to the right and left of the parish of Madawaska, there are four or five other large parishes, the most important of which is Saint Basile, with a population of nearly two thousand, then Saint Leonard, which extends as far as Grand Falls, and on the other side that of Saint Francis, bounded by the river of that name which flows between the counties of Temiscouata and Kamouraska and falls into Saint John River. These four parishes cover a front of about seventy-five miles between Grand Falls and the mouth of the River Saint Francis. A railway is now under construction between Edmundston and the latter river; this railway will be thirty-six miles long and pass through a well settled country covered with quantities of timber, especially cedar. The people of Edmundston even say that the Temiscouata railway should have been built from Rivière Ouelle to the River Saint Francis, whose course it would have followed and then that of the Saint John River to Edmundston. They affirm that this line would have run through a country much more suitable for colonization and of much easier access than the present line, besides the fact that it would not have been any longer and would have saved the unnecessary run of thirty miles on the Intercolonial between Rivière Ouelle and Rivière-du-Loup. They say that the Temiscouata Railway, owing to the comparatively sterile region through which it passes, will contribute but little to the progress of colonization and will not even pay its expenses. They say that it cost nearly a million dollars which, as regards colonization, have been spent to no purpose. This amount has been paid partly by the Federal Government which gave a subsidy of six thousand dollars per mile and partly by the Local Government which redeemed, at a rate of seventy cents per acre, the lands which it had originally granted to the railway, making a sum of seven thousand dollars per mile and finally by the New Brunswick Government, which contributed thirty six thousand dollars for twelve miles within its territory from the parish of Notre-Dame du Dégélé.

The people of Edmundston also say: "Politics, which are mixed up with everything, alone decided the construction of the line through the county of Temiscouata. No heed was paid to the requirements of the population nor to the conditions necessary for the colonization movement, but the day is not far distant when the Provincial Government will open its eyes to the truth and construct a railway which will start from Rivière Ouelle and connect with the railway we are now building from Edmundston to St. Francis."

In concluding this report, I would like to add that this line will not prejudicially affect the line which must before long be built from the county of Dorchester to Lake Temiscouata and thence, in a straight line, to the Baie des Chaleurs, but will have just the opposite effect. This, Sir, will be the work of an administration like yours, as enlightened respecting the interests and the true methods to be adopted for the progress of the county as it is desirous of promoting the former and of giving to the latter all the force and impetus which they require.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) ARTHUR BUIES.

CARTE
ACCOMPAGNANT
LES RAPPORTS DE M. ARTHUR BUIES
SUR LES COMTÉS DE
RIMOUSKI ET MATANE

ECHELLE DE MILLES ANGLAIS

CHEMIN DE FER PROJETÉ DE MATANE

THE DUBLAND WITH MONTREAL.

À partir de ce point la rivière
 Matane est navigable pour
 des bateaux à voile tirés de la
 R. de la Rivière

REPORTS

OF

MESSRS H. A. TURGEON AND C. E. DAMOURS

ON CERTAIN PORTIONS

OF THE

COUNTIES OF TEMISCOUATA AND RIMOUSKI

COUNTY OF TEMISCOUATA.

Honorable J. A. CHAPLEAU,

Premier and Commissioner of Agriculture
and Public Works.

In obedience to instructions from the Department of Agriculture and Public Works, I proceeded, on the 12th March last, to the county of Temiscouata to ascertain the feasibility of opening a road from the last settlements of the Colonization Society No. 1 of Temiscouata, in Begon, to Green River, in the Province of New-Brunswick, and I have the honour to submit the following report:

The road having been asked for at the same time by His Lordship the Bishop of Rimouski and the member for the county of Temiscouata, I considered that means should be found to make it pass as close to the line as possible so that it might serve as a main colonization road for both these counties at the same time.

Consequently, on leaving the road of the Témiscouata Colonization Society, and after following the Raudot central road, along almost its entire length, I at once proceeded to the line dividing the two counties which I reached at lake St. John. The distance from the Raudot road to lake St. John is about nine miles, over seven of which a road can be easily made through splendid lands with forests consisting chiefly of maple and black birch. The last two miles are swampy but still a road can easily be made. On leaving lake St. John and taking a south-easterly direction, following the line as closely as possible, we find about a mile or two of rather steep hills before we reach a splendid plateau of maple groves, which seems to extend to a considerable distance in both counties. From the Touladi river to a point two miles beyond the line of Biencourt, in Rimouski, there is no serious obstacle to the construction of a colonization road, almost in a straight line, and these six or seven miles are covered for the most part with tall hard-wood trees, which indicate that the soil is rich and with but little rock. At this point, that is about two miles from the line of Biencourt, we cross an extent of five or six miles where the soil is not so well adapted for cultivation and where the mountains and steep ravines would present more obstacles to the construction of a road in a straight line. However, the hills, though steep, are not long and can be easily turned without greatly increasing the cost of the road. There is a good deal of cedar and spruce on the bottom lands.

After passing this spot which, comparatively speaking, is of but little value, we find that the last nine or ten miles near the frontier of New-Brunswick offer about the same advantages as regards colonization, and the opening of a road as the land we pass over before leaving the line of Biencourt. However, the last two miles, near the frontier, are a little more hilly. The same may be said of the five or six other miles which follow, in New-Brunswick, before reaching Green River, where the division line between the two counties of Rimouski and Temiscouata would touch, if prolonged as far as that river.

In New Brunswick, on the north bank of Green River, as far as the first settlements and even as far as the Madawaska River, there are very high mountains, but their sides have long and gentle slopes; hard-wood trees, maple especially, predominate on these last twenty-five miles and, as in the Province of Quebec, there is a great deal of cedar on the bottom lands.

Before concluding, I would observe that the two miles of hills after leaving lake St. John, as well as the two miles of swamp before reaching there, might be easily avoided by continuing the Raudot central road, in a south-westerly direction, to where it would meet a natural pass which is said to exist in a ravine at a short distance from that spot, and afterwards taking an oblique and south-easterly direction to strike the division line near Eagle lake. The length of the road would even be shortened by adopting this line.

The proposed road would be from 35 to 40 miles in length from the Raudot central road to the frontier of New-Brunswick, and I have no hesitation in saying that it would open up to colonization a vast area exceptionally well adapted for cultivation, but the great cost of the road, which I would not estimate at less than \$600 per mile, including bridges and culverts, prevents my recommending the undertaking to the Government before ascertaining to what extent the two counties, who will derive so much benefit from it, would be prepared to contribute towards the cost of the work.

The whole respectfully submitted,

(Signed)

H. A. TURGEON,

Assistant-Director of Colonization.

Quebec, 8th April, 1881.

(True copy.)

H. A. TURGEON.

DESCRIPTION OF A PORTION OF THE INTERIOR PLATEAU OF THE ALLEGHANIES.

A VAST REGION TO BE SETTLED.

1,280,000 acres of very fertile farming land in the counties of Temisconata and Rimouski.

Behind the chain of the Alleghanies, whose crest is outlined above the town of St. Germain de Rimouski and adjoining villages, there is a depression forming an interior plateau, bounded to the south by a range of hills which follows the frontier line of the Province.

This plateau, on a level with the upper portion of the great rivers of this region, is intersected by beautiful lakes and rivers and covered with dense forests. It extends westwardly to the mountains around lake Temisconata.

The rivers which take rise in it are: the Metis, Rimouski and Trois-Pistoles, which cut through the whole chain of the Alleghanies in deep gorges and fall into the St. Lawrence; the Patapedia, which flows towards the south, the Squateck, des Outres and Eagle rivers, which flow into lake Temisconata by the river Touladi. The principal lakes are lakes Metis, Rimouski, Patapedia, des Outres, Eagle, St. John and the four Squateck lakes

The most common kinds of trees are maple, black and white birch, elm and willow; there are also white and red pine, grey, black and red spruce, cedar and fir. Hard-wood trees are so abundant that they have given to the region the name of "*grande lisière des bois francs*," (wide strip of hard-wood timber.)

This interior plateau, closed in on all sides by a dense chain of mountains over which no road passes, is accessible only by means of the rivers whose beds are often obstructed, making canoe navigation difficult and slow.

The rivers which flow into lake Temisconata are comparatively easy of navigation; they constitute the ordinary route of the *concoureurs des bois*. It is by their means that we will penetrate into this portion of our Province, where the axe of the settler has, as yet, awakened no echoes.

In the county of Temisconata, the main axis of the Alleghany chain deviates to the south towards the American frontier.

At a distance of thirty miles from the St. Lawrence, a long blue streak appears in the midst of the mountains. This is lake Temisconata, whose bed lies in the bosom of the Alleghanies, with very irregular and capricious shores. Here it stops at the foot of a giant peak, further on it stretches

to the bottom of a deep bay. The peaks, forming very advanced points, approach so closely to both shores that only one-half the surface of the lake can be seen. In the bays where the mountains are not so high and have more gentle slopes, they present an appearance of ramparts of verdure or hemicycles rising in amphitheatre up to the crest, clearly and sharply outlined against the blue sky.

On the west shore of the lake are two pretty villages built on the slope of the hills, Cabano and Notre-Dame.

There is a church at Notre-Dame, and on a fine summer's evening, when the *Angelus* rings, the silvery sounds of the bell are echoed long and far away by the mountains. At that hour the lake looks like a long ribbon, black, silvery and rose-coloured, assuming close by the dark shade of the shore, and in the centre the silvery and rose-coloured tints of a cloudless sky, in which linger the last rays of the setting sun.

The river Touladi is on the east side of lake Temiscouata. It flows through the mountains in deep gorges and falls evenly and gently into the lake.

As far as the first lake Touladi, a distance of about four miles, the current is rapid and in some places canoe navigation is difficult.

The steep banks of the river, the greyish rocks piled one on the other, show that we are passing through an inhospitable region; human activity has not yet penetrated there and all is gloom and silence. It seems as if Nature had wished to hem in with difficult barriers a privileged corner of earth so that man would really have to conquer it.

The Touladi lakes, which are respectively called "Great lake Touladi" and "Little lake Touladi," are properly speaking but one, whose two parts are connected by a pass which a group of islands divides into a number of narrow channels. These islands, covered with foliage, look like baskets of verdure lying on the water.

The Touladi lakes are at the foot of the last spurs of the Alleghany chain.

The mountains disappear gradually and give way to fine wooded slopes descending gently to the water's edge with an undulation of the forest.

At the head of these lakes the river Touladi assumes the names of *Rivière des Eaux Mortes*. The banks are low, the water deep and clear, with a barely perceptible current, rising under the branches of the large trees leaving no shore and giving the river a fantastic appearance. It looks like a fine road of ivory and silver opened through the verdure, but there are no travellers on this road. The king-fisher alone dives into its waters; ducks, teal and owls alone are mirrored in its limpidity.

The setting sun produces marvellous effects of light and shadow, whether it shines through the fringe of elms and ash, and gilds the surface of the water, or half hidden behind the large trees, it shows but a half ray.

Here the shadows spread heavy and persistent over trees and water, with the coolness of the evening and call upon night to appear; there, the river, turning abruptly to the south, allows the last rays of the setting sun to stretch in long luminous streaks upon both banks.

The rivers Squateck, Eagle and *des Outres* fall into the *Rivière des Eaux Mortes*, at a place called the "Forks," eight miles from the Touladi lakes.

At the Forks, we are in the midst of a fine level country; not a mountain or hill breaks, to an appreciable degree, the uniformity of the plain. On the horizon the eye sees the boundary of the great forest, and an illusion is caused which is far from the reality.

In the silence of the sleeping forest, one is struck with mute admiration in presence of the savage beauty around him. The sky is perfectly clear, the air is pleasantly warm. On the slumbering waters, there is not a breath to wrinkle their surface, and, in the forest, there is not a voice, not a cry, to disturb the silence of the night which falls gently and peacefully over slumber-seeking Nature.

Eagle river takes its source in Eagle lake. It flows through a dense forest over a bed of alluvial soil of incomparable fertility.

In several places the branches of the trees interlock above the tranquil waters and cover them with a dome of foliage.

Eagle lake receives the waters of the St. John river, which takes its rise in lake St. John, in the township of Raudot, which adjoins the parish of St. Jean de Dieu, in the county of Temiscouata.

This lake cuts transversely the main axis of the Alleghany chain; nevertheless the land around it is level and fertile.

The mountains have suffered more from erosion here than anywhere else. Rocky masses removed by the action of water and atmospheric agents, have given place to a fine alluvial plateau, in which are situated lake St. John, *lac à la Sauvagesse* and the seven lakes of the Trois-Pistoles river. The latter with its tributary, the river Boisébuseache, have assisted in this transformation.

The Trois-Pistoles river, cutting its channel through the chain of the Alleghanies, formed, as the lands of the Champlain formation emerged

from the bed of the Ocean, an uninterrupted series of plateaus rising one above the other in the form of terraces.

It is very important to have an easy passage through the mountains, and the Trois-Pistoles river offers an excellent one.

This series of terraces forms a long strip of arable land which connects the rich alluvial lands of Trois-Pistoles with the interior plateau of the Alleghanies, and allows a long continuous line of dwellings to be built as far the good farming country.

Settlers, on the north side of the mountains, will, consequently, not be isolated.

The parish of Trois-Pistoles has opened the township of Bégon (*St. Jean de Dieu*.) The township of Bégon, in its turn sends settlers further south to the banks of the rivers Boisbouscache and Trois-Pistoles. All that has to be done now is to push on the movement in order to obtain wonderful results. The slightest step in that direction would be fruitful.

It would cost but little to open a good road to the first lake Squateck; no one in Trois-Pistoles and St. Jean de Dieu ignores what a beneficial effect it would have.

The *rivière des Outres* comes from the east. It takes its rise beyond the *lac des Outres*, eighteen miles from the Touladi river, in a straight line. It flows slowly over a shallow and regular bed. Its waters are remarkably clear and very pleasant to the taste.

All the country watered by this river and the east and west rivers, its tributaries, are covered with fine forests of elm, black birch, ash and maple, alternating with cedar, spruce and pine.

The river Squateck rises at the foot of the hills which form the southern boundary of the Province. There are four lakes along its course: *Grand lac Squateck*; nine miles long and two miles wide; the Sugar loaf lake, the second lake Squateck and the first lake Squateck; the three latter really form but one lake.

Grand lac Squateck attracts the attention of the traveller by its extent, the dark colour of its waters which seem to cover abysses, the picturesque of its shores and, above all, by the fine wooded hills which surround it.

These hills are similar in shape, run all in the same direction and are nearly all of the same height. One is tempted to believe that the natural phenomena, still unknown, which formed the undulations near the mountains in the Canadian North-West, has been repeated here.

If the Alleghanies could be compared to the Rocky Mountains this supposition would be still more probable. Still, Nature did not originally give our mountains the shape they now have. Erosion and the work of centuries have considerably modified them. Ages ago there was a time when the Alleghanies had peaks attaining a height of 2,000 feet, if we may judge by the immense synclinal strata which now form several summits of considerable height.

Who knows what giant labour was accomplished in this chain, all of whose summits are greatly worn by erosion and perhaps also by a continental glacier? What were the immense waves of an unknown ocean which undulated the hills and left everlasting traces? No one knows.

On the eastern shore of Sugar-loaf lake, there is an isolated conical rock rising to a height of nearly 1,500 feet. This is the Squateck or Sugar-loaf mountain, the only mass of rock in that region. Nature seems to have placed it there to serve as a point of observation. From the summit of the mountain one sees on all sides an immense forest with lakes here and there reflecting the sky. The view is so fine that the traveller is always enchanted with it.

To the west of the mountain we see the calm surface of Sugar-loaf lake, the gently sloping hills of the other shore, and the forest draped with the sombre verdure of resinous trees or with the fresh and tender tints of the maple leaf.

All the meanderings of the river Squateck, all the sinuosities of the lakes are visible to us. Further on we see the gaps made by the *rivière des Eaux Mortes* through a forest of elms, the Touladi lakes and the formidable declivity in the midst of high peaks where lake Temiscouata spreads out in all its majestic grandeur.

To the south we see the river Squateck, the hills of *Grand lac Squateck*, the immense and unbroken forest and, finally, almost lost in the azure sky, the pale outline of the hills which form the southern boundary of the Province.

To the north the eye wanders over a vast plain intersected by rivers and lakes, and rests only on the gaps in the Alleghanies through which flows the Trois-Pistoles river.

Here and there we observe slight undulations, whose pale blue colour, indicating the proximity of sheets of water, contrasts strongly with the usual tints of the forest.

To the north-east lies *lac des Outres*, in the centre of a fine level country. Although 15 miles away, the lake seems close by, so vast and level is the plain over which we look.

Far off, in the same direction, lies a series of hills intermingled with lakes and rivers : lakes Trout, des Bardes, Taché, &c., the rivers Rimouski, Little Rimouski, Tessier, &c., and further away, on the outline of the crest of the Alleghanies, the mountain of Ste Blandine and Mount Comis show up against the blue sky. To the east the view is bounded only by the hills around Lake Metis, 55 miles away

We have had a glimpse of the *grande lisière des bois francs* (wide strip of hard wood timber), well known to hunters.

From the Squateek lakes to the Matapedia river, there is an extent of about 1,280,000 acres of arable land.

The climate of this region is about the same as that of the Eastern Townships; the soil is of better quality and easier to cultivate. There is probably nothing in the whole Province to compare with it. And yet the axe has been wielded in these solitudes only for purposes of devastation and pillage, never for the purpose of allowing a furrow to be ploughed.

The splendid pine along the lakes and the rivers Squateek and des Outres has disappeared; it has been taken down the rivers as far as Maine, where it has been unscrupulously sold as coming from the American forests, without a cent being paid to us. Over 14,000,000 feet of pine have been cut on the shores of *lac des Outres*. Such a pillage will no longer be possible in future, thanks to the vigilance of the National Government.

From the summit of the Squateek mountain, we cannot look at the immense forest without thinking that in it there is perhaps a sufficient means of arresting the national evil, emigration, which threatens to become serious in the counties of Temiscouata and Rimouski.

When this region shall be opened up to colonization, when roads shall be made everywhere, from the old seigniories to the centre of the Alleghany plateau; when determined and intelligent settlers shall have plunged into the forest, beyond the line of hills which close the south, then the young men, the fugitives of to-day, who go to spend their energy and lives on a foreign soil, in the poisoned atmosphere of factories, will have the ambition to create a home for themselves near the St. Lawrence and near their families, and they will enter the forest cheerfully, with a warm feeling in their hearts for Canada, their country.

This fine region is close to the St. Lawrence, near the old parishes and yet how is it that our surplus population has not gone there? It is

because the chain of the Alleghanies, running along the St. Lawrence, has left a narrow strip of arable land, outside of which we find only mountains, hills and narrow valleys.

It is quite true that some of these valleys may be cultivated with advantage ; but they are all parallel to the main axis of the chain, so that owing to the method of dividing land, there is not sufficient in 100 acres to provide subsistence for a large family.

Several small parishes have been formed in the mountains, amongst others Ste. Blandine, St. Valérien, Ste. Françoise, St. François-Xavier, St. Paul de la Croix and St. Honoré. It is true that the soil is suitable for cultivation, but it is rocky and difficult to clear and thus discourages settlers. If they had gone further south, beyond the huge masses of rock, they would have found a fine plateau covered with hardwood trees, a rich soil, free from rocks and easy to clear. They would live there in comfort and we would not have the sorrow of seeing them leave their country to go to the United States. And yet we must not blame, but pity them. They knew that a few miles to the south the soil was rich, but there were no roads to go there, and they were too poor to make any.

It is a dream impossible of realization for a settler, who has already spent one half of his life and energy upon an ungrateful soil from which he has derived just enough to keep him from dying of hunger, to venture alone through a chain of mountains far from his fellow creatures. It is useless for him to arouse his patriotism and his energy, he can do nothing.

It is much easier when poverty is at his door to proceed to a railway station, buy a ticket at reduced rates for some American manufacturing centre, where he is sure to find work, hard and ruinous perhaps, but sufficient to enable him to live.

It was a great economic error to allow settlers to leave Canadian territory. The nation should rather have sacrificed everything to keep them here ; but that social problem was not at all understood.

At present ideas have completely changed and the cause of colonization has attained a level which it should always have had.

The cause of colonization has given birth to enthusiasm and to those celebrated words spoken by a Minister, Hon. Mr. Duhamel : "*The last pine in our forests shall be sacrificed for our settlers.*"

Nevertheless, the population of the old parishes of the counties of Temiscouata and Rimouski is increasing, as the births greatly exceed the deaths.

It is painful to say so, but all the families have some of their members in the United States. Our young men think that there is nothing

here to satisfy their ambition. They are mistaken. If they knew the wealth contained in the interior plateau of the Alleghanies, they would not hesitate in their choice. But to make them acquainted with this wealth we must at least be able to show them a road leading to it through the mountains.

If we made good roads to that region we would perhaps induce our surplus population, which escapes us each year to go there.

The project is worthy of execution. It is not much to risk a few hundreds of dollars when we have the prospect of a national fortune. And if we attain the desired result, in some years, owing to the producing powers of our race, the sons of the farmers of the counties of Temiscouata and Rimouski will have founded 20 or 30 French Canadian parishes in the forest.

Then, from the summit of the Squateck mountain, we would count the steeples of 30 churches where now the eye wonders over an unbroken forest.

This is not a vain dream but a problem easy of solution.

I thought of all that while looking from the summit of the Squateck mountains at a forest whose wealth and beauty are as yet unknown.

Beyond the mountains, shutting in the horizon on all sides, man moves about, opens roads, builds railways and towns, while in the bosom of this immense forest, there is naught but the silent calm of the forest under a pure and genial sky.

(Signed),

C. E. DAMOURS,

True copy,

H. A. TURGEON.