

missioner is appointed to explore and mark it out. The district is first carefully examined from one end to the other, and if it be covered with trees, as is commonly the case, its principal features can only be ascertained by climbing frequently, and observing the bearings of the distant hills, lakes, vallies, &c. If there be streams or rivers to cross, the bridging places must be selected, and points fixed by which steep hills, lakes, and other objectionable places may be avoided. The line is then bushed staked, or otherwise marked out—its courses, distances, elevations, and depressions, noted down—an estimate made up of the cost of opening and making the road, with an account of the character and quality of the land over which it passes. A report of all this is sent to the Governor, and by his command, laid before the House of Assembly. It is then discussed, and if it receive the sanction of the majority, a Bill is brought in to place the line on the Great Road establishment.

This Bill is then sent up for the concurrence of the Legislative Council, and on being there approved, a grant of money is made towards the opening of the road. A Supervisor is then appointed, who, after public notice, lets out at auction to the lowest bidders the making of certain portions of the road, the building of the bridges, &c. Contracts, with written specifications, are entered into between the several parties and the Supervisor, and the money is paid on the completion of the work. Accounts, verified on oath by the Supervisor, with receipts signed by the contractors as vouchers, are then forwarded to the Provincial Audit Office, and there carefully examined and reported on. These accounts, vouchers, and reports, are afterwards submitted to the Assembly, and again examined and reported on by a committee of that House.

Supervisors have annually to enter into bonds, with sureties, for the faithful performance of their duties, and particularly for the proper disposal of the monies with which they are entrusted—they are allowed ten per cent. of the sums by them severally expended, as remuneration for their services, and are liable to lose their places when their proceedings are reported unsatisfactory.

The following is an outline of the character and condition of the several Great Roads in the Province:—

From Saint John to Fredericton, sixty four miles, the road leads up on the right hand side of the main River Saint John, through the Counties of King's, Queen's, and Sunbury, and into the County of York. In all that distance it crosses no river of any magnitude except the Oromocto, where an expensive and convenient draw-bridge has been erected. From Saint John to "Government House," a distance of about thirty miles, a good deal of the ground is rough and broken, and in some places the road rises high up, overlooking the river and much of the adjacent country—in other places it is low and almost on a level with the water—then it winds away among mountains, turning and twisting through side cuts, and past the bases of frightful precipices several hundred feet in height. The site is well chosen, and the high grounds are ascended by gradual slopes, perfectly safe, and comparatively easy. From the half-way house to Fredericton the ground is generally level. The bridges are all safe, and the road is in good condition all the way.

From Saint John to Saint Andrews, sixty-five miles, the road passes near the coast in the Counties of Saint John and Charlotte, crossing the Musquash, Magaguadavic, Digdegnash and Boabec Rivers, besides several smaller rivers and streams; a great part of the district through which it passes is rough, rocky, and undulating. The site was in many places ill-chosen, and this road has therefore undergone from time to time expensive alterations, and cost more money than the same length of road in any other part of the Province. Some of the bridges, particularly those at Digdegnash and Musquash are expensive. There has been a great deal of travelling on it for many years, and much care has been taken by the Supervisor from year to year to keep it well gravelled, and the top part hard and smooth. There is however a want of uniformity observable along the line—many places are unnecessarily crooked; and between Boabec and Saint Andrews there are several difficult hills that ought yet to be avoided. The road is now, and has been for a number of years past, in as good a state for travelling as the nature of the ground and the objections arising from the injudicious laying of it out in the first instance, would admit of.

From Saint John to Quaco, thirty one miles, the road passes through a good deal of Lilly, hard, and rough ground. The district is all in the County of Saint John and generally settled. The road joins the flourishing village of Quaco with the City of Saint John, and is very much travelled. It has only been a few years on the Great Road establishment, has no expensive bridges on it, and is in as good condition as could be expected.

From Gondola Point to Fredericton, seventy miles, the road passes through the several Counties of Kings, Queen's and Sunbury, and into the County of York, in a well settled country the most of the way. There are ferries on this line at Gondola point, Washademoak, Jemseg and Fredericton. From Gondola Point to Washademoak, a distance of about thirty miles, the district is hilly, undulating and uneven, and several hills over which the road passes, more especially between Bellisle and Washademoak, are too steep either for convenience or safety.—Between the Jemseg and the mouth of the Nashwaak opposite Fredericton, thirty three miles, it is nearly level the whole of the way, and passes through one of the most fertile and highly valued agricultural districts in the Province, being an extensive alluvial deposit on the left side of the River Saint John. Taken altogether, and at all times of the year, it is one of the worst lines of road in the country. So many ferries make it inconvenient, and it is not possible to bridge them; then large portions of it are liable to be covered with water in the Spring of the year, and are for the time impassible. Some of the few bridges on the line are out of repair at present; were they put in good condition, and a few of the steep hills avoided, nothing more could reasonably be expected.

From Saint John to the Nova Scotia line, one hundred and thirty six miles. This road passes through some of

the finest agricultural districts in the Province. Beginning at Saint John, it passes into King's County, and crosses the Hammond river sixteen miles from the city; thence it passes through a cultivated district a distance of seven miles, and over the Kennebecasis River at the Village of Hampton. From Hampton it runs up on the right hand side of the Kennebecasis, through a beautiful and fertile country, and crossing several branches of that river, reaches the head of the settlement fifty seven miles from Saint John. It then passes through a wilderness about ten miles, and crossing the Petticodiac above the head of the tide where it is narrow, follows it down through a well settled country within sight of the Bend, a thriving village, ninety four miles from Saint John.—Leaving the Bend it passes through the French settlement at Memramcook, and thence down on the left side of that River to Dorchester, the Shire Town of Westmorland County, distant from Saint John one hundred and eighteen miles. Thence it passes through the beautiful district of Sackville, crossing the Tantarac River, and running through the great marsh over a point of land near the ruins of Fort Cumberland, until it reaches the Missiquash River, being the line between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. There are several large and expensive bridges on this line, the principal of which are those of Hammond River, Hampton, Memramcook and Tantarac. The bridge over Hampton River was built on the common cross-truss principle, and covered in. Soon after its erection it began to bend in the middle, and was afterwards supported by two chain cables and a block underneath. It is a clumsy ill looking fabric, but withal safe and convenient. The bridge at Hampton is built on blocks and in good repair. That at Memramcook on the cross-truss principle, covered, very good, and nearly new. That over the Tantarac on the same principle, covered also, and in good order. The whole line of road is in good travelling condition, though that portion of it between Roache's and the head of the Petticodiac seems to have received less attention than the rest.

From Dorchester to Shediac, sixteen miles. This road branches off from the Great Road from Saint John to the Nova Scotia line, near the Memramcook Bridge, and passes thence through the interior of the County of Westmorland, to Shediac. There are no very expensive bridges on it, and it is now, and has been for a number of years in a good state for travelling.

From Cole's Island to Cape Tormentine, thirty one miles, the road passes through a country settled and cultivated the greater part of the way. It runs through the beautiful village at the head of Bay Verte, and between that village and its commencement, through one of the most fertile agricultural districts in the Province. The site is well chosen, and there are no heavy bridges on it. It has been but a short time on the Great Road establishment, and is not yet very perfectly made, though in tolerable travelling condition. It is all the way in the County of Westmorland.

From the Bend to Richibucto, forty eight miles, the road passes through a district mostly settled and generally level. There are five large and expensive bridges on this line, besides others of a smaller size—namely, Shediac, Cocaine, little Buctouche, big Buctouche, and Richibucto. These bridges do not, as in rapid rivers, require a great deal of skill in building; but to keep them all up and in good repair must ever require a large outlay of money; some of them are nearly new, but they are all in a safe travelling condition at present. If measured, their united length would not be much short of two miles. The Road is partly in Westmorland and partly in Kent, and in a good safe travelling state.

From Richibucto to Chatham, forty miles. This road also passes through a district chiefly settled and generally level. There are five pretty long bridges on the line, passing over rivers where the tide ebbs and flows—one of them is new, and they all appear safe, though one is old and somewhat out of repair. The United length of the bridges on this line is nearly a mile. The Road is in a rather better state than that between the Bend and Richibucto. It joins the Shire town of the County of Kent, with Chatham in the County of Northumberland.

From Chatham to Bathurst, forty eight miles. This line begins with a steam ferry boat crossing the river Miramichi, about a mile wide. After passing through the settlements on the left hand side of that river, it enters the wilderness, and running through a very unpromising district, reaches the half-way house. Here the land improves and the road continues chiefly through the wilderness to Bathurst. In its course it crosses the Little Bartibog, the Big Bartibog, Tabusintac, and a few other streams, and at last a wide ferry at the mouth of the Nepisguit. The country through which this road passes is generally level. A great portion of the road is straight, very well made, and in excellent travelling condition, though some of the bridges are a little out of repair.

From Bathurst to Campbelltown, seventy one miles.—This road passes through a level, well settled, and productive agricultural district of the Province. It runs up through the County of Gloucester on the side of the Bay of Chaleurs, and entering the county of Restigouche near Belldoune Point, reaches Dalhousie, the Shire town of the last named County, distant from Bathurst fifty five miles. From Dalhousie it passes through the settlements on the right side of the Restigouche River, a distance of fifteen miles farther, to Campbelltown, where it terminates. In its course it crosses the Bathurst Basin, on a long bridge built on blocks, very convenient, safe, and in good repair. It afterwards crosses Tatagouche, Elm Tree, Jaquet, Benjamin, Charlo, and Eel Rivers, and several other streams, all falling into the Bay of Chaleurs. The bridges, with the exception of the one over Bathurst Basin, are not very expensive, and are all in a safe condition.—One is new, and from the appearance of the materials and the manner of building, is likely to last a long time.—The road is in first rate order, made with great uniformity and regularity, and in excellent condition for travelling. A serious mistake appears to have been made in the laying out of this road in the immediate vicinity of the Town

of Dalhousie, where an expensive portion of it will probably yet be abandoned.

From Fredericton to Newcastle, one hundred and six miles. This road passes up through the County of York near the right bank of the river Nashwaak, and over the Portage of the river Miramichi, where it enters the County Northumberland at Boistown, forty five miles from Fredericton. Thence it runs down on the right side of the Miramichi to Doak's, and thence on the left side of the same river to Newcastle, the Shire town of the County of Northumberland. The river Saint John is crossed at Fredericton by a Steam ferry boat. The road afterwards crosses the Nashwaak, the South West or main Miramichi, Bartholomew's River, Renous river, and other smaller streams; and at last, the North West branch, a mile wide, is crossed in a horse ferry boat. The bridges over the before named rivers are large and extensive, and a great deal of skill and care is required in their construction, in order to withstand the fury of the rapid water and masses of ice during the spring freshets. The bridge over the main river, near Doak's, is built on the cross truss principle, and covered; it is said by competent judges to be the best in the Province. There are very few objectionable hills on this line, and the bridges are all safe and in good repair. The road has been constructed in a very superior manner, passes through a country chiefly settled, and is in excellent travelling condition.

(To be continued.)

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

THE OPINIONS OF COMPETENT PERSONS.

The papers and correspondence relating to the Arctic Expedition have been presented to Parliament; and independently of the narratives of Sir James Ross, Sir John Richardson, and Captains Kellett and Moore—which have already been published—they contain the opinion and reports of the hydrographer of the admiralty, and of the most eminent Arctic officers, respecting the expedition to Behring's Straits, and those in process of organization under Captain Austin and Captain Penny. It is worthy of remark, that these authorities are unanimous in supposing that Sir John Franklin's Expedition is still in existence; and it cannot but be interesting to our readers to know the various grounds on which so many competent witnesses arrive at a common conclusion.

Admiral Beaufort says:—"There are four ways only in which it is likely that the *Erebus* and *Terror* would have been lost,—by fire, by sunken rocks, by storm, or of being crushed between two fields of ice. Both vessels would scarcely have taken fire together. If one of them had struck on a rock the other would have avoided the danger. Storms in these narrow seas, encumbered with ice, raise no swell, and could produce no such disaster; and therefore, by the fourth cause alone could the two vessels have been at once destroyed, and even in that case the crews would have escaped on the ice (as happens every year to the whalers). They would have saved their loose boats and reached some part of the American shores."—Sir Francis Beaufort argues, that as no traces of the Expedition have been found on those shores, it may be safely affirmed that one ship at least and both crews are still in existence: and after discussing the probable course of the Expedition, he arrives at the conclusion that it remains locked up in the Archipelago to the westward of Melville Island.

Sir Edward Parry conceives that the ships have been pushing on summer after summer in the direction of Behring's Straits, and are detained somewhere in the space south-westward of Banks' land. But while he advocates the desirableness of prosecuting the search by the way of Behring's Straits (to which he looks with the strongest hope,) he also thinks it expedient to continue the search in Barrow's Straits which Sir James Ross's forced return left unaccomplished.

Sir James Ross declared it to be hardly possible that the *Erebus* and *Terror* can be anywhere to the eastward of Melville Island, or within three hundred miles of Leopold Island; for if that were the case he conceives that the crews would most assuredly have made their way to the eastward last spring, and have been fallen in with by the parties detached from the *Enterprise* and *Investigator*, during their sojourn in Leopold Harbour. He therefore regards it as probable that Franklin was enabled during his first summer, which was remarkably favourable for the navigation of the Arctic Seas, to push his ships, in obedience to his orders, to the westward of Bank's Island—and has there become involved in the heavy pack of ice which was observed from Melville Island to be setting past its westernmost point in a south-east direction, and from which pack he may not have been able to extricate himself.

Captain Beechy entirely agrees with Sir Francis Beaufort and Sir Edward Parry that the missing Expedition is probably hampered amongst the ice somewhere to the south-westward of Melville Island, and he alludes to the possibility that the crews may be in such a debilitated state from the ravages of scurvy as to be incapable of making any exertion towards their release. Under these circumstances he considers that every possible method of relief should be directed to Barrow's Straits, Behring's Straits, and the northern coast of America.

Sir George Back is of opinion that the expedition is still locked up in the neighbourhood of Melville Island. He wholly rejects the idea of any attempts on the part of Sir John Franklin to send boats or detachments over the ice to any point of the main land eastward of the Mackenzie, because he is enabled to say from experience, that no toil-worn or exhausted party could have the least chance of existence by going there. From his knowledge of Sir John Franklin, he much doubts whether he would quit his ship at all, except in a boat; for any attempt to cross the ice a long distance on foot would be tempting death, and it is too laborious a task to sludge far over such an uneven surface as those regions generally present.—Therefore, Sir George conceives that the coast about Melville Island, including the south-west direction from Cape Walker to Wellington Channel, should be thoroughly explored.