

*Extrait du rapport du Commissaire des Travaux Publics et
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SPECIAL REPORT
OF
MR. E. MOREAU,
DIRECTOR OF COLONIZATION,

UPON A
VISIT OF INSPECTION TO THE COUNTY OF BEAUCE.

THE FRANCO CANADIAN SETTLEMENT IN METGERMETTE.

On the 10th September last. I visited Metgermette north, where Mr. Vannier has planted the beginning of a french colony, with the hope of extending it to the neighboring townships of Watford and Metgermette south, Risborough and others. Leaving St. George, at the South. Eastern extremity of the county of Beauce, and the last parish both canonically and civilly erected, I took the St. Antoine and Watford colonization road, which joins the county of Beauce to that of Dorchester and crosses the township of Watford till it reaches the township of Langevin. I found the portion of this road traversed by me, in good order, very well fitted for travel and pretty well kept. The lands on each side had been taken up, and a good number of lots are already occupied, and upon the rest, the clearances exacted by law have been made. Everywhere, the crops looked well.

About three miles below the place where the *Little Abenakis* falls into the *Grand Abenakis*, in the township of Watford. I left the St. Antoine road and took the new road opened by Mr. Vannier in a south eastern direction.

This route is $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, from the St. Antoine concession or St. Nicholas to the Vannier settlement.

Mr. Chicoyne who was specially sent to visit the Colony, said in his report dated the 4th December 1874. " Upon this road, the trees have been pulled up " a breadth of 22 feet, besides which an opening has been cut down ten feet on " each side, giving to the road a width of 42 feet ; to complete it, a few stones " and roots have still to be removed, and ditches to be made. The bridge which " is to cross the Abenaki river, about the centre of this road, is already contract- " ed for, and is to be constructed on the model of that built near the mill. "

Since Mr. Chicoyne's visit, a solid bridge has been build on *la Petite Abénakis* ; about thirty men are now at work, completing the road which Mr. Vannier expects to make fit for carriages, by this fall if the season is favorable.



I observed that this route, with hardly any deviations, passes through a smooth country of easy traffic. The water course from the *Grande Abénakis* which it skirts through a long distance, is floatable, with good banks, and thus offers real advantages to the settlers.

From the Watford road to Little Abenakis, the forest is of second growth, easily rooted up. The original forest was burnt down about twenty years ago, and the half rotten trunks are lying on the ground, covering it with a fruitful coating. The young trees, straight, very tall and very close together, testify to the richness of the soil in which they grow.

This road will be also of great utility for colonizing the ranges in the township of Watford which it traverses, where there are still a great many lots to be conceded and whose value is thus increased.

As Metgermette is neared, by the size of the trees, one knows that the virgin forest is being reached.

At a distance of about a mile from the colony, I noticed in places, some rocks and hills of small elevation which could be easily avoided by deviating a little from the actual line of road.

After traversing through nine miles of bad road in which the trees only have been removed, and over which we often had to go on foot, the eye rests with satisfaction upon the Metgermette settlement, upon the fine lake that bathes its feet and the hills of graceful outline that environ it.

I will again cite Mr. Chicoyne's report :

" This company of which Mr. Vannier is manager has, for one of its objects, the colonization of certain townships in Beauce and in Dorchester, by french immigrants. It began its operations in November 1873, on the borders of lake Abenagui. It had to open up from the first a road through the forest, to the spot selected for the site of its first village, and it made use for such purpose, of an old sugar bush road, opening up also a new road over a mile in length. The first work which followed was the construction of a bridge on the Abenagui river; this bridge, about 60 feet long, is 16 feet wide in its narrowest part, and rests on two abutments in cedar wood squared and dove-tailed in; the paving is made of squared spruce timber. Immediately below this bridge is a saw-mill, a building three stories high, 60 feet long and 40 wide, solidly constructed out of timbers a foot square. The furnishings are complete; two sets of gang saws, of 12 saws each, are put in motion by a large water wheel; the other saws, and the rest of the machinery, are worked by a turbine wheel, 65 horse power."

" This mill is situated at the mouth of the Abenagui, the waters of which supply the necessary power. At the discharge of the lake, a dam has been constructed, which raises the water four feet and has much increased the water power; consequently turning the whole lake into an immense reservoir, from which the necessary water is taken as needed."

" The discharge of the lake forms what is called the Abenagui river, which, at the end of 12 miles, falls into the Famine river; this in its turn, falls into the Chaudière river; it is through these various streams that the company intends floating down its timber and lumber as far as Quebec, to be there shipped to France."



" Besides the mill, the company has constructed various buildings, numbering 14 in all, some being used as shanties for the laborers, others as carpenters and black smith's shops, stores, &c. One of these constructions is used as a stable, containing 14 large stalls to which a granary is attached. The largest of these buildings measures 32 feet by 30, and the smallest 16 by 20 feet. There are seven houses built. One, near an oven, is used as a bakery; the others are occupied by families. Two of these houses measure 16 feet by 20, and the others 20 feet by 24; five more houses are being built, besides an ice house 26 feet by 18.

" The forest trees in the township of Metgermette appeared to me very fine and of varied kinds. White spruce and birch prevail; in certain spots there are beautiful cedar groves of excellent sound wood. Above the head of Abenaki lake on the United-States frontier there are beautiful maple sugaries, in which over 60 persons are employed every spring in sugar making.

" This spot appeared to me quite suited to colonization. Besides the main Abenaki lake, there are three other lakes called: small Abenaki, St. John, and Little St. John. The two latter fall into the St. John's river, which here forms the boundary line. These sheets of water are bordered by heights of land well suited for agricultural purposes. These lands, which can be easily drained, cannot fail to offer great inducements to settlers. The main Abenaki lake, of a pleasant oval form, is 32 acres in length and 17 in width; its average depth is 15 feet. It is on the left bank that the proposed village is marked; it will be admirably situated.

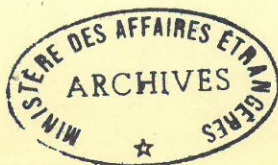
" Five streets come down to the lake; the centre one, on which the church will be constructed, as well as the school, and work shops, will be 100 feet wide. Already, about 6 arpents in length have been opened up on this line, and of the above mentioned width. The other streets will be 60 feet wide. One of them, which borders on the lake, is already opened for a length of 18 acres. According to the plan proposed, a house is to be constructed at every acre, to which a garden of two superficial acres is to be attached."

Since Mr. Chicoyne's visit several other buildings have been put up, among others a very fine looking house, on the borders of the lake, which Mr. Vannier reserves for his family and a provisional house of refuge, solidly, but at the same time elegantly, built, measuring 256 feet in length and capable of easily lodging and sheltering easily 20 families.

The superficies of land cleared is 450 acres. Mr. Vannier sowed 38 bushels of oats and 52 of potatoes this year, which promise a most abundant harvest. He also experimented in sowing several kinds of corn, samples of which he had brought from France and Belgium. He hopes to acclimatize also the colza and other oil plants, with which he has experimented. Until there are better means of transport these products, of relative large value as they are of small volume, may benefit the settlement. Mr. LeBreton, a colonist of french origin, successfully cultivates all the seed and grass plants suitable to our climate.

By next spring, not less than 450 arpents, now cleared, of which the lumber has been piled and burnt, will be under cultivation, which will increase the present agricultural yield ten fold.

Colonization, from the point of view of the interest of our country, has greatly profited by the enterprise attempted by the Franco Canadian Company. I cannot exactly give the figures of the expenditure in the colony; I think I can value it at least at fifty thousand dollars (50,000.00.) This large sum of money



came from France to be expended amongst us, principally among the inhabitants of the frontier, who, being wood choppers, finding good wages at hand, abandoned the american lumber establishments, to the great advantage of their temporal and spiritual concerns.

Mr. Vannier employed, on an average, fifty men, sometimes more, sometimes less. At the time of my visit Mr. Vannier had only twenty men in his employ, the harvest detaining the majority of the workmen at home, they being all (*habitants*) farmers of the neighboring parishes. I have since learnt that there are more than fifty men engaged to work at clearing the lands and on the road of which I have spoken.

Mr. Vannier found within the radius of his clearance and on the road, that he is opening up at his expense, about 11,000 logs of tamarac, white and black spruce and pine, of good quality, which he will be able to float down next spring.

The number of settlers is very small, about a dozen of french origin and twenty or so Canadians, at which we must not be surprised: the bad roads and the hardships to be met in the work of clearing, would require so much courage and endurance.

A good many french and canadian families are however only waiting for the winter roads, which are much more easily travelled over, to go and settle in the colony.

Mr. Vannier is energetically carrying on his work. The settlements of Scottstown and Ditton or *de la Patrie* founded, with the exception of a few changes, according to the prospectus published in *L'Opinion Publique*, in December 1873, and where success is so very apparent, give him every hope of good results. In addition to this, the early passage of the Kennebec railway, either at Metgermette or at a short distance from it, giving him means of transport for his hard wood, will confirm the partners in his conclusions as to the large profits to be realized either at Quebec or in European markets.

From the Metgermette settlement, I went by a sugary road as far as the river St. John on the frontier of Maine, a distance of about five miles. On this whole length of road, the soil appeared to me to be very rich, although slightly broken. The trees, especially the birch and cedar, frequently measure from three to four feet in diameter at the base. This portion of the township to the south east of lake Abenakis, is the region of maple groves. From the height is seen, as far as eye can reach, a sea of verdure, whose every wave is a maple with a large and heavy head, undulating in the breeze, with the long and prolonged murmur, which breaks so agreeably upon the ear of a Canadian.

I hesitate not in saying that this portion of the township is the most advantageous for agriculture. In the *bottoms* cedars abound and every where they are fine, straight, large and strong. A black mould mixed with grey sand promises fine crops and fertile grass lands.

Settlers in Maine are eagerly awaiting the opening up of a road of communication with Mr. Vannier's settlement.

This notice would be incomplete if I were not to follow it by a very well written article that appeared in *La Minerve* of the 11th of January last "on french capital in Canada," in which are contained excellent remarks concerning the establishment at Metgermette, and on the probable chances of success offered to the public.



"FRENCH CAPITAL IN CANADA."

"Our readers have for a long time been cognizant of the undertaking of the franco-canadian forest company, which for several years past, has been opening up in this Province certain portions of our forests, in the Counties of Beauce and Dorchester. This enterprise, under the management of Mr. Vannier, a french manufacturer of known talent and enterprise, has already achieved marvellous results. Large and very important works have been carried on in this region, so rich and well fitted for trade in timber, and the saw mills, established by the company, work marvellously. The Government of Quebec, which always actively endeavors to encourage colonization and the clearing of our forests, favored and assisted, as much as in their power, the work of Mr. Vannier's company, sustained by french capitalists. The territory now worked upon by him was conceded to him on favorable terms. Those who have visited the Beauce valley, that privileged country, in which are found the finest forests in Canada, know that the success of the undertaking has surpassed general expectation.

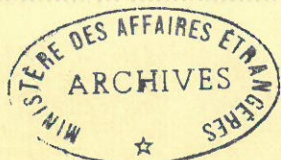
"The change operated in this fine forest region in such a short time is really marvellous, and the description given in a french paper, which is reproduced a little further on, is by no means exaggerated: on the contrary, it is a success, and we can only hope that this example will be imitated. We have resources which only require intelligent working to enrich both those who undertake it and the province itself. We, in this one province of Quebec, have a territory as large as France, which is covered for the most part with virgin forest and furnishing timber for building of the richest and most valuable kind."

"Mr. Vannier's enterprise has served to make our country known to France in this respect. The Beauce company has just placed in the Paris market, 2,000, additional shares of stock, which, no doubt will be promptly taken up. The success that has attended the operations of this company up to the present, and the truly extraordinary advantages offered to the forest industry in this province, guarantee before hand the success of this issue. The interests and progress of our country are not the only reasons that make us wish to see this enterprise favored by french capitalists. We earnestly wish to see our commercial industrial and financial relations with France, much more extended and french capital here rivalling that of England."

"Canada is a well situated country, presenting all the guarantees that are not found in other regions of the american continent. The checks and losses that industrial companies and even certain governments of America have occasioned European capitalists during these later years, have, with good reason, made the latter distrustful and have discouraged foreign loans. Canada, unknown to many in France, and the rest of Europe, should not suffer from the dishonesty or extravagance of its neighbors, with whom it would be unjust to confound it. It should be judged by its past and by its resources that have been well appreciated by all who have visited it. For this reason we think that the following reflection of the *Courrier des Etats-Unis*, accompanying the circular of the franco-canadian company soliciting new shares a little hazardous."

"It is always a serious matter to place french capital in a foreign loan, and our compatriots are warned not to venture it without proper information. We do not know whether the operations in question have a sufficiently firm basis to inspire confidence, we content ourselves at present with hoping that the savings, accumulated by hard work, will not become the prey of speculators."

"The *Courrier* is in a position to be well aware of what should be said on this point and not to confound us with the United-States or Honduras: the one



with its railroads to the moon and the other with its fraudulent official loans ; and we are surprised at seeing it giving vent, on the subject of the Beauce project, to suspicions which will have all the more force in France, as they come from a source that will be thought to be well versed in the matter. We do not wish to become surety for the future success of the operations of the Vannier company ; but what we will assert without fear is that this success is assured, if the future will be equal to the past, and that the forest industry of Canada only requires to be well managed to give the most satisfactory results. ”

“ As far as moral guarantees are concerned, Canada can rival the best countries in Europe. Our people are honest, and hate fraudulent industries so much carried on in the United-States ; and our government has a credit and a respectability which are unblemished ; these are strong guarantees to persons interested in undertakings protected by it. French capitalists have nothing to fear here. The example of english capitalists, who have had for more than a century the monopoly of our financial market, and who have always found it a good one, should be sufficient to reassure the most timid in this respect.”

“ This is the manner in which a Paris journal announces the issue of the new stock in the Vannier company.”

“ The franco-canadian company, an unincorporated company established under a deed passed before Mr. Duplan, notary at Paris, issued, from the 5 to the 10 December, 2000 shares of stock of 500 francs each.”

“ This company is established for the opening up and colonization of 129,000 hectares of public forest land, granted by the Government of the Province of Quebec (patent dated 23 October.”)

“ The advantage of a forest is that it always remains virgin until the most advanced period of time ; it is only in the vegetable world that the virgin increases in value by becoming older.”

“ Canada (need I say it) is it not one of those regions of fancy, that have been sometimes used to gull the public. The treaties with Canada are made in the name of the Queen of England, and are in consequence, certainly serious.”

“ The forests of the franco-canadian company are situated in the counties of Beauce, Dorchester and Rimouski.”

“ The land was taken possession of, by the first of November 1873.”

“ Large works and buildings, such as damming a lake, canal, bridges, drains, large saw-mill on a fall of five metres high, moved by a turbine of 65 horse-power ; houses for the overseer and settler's stores, to the number of over forty tenements, a road of 14 kilometres in length by 12 metres in width, timber cut down, clearings made, sowing, &c., having cost about 300,000 francs, have been executed and performed in this concession, which from this out will give returns.”

“ The various kinds of timber, to the number of over twenty useful sorts, which fill these forests are those most used in house and ship building, such as larch, white and red spruce, oak, elm, ash, maple, cedar, beech, walnut, &c.”

The expenditure and receipts are estimated at :

Total expenditure.....	6,550,000 fr.
Total receipts.....	11,350,000 fr.

"After the first eight years, there will remain only ten instalments to pay in four years, altogether about 200,000 francs. The settlement and colonization duties as well as the buildings required by law, will be completed, there will be nothing further to be done but to carry on the works, which at the rate of a million francs of expenditure per annum, will yield at least two millions, leaving one million of actual profit, but by calculating only for one million per annum the net profit of 50 years, the term of the company's charter, will come to be 46,800,000 francs."

"In the above work and calculations the expenditure was intentionally exaggerated and the receipts placed at the lowest figures, so as not to create any deception."

"Now, it is well known that the wooded countries of Europe are rapidly losing their finest trees, and this to such an extent as to engage the serious attention of political economists:—That North America is thinking of taking precautions against the too rapid cutting away of its forests, which are converted into arable lands; that it takes 150 years to produce a tree fit for commerce, and that not one tenth part of those every year destroyed are replaced, that from henceforth the price of timber must go on increasing, and that, commencing at a low figure the revenue of the franco-canadian company must advance to a more increased figure."

"Hence a future that can be estimated and the assured success of the franco-Canadian Company."

"A new element of prosperity will shortly be added by the passage through the company's land of the Levis and Kennebec railroad, now open for one third of its length and which is to be completed in 1876."

"It is to pass at from 2 to 3 kilometers from the Metgermette settlement, with which it will be promptly connected, and will necessarily increase ten fold the value of the lands."

"The telegraph is to be extended to the offices of the Company at Metgermette."

"The board of management of the franco-canadian Company is composed as follows:

"Messrs. EUGENE MAHEU (of Cherbourg), president of the Northern timber syndicate in France, by french ports; FOURNIER, civil ingenier, ex-pupil of the polytechnic school; PEYRUSSE, general secretary of the Charentes railway; E. UZAC, of the farm of Guz & Co. (of Bordeaux.)"

Several persons of high standing,—Mr. Larochelle member for Dorchester, Mr. Dulac, member for Beauce, who both very closely watch over the interests of their respective counties, Messrs. A. N. Montpetit, Charles Baillargé, Benj. Globensky of Quebec, and Messrs. Bussière, Moisan and the two Messrs. Proulx, of St. George, all having a lively interest in the colonization of the country and in the working of our forest industries, had accompanied me to Metgermette. They returned enchanted with the richness of the soil and the abundance of its industrial and commercial resources. The very cordial reception given us by Mr. Vannier the manager of the settlement, gave additional zest to this good impression.

On returning, the inhabitants gave us a sort of an ovation. Mr. Dulac prepared the agreeable surprise of the inauguration of a splendid bridge over



the "Famine river." A large number of citizens of the parish of St. George and its neighborhood, being collected at this place, the Mayor, Mr. Jean Morin and Mr. A. Paquet, were pleased to present me with the following address :

To E. MOREAU, Esq.,

Secretary and Director of Colonization in the Department of Agriculture and Public Works.

SIR,

We learnt with very great pleasure that the government had delegated you to visit our remote settlement, to estimate the value of the colonization works executed in this county, and the application of the sums voted by parliament to assist us. We are happy to thank you on the Famine Bridge, which attests the generosity of the present government.

We were obliged to build it with economy but made it solid and strong, thus fulfilling the two ends that were in view : first that of meeting the necessities of colonization and secondly that of recalling to the memory of several generations the gratitude due to the government.

Your interest in Colonization has made you personally known to us here : we have already been for a long time under obligations to you, for your great kindness shown us in many occasions.

Please accept this address of to day as an evidence of our thankfulness to the Government and at the same time of our esteem and affection for you.

JEAN MORIN,
Mayor.

A. PAQUET,
Secretary, St. G. M. C.

St. George, Beauce, 9 September 1875.

I replied to this address in very few words endeavoring to lay great stress on the merits of the Government, who have deeply at heart the interests of colonization and the safety and protection of the settlers. I said a few words also of Mr. Dulac, whose zeal, labor, energy and ability, greatly contributed to the erection of this bridge, which is of fine and solid construction, and is so useful, not to say indispensable to a large majority of the inhabitants of the neighboring townships.

Thence, we were invited to the houses of several citizens and friends who received us with the utmost generosity and kindness.

On the whole, our excursion to Metgermette and St. George, will be classed as among our most pleasant recollections.

COLONIZATION ROADS IN BEAUCE.

We left St. George, taking the direction towards Lambton on the splendid lake St. Francis ; after traversing a very rolling country, offering most charming and varied scenery, we reached Lambton, where we were very well received,