

higher elevation than 900 or 1,000 feet above the sea.

"The river systems, which carry off the water-flow of this long sloping plane, are the Assiniboine, the Saskatchewan, the Athabaska, and the Peace. The first two unite their waters in Lake Winnipeg before finally passing out through the Nelson River to Hudson Bay. The last two are tributaries of the Mackenzie, and, through the channel of that river, ultimately reach the Arctic Ocean. Between the Saskatchewan and the Athabaska the River Churchill takes its rise, and flows independently in a generally north-eastern course, falling ultimately into Hudson Bay.

"All the rivers of this division of the country flow for a great part of their length in deeply eroded channels, frequently of considerable width, and, as the materials underlying the plains are for the most part drift or soft rock formation, the channels which have been furrowed out are not much obstructed by falls or dangerous rapids, but generally present, from the base of the mountains throughout the greater part of their course, a uniform descent.

"The prairie land passes into woodland in various localities to the north of the Saskatchewan, to re-appear in higher latitudes. On Peace River there are extensive prairies with extremely rich soil. In other

localities there is an agreeable mixture of woodland and prairie, and this character of country appears to prevail as far as Hay River, 400 miles to the north of the River Saskatchewan.

"Although the prairie region is of vast extent, it is not all fertile. A very large area adjoining the boundary of the United States, midway between Manitoba and the Rocky Mountain Zone, is arid and unfavourable for agriculture. In other quarters a great breadth of rich pasture and cultivable land exists."

We have not in this sketch made any attempt to give a complete analysis of the facts which have been brought out by Mr. Fleming's Report of the Survey, but merely to present some points of chief interest.

The result of the further surveys of the Peace River District which are now being prosecuted will be looked for with much interest. The preliminary Report of Mr. Horetzky and Mr. Macoon (the Botanist) of the Expedition having raised high expectations, from the glowing terms in which they have spoken of the beauty of the country, the fertility of the soil and the salubrity of the climate.

On these points, however, we shall have occasion to make further reference in another article of the *Year Book* on the climate of the Dominion.

Intercolonial Railway.

Eastern Section.—The road east of River du Loup has been worked temporarily by the Grand Trunk Railway. Since December 1872, it has been opened to Post Road 22½ miles, and the line regularly run. As the sections are given over by the contractor, they will be made available to the public.

Western Section.—The Government Railways in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have been reconstructed under the name of Intercolonial Railway. They are divided into three divisions, Eastern or Nova Scotian, 145 miles; Central, 118 miles, and Western 108 miles. The total receipts during the 8 months from November 1872 to July 1873 were \$416,139, and the expenditure \$693,724. The receipts of the

Windsor Branch were \$17,767, and the expenditure \$10,563. The road being in so unfinished and *unfurnished* a state when the organization under one system was effected, no proper inferences can be drawn from these returns, either of the prospects of business, or the ordinary cost of maintenance. Many new and important works have been made, and others are still wanting. Some progress has been made in the branches to Dorchester Island, and to the line to the Acadia mines. The line from the Railway to the ballast wharf at St. John, is nearly completed.

The authority for the above information is the last published report of the Minister of Public Works.

Railways of the Dominion.

LIST OF RAILWAYS IN DOMINION, 1ST OF OCTOBER, 1874, AND THEIR MILEAGE.

	Miles.		Miles.
Brockville and Ottawa Railway.	45	Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers—	
Brockville to Carleton Place	do	Sherbrooke to Province Line	35
Smith's Falls to Perth	12 do	Cobourg, Peterboro, and Mar-	
Canada Central	70 do	Mora	30
		European and North American	92
Canada Southern—		Great Western—	
Fort Erie to Amherstburg	229 do	Suspension Bridge to Windsor	229 Miles
Niagara Junction to Niagara	23 do	Toronto to Hamilton	39 do
		London to Sarnia	61 do
Central Vermont—			
Stanstead, Shefford, and Chamblay	48		