

Mr. O'Sullivan says "there is very little doubt that there exists beyond the sources of the Ottawa a fertile region, several thousand miles in extent, where there is an abundance of merchantable timber, principally tamarack, of which there is a sufficient quantity to supply sleepers for all the railways in the Dominion. A glance at the latest official map of the Province of Quebec will show a vast extent of country, bounded on the north by the Rupert River and James Bay, on the east by Lake Mistassini and the head waters of the Ashuapmouchouan and St. Maurice Rivers, on the south by the height of land dividing the St. Lawrence from the Hudson Bay waters, and on the west by the Province of Ontario, that up to last year was as little known as it was in the days of Jacques Cartier. Roughly speaking this vast region extends over about three degrees of latitude and five degrees of longitude, containing about 50,000 square miles or 32 million acres, equal in area to England, and one third larger than Ireland." The general impression was that all that northern region is a cold rocky waste. But says Mr. O'Sullivan, "Father Gueguin, in relating to me some of his experiences among the Indians, mentioned having seen some good land and large timber in the neighbourhood of Lake Waswanipi and advised me to explore it." He followed the advice, and from his explorations concludes "that there is no doubt, that instead of a barren mountainous region there exists a fertile slope gently falling towards James Bay." Of course there are barren wastes of burnt country, but these do not materially affect Mr. O'Sullivan's conclusions, which are, that a large extent of the newly explored region is well adapted for agriculture, that its timber is capable of being turned to good account, and that from the quartz veins which he saw he thinks it possible that further explorations may result in the discovery of gold. Mr. O'Sullivan maintains that there is every reason to believe that the climate of this region compares favourably with that of the country along the St. Lawrence between Quebec and Montreal. Father Albanel, who wrote an account of his journey via the Saguenay and Rupert Rivers to Hudson Bay, in 1671-72, records that on June 15th he saw "wild roses blooming as lovely and smelling as sweetly as any around Quebec," and this must have been 60 miles further north than the furthest point reached by Mr. O'Sullivan. At Waswanipi post, latitude 49° 39' 55", Mr. O'Sullivan saw, on the 20th September, the potato tops as green as in midsummer. He says, of course, near the height of land it would naturally be colder and more subject to frost; and in the neighbourhood of Hudson Bay the low temperature of that immense body of water must have a cooling effect on the climate, but a certain distance from these extremes I believe that a mild, genial climate favours the greater part of the land."

The most northerly point reached by him is a little south of the parallel of the City of Winnipeg. Taking into account the increasing altitude going westward, he is of opinion that as regards climate the region he partially explored compares favourably with Manitoba and the North-west. There is an abundance of water with numerous cascades, and unlimited quantities of timber and stone for railway purposes.

Dealing with the accessibility of this region Mr. O'Sullivan says there is certainly no obstacle to the building of a railway from any part of the Province of Quebec into the heart of this region.