

QUEBEC CENTRAL  
RAILWAY

1877

INSPECTION  
TRAIN

# THE QUEBEC CENTRAL.

**Inspection of the new road Railway engineering, limekilns and oyster soup—A trip down to Beauce.**

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT]

SHERBROOKE, November 29.

The Quebec Central Railway has been inspected. It was inspected yesterday, and the inspection party have unanimously declared that the country through which the new railway runs is perfectly safe. As the road was to be thoroughly inspected, extensive preparations were made for the occasion by Messrs. Bowen & Woodward, the enterprising contractors. The "preparations" were packed up safely in hampers, baskets, barrels and cans. They comprised cold roast turkey, sausage, ham sandwiches, bread, biscuit, oranges, apples, grapes, champagne, brandy, Sherry, ale and other engineering instruments necessary to test the curves, gradients and general workmanship of the road. It required a variety of talent to inspect the road. Messrs. Peterson and Blackwell, the Government engineers, were along, as a matter of course, with profiles, specifications, diagrams and note books, and the rest of the inspection party were supplied with umbrellas, three euchre packs, a large bundle of Sherbrooke Gazette soup, which on the face of it solemnly bound the proprietors of the Gazette to send one copy of that enterprising journal for the space of one year to any address on receipt of one dollar. The party were also supplied with pipes and well filled tobacco pouches, and at 10 a.m. the whole excursion was comfortably packed into two elegant first-class coaches at Sherbrooke station. Among the number were the following gentlemen from this city and vicinity:—Hon. J. G. Robertson, President of the Quebec Central; R. D. Morkill, Vice-President do; E. T. Brooks, M.P.; Wm. Farwell, Cashier E. T. Bank; Chas. Brooks, K. N. Hall, Wm. White, W. B. Ives, L. C. Belanger, J. Calder, Lieut.-Colonel Charles King, W. W. Beckett, Oliver Camiraud, Henry Camiraud, G. B. Reeve, Freight Manager, Grand Trunk Railway, Contractors, Superintendent Steele and Engineers of Railway, J. A. Archambault, Secretary, E. Clark, Mayor W. Chamblain Dr. F. D. Gilbert.

Whitcher will have this matter seen to at once, before the spawning season is over. The new section of the Quebec Central has been laid with steel rails, and the company have rails enough on hand to finish the balance of the road. Already considerable traffic has sprung up for this railway, in tanbark, ship's knees, square timber and lime. For these articles alone, some \$40,000 has been paid out during past year in the townships adjoining the road, mostly for shipment to the United States. It is the intention of the company to push on the grading of the road this winter, and new roads are being opened up by the Government that will bring to the railway the traffic from the old settlements of Beauce county and Lake Megantic. It would do Mr. Colby's heart good to see the amount of hemlock there is to be skinned in that section yet, and there will be ample opportunity afforded for years to come for the member for Stanstead to make Parliament ring with the tanbark question.

## THE RETURN OF THE EXCURSIONISTS.

One of the most interesting and important features of the inspection, to a great majority of the party, was the luncheon. After it was over a child could have played with the worst tempered man on the train with impunity. Even the breaking of the bank several times did not ruffle the serenity of the card players. The run back to Marbleton was accomplished in good time, and although it was dark when the train reached there, they switched off on to the Marbleton branch to see Mr. Chamberlain's far-famed lime-kilns, to which the road has lately been extended. A torch was improvised by Mr. Fred Bowen, who tied a quantity of cotton waste on the end of a stick and saturated it with oil. It burned brilliantly, and the effect was picturesque in the extreme. As the train was backed up the branch, the dense forest on either side, and the black sky overhead made the road look like a tunnel. The quarries are well worth a visit. The cars run alongside the four huge kilns, which are situated at the base of an immense cliff of limestone rock. The rock is thrown down by blasting, broken into sizes with sledges, and wheeled into the top of the kilns only a few yards from the base of the cliff, when, after passing through the kilns it is loaded into the cars



At a few minutes past ten Superintendent Steele shouted "all aboard," and the train started, the locomotive being in charge of Mr. John Conan, a sharp, clear-headed engine-driver. The ride to Marbleton, along the north side of the valley of the beautiful St. Francis river, was very romantic, and delightful to the excursionists, but it must have been somewhat disheartening to the engineers who located the line, and to the contractors who built the road. It is a succession of curves, deep cuttings and fillings that were sufficient to appal any but skilful men who undertook to surmount them. However, the difficulties have been nearly all overcome, and when the work now being done to lower some of the grades, straighten some of the curves, and to fill in the trestle-work is completed, the road will be a safe and substantial one.

#### BIG HOLLOW BRIDGE.

The train proceeded very slowly until it reached Big Hollow Bridge. Messrs. Peterson and Blackwell seated themselves at the rear of the car, and with the profiles, specifications and diagrams before them, put nasty questions to Mr. Woodward about culverts, grades, curves, slopes, trestles, etc., which were all answered satisfactorily, the train being stopped several times in order to allow them to examine the work. The rest of the party also took a deep interest in the inspection. The three euchre packs had been produced directly after the train left the station, and the most reckless gambling for GAZETTE scrip was soon in full swing, despite the stringent provisions of Mr. Blake's Bill for the prevention of gambling on public conveyances. The card players had all the excitement of gambling without either the risk or the profit. At Big Hollow the train was stopped to allow the inspectors to examine the bridge, and Mr. Peterson to take a photograph of it. The trestle work at this place, over Big Hollow Creek, is seventy-two feet in height, and it is a sight sufficient to make a nervous person shake to pass over it on a train. Mr. Fred. Bowen pointed out the spot where the locomotive with a construction train leaped the rails at the end of that bridge a couple of years ago, and a gang of over forty men, seized with a panic, jumped from the train over the bridge. Standing on the spot and looking down into the black-looking gulf below, the thought of seeing men take such a leap

portance of this business may be gained from the fact that the company have \$70,000 capital engaged in it, and when the kilns are in full operation they employ about two hundred men. Wood is very cheap throughout the whole of that section, and the lime cliffs at Marbleton are the only limestone quarries of any extent in a district of many miles square. The Marbleton lime is sent in large quantities to the United States. Mr. Lumis, one of the proprietors, says this industry requires no protection, as no Yankee manufacturers can compete with them in their business. When the party had inspected the kilns and quarries, they got on board the train and gave Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Lumis three hearty cheers for their enterprise. On the return of the train to the main line at Marbleton, some men appeared bearing a huge tin vessel filled with a steaming liquid, and when it was taken safely on board,

#### OYSTER SOUP

was announced as the order of the evening. It was a novelty in railway engineering, but few persons outside of Sherbrooke are aware of the strides which have been made in science and civilization by the people of this railway centre of late. When they do a thing in this city, they never do it by halves, unless they do it on the half-shell. Supping hot oyster soup on a rapidly moving train can no doubt be successfully introduced into railway engineering, but after the experience of yesterday the whole of the inspectors have come to the conclusion that it works better on roads which have no sharp curves, because the oscillation of the railway carriage has a tendency to spill oyster soup down the back of the man in front of you, or into your own lap, or somebody else's coat pocket. However, the party came to another conclusion also, and that is, the man who cooked those oysters knew his business.

The excursion was the jolliest affair that has taken place in the Townships for a long time. All it required to make it a thorough success was the presence of the ladies, but then, as some of the eldest inspectors on board, men who took theirs with a stick in it, said, "What do ladies know about engineering anyhow?" The same parties have remarked that Marbleton will always be associated in their memories with railway inspections, lime kilns and oyster soup.

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gang of over forty men, seized with a panic, jumped from the train over the bridge. Standing on the spot and looking down into the black-looking gulf below, the thought of seeing men take such a leap makes one shudder. Several of the poor fellows who did jump over were maimed for life; but owing to the depth of snow on the ground at the time no lives were lost. There is a pretty little trout stream running through Big Hollow, and the railway men say minck, martin and fisher are plentiful in that vicinity. Gold is also found there in small quantities, but not sufficient to pay to wash for it.

#### MARBLETON.

Marbleton Station, in the County of Wolfe, 29 miles from Sherbrooke, was reached at noon. At this prospective village a branch line has been built out two miles and a half to the north, to a limestone quarry, which the party proposed to visit on the way back. The road from Marbleton to Weedon Lake is through a newly-settled country. The land along the immediate line of railway on both sides is rough and of poor quality, but it is said there are sections of good country for settlement back at short distances from the road. The timber is a thick growth of spruce, balsam, tamarac, yellow and black birch and hemlock, while here and there are new settlements forming openings in the thick forest.

#### THE NEW SECTION.

From Weedon east the inspection of the newly constructed eighteen miles of road commenced. This part of the line runs through a much better country for railway construction than the old section, extending through Garthby and into Colrairie, in Megantic county. About fifteen miles of this is through Crown Lands, which are now opened up for settlement in the most convenient manner—a tract of country fifteen to twenty miles square. The beneficial result of the railway is seen already from the fact that about two hundred lots have been located in that locality this season. The country is new—in fact a perfect wilderness, covered with a thick growth of balsam, spruce and hemlock, tamarac and pine—the home of the blood-thirsty mosquito and the ferocious black fly.

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are told by the railway employees of what they have suffered from the flies while working in that section during the fly season. They say some of the men—fat men especially, and more especially fat Englishmen—had their faces swollen out of all shape and recognition by the fly bites, and none of the men could button the wristbands of their shirts over their swollen wrists. At one camp in the vicinity of Black Creek Lake, the cook was unable to work his dough, as he could not get his hands free from brushing the flies off his face, and the men had to live on slap-jacks for a week. The readers of the GAZETTE may believe these stories if they please, but if they do there are tougher ones to be told that will surely cause some doubt in their minds—for instance the story of the new settler in Weedon Dam who went out to look for his oxen that had strayed off, and after searching for them two days found their skeletons at the edge of a beaver meadow and some mosquitoes sitting on fallen trees close by picking their teeth with the oxen's horns. There are some readers, however, who will believe nothing unless they see it in the Witness, Rev. Mr. Bray, for instance. From Weedon Dam east the road runs through this dark, solitary looking forest of evergreens, already spoken of. The timber stands nearly as thick as it can grow. There is no underbrush, but the ground is covered almost fifteen inches deep with a soft carpet of beautiful moss, through which the rich dark green leaves of the fragrant mayflower and the wintergreen spring up and attain their greatest perfection. The dark monotony of this forest is broken on either side of the line at short distances by the road skirting the bays of Lake Aylmer, a sheet of water twelve miles in length, and Black Creek Lake, both of which are touched at several points. At 4 p.m. the inspection party reached the present terminus of the road, away into the heart of Colrain.

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"Far from the busy haunts of men," — a person of a romantic turn of mind would be led to exclaim, but for the fact that at a hundred years distant from the north end a force of about 200 able-bodied laborers were to be seen hard at work with pick shovel and axe, forming the road bed, for the continuation of the line to Quebec. The country through there abounds with game, the more valuable fur bearing animals and fish. The line is located on through Thetford, and about a mile beyond the point where the excursionists reached it touches Black Lake, where it will run at an elevation of 150 feet above the water, on the border of Black Lake Mountain. The following lakes can be seen from the railway, Lakes Ayinger, Black Creek, St. Francis, William, Trout, Joseph, Breeches and Black Lake, all of which will be

#### AN ATTRACTION FOR TOURISTS,

by the Quebec Central route. It is proposed to place a small steamer on Lake Ayinger next spring for the use of the settlers to the east, and for sportsmen who wish to spend some time fishing in that locality. Enormous quantities of fish can be caught there at present, but, like other good fishing grounds, the waters of that section will soon be depleted of fish unless the authorities step in and prevent the wholesale destruction that is now going on. At present nets are stretched across the narrows of Lake Ayinger, and the railway men say the fish are killed by hundreds. It is to be hoped Mr.