

**SOME STARTLING FACTS
RELATING TO THE CANADIAN
PACIFIC RAILWAY AND THE
NORTH-WEST LANDS, ALSO A
BRIEF DISCUSSION**

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A Brief Discussion by C. Horetzky

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C. HORETZKY

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CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

-AND THE-

NORTH-WEST LANDS,

-ALSO-

A BRIEF DISCUSSION

REGARDING

THE ROUTE, THE WESTERN TERMINUS

-AND-

THE LANDS AVAILABLE FOR SETTLEMENT,

-BY-

C. HORETZKY.

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OF
CALIFORNIA

Prefatory Remarks.

Various indications point to the existence of a wide spread and rapidly growing feeling of dissatisfaction and distrust throughout the older provinces of the Dominion, with regard to the adopted route and construction of that portion of the Canadian Pacific Railway which traverses the "Rocky Mountain" and "Cascade" Zones, and terminates at Burrard Inlet.

The main difficulty in the construction of the Pacific Railway is encountered in the "Cascade" or Coast range, through which any line from the interior of the Continent must pass in order to reach the coast. All surveys made hitherto have been met by this grave obstacle. The "Yale," "Bute Inlet," "Kemsquit," and "Skeena" routes are all, owing to this impediment, well nigh impracticable, and the adoption of any one of them could only be justified, were it to lead to tangible advantages beyond. No such advantages exist, the entire seaboard being but the adamantine buttress of a mountain range, one hundred miles in width.

The seaboard again, although pierced by countless Inlets, and presenting on the map a most favourable appearance, offers in reality very grave obstacles to the mariner, because of the nearly universal dearth of good anchorages. On the whole mainland coast there is but one really good natural harbour—Port Simpson. All others have drawbacks in a more or less degree.

The writer claims to be able to point out a solution of the coast range difficulty, besides certain other advantages of paramount impor-

tance. The matter in the following pages is, to some extent, a mere index of facts culled from various railway reports, in order to elucidate the writer's arguments, in favour of a Northern route for the Pacific Railway through the "Pine River Pass" of the Rocky Mountains, preferably to that of the "Yellow Head Pass," as advanced in 1874 in a little work entitled "Canada on the Pacific."

The writer has been connected with the Pacific Railway surveys since the inception of the project, and during the past nine years has seen and examined much more of the North-Western country and of British Columbia, than perhaps any Engineer of Mr. Fleming's staff.

Besides having originated the northern route *via* the Pine River Pass, in opposition to the sneers of certain individuals identified with the Frazer River Line, the writer claims a special practical knowledge of the British Columbian coast, from the Alaskan boundary line, southwards, and has, therefore, no hesitation in giving his views to the public, he merely asks the reader to examine carefully the written testimony, and to trust to his own common sense for his deductions.

CHAS. HORETZKY,

Late of the C. P. R. Surveys.

OTTAWA, May 31st, 1880.

THE object of the present pamphlet is to place prominently before the thinking portion of the Canadian public certain facts bearing materially, not only upon the future prospects of the country at large, but also and by no means in a small degree, upon British Imperial interests, in so far at least as these interests may be vested in the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Acting upon the advice—presumably at least—of the Chief Engineer of the railway in question, the Government of Sir John A. Macdonald has taken the initiatory step towards carrying out the compact of 1871 with British Columbia. Construction has been commenced on the Yale-Kamloops Section—a length of 125 miles.

The Toronto *Mail* of the 6th May, in commenting upon the very serious question of routes, betrayed its misgivings by the utterance of the following apologetical remark:—

“It must be said that if a mistake should have been made in the choice of the Burrard Inlet route, that mistake will have been made without shame or blame to any one.”

Exception may, perhaps, be taken to the above allegation. It is scarcely a matter of doubt that a mistake, and a very serious one, has been made. The article in question speaks of three seriously competing routes: the “Burrard,” the “Bute” and the “Port Simpson” routes.

“After eight years of surveys pushed forward at great cost, and “with infinite labour to all concerned,” the question has *not* been exhausted, and the testimony given in the following pages establishes beyond doubt that the true trans-continental route, and the true “Pacific” terminus of that route, have been most unaccountably lost sight of.

Six years ago, during an examination of the north-west coast of British Columbia, I discovered at the head of the “Kitimat” Inlet, or Douglas Channel, a small land-locked harbour, north from which stretched a beautiful valley leading directly to, and touching, the River Skeena at a point 75 miles above Port Essington. So much impressed were my little party and myself with the natural facilities of this locality towards the formation of a good harbour, and its adaptability for a terminus, that I made two attempts to discover access

from this point to the eastern interior plateau. My efforts were fruitless, and after a five weeks' delay at the head of this Inlet, our sloop, the "Triumph," left for the Dean Canal.

All the above facts were duly set forth in my Official Report, dated from "Bellabella, North-West Coast B.C., November 15, 1874," but for reasons unknown to myself, that Report was mutilated most unmercifully, and the last portion of it, descriptive of the coast from Douglas Channel to Queen Charlotte Sound, entirely suppressed. Reference to pages 137, 144, of Mr. S. Fleming's Report of 1877, will afford the most convincing proofs of this statement. A foot note at bottom of page 144, states that the matter omitted is treated of in another appendix. I can only say that such is not the case. The only reference made elsewhere to the valley of the Kitimat—none is made to the harbour or head of the Inlet—is at page 111 of Mr. Fleming's Report for 1877, where Mr. Marcus Smith alludes to "*the wide and low valley stretching to the north affording an easy route to the Skeena River.*" His visit to that locality was made a few days previous to mine, but he did not go far enough up the Inlet to see the bay at the northern extremity.* Now, this place being but 140 nautical miles from Port Simpson, or, say ten hours steaming through the safest and finest channels in the world, i.e., the "Grenville" and "Douglas" Channels, the former of which has been used for years, and safely navigated during the darkest and most stormy nights of winter by both British and American steamships bound up and down between Sitka and southern ports, being also accessible from the ocean by "Napean" and "Wright" Sounds, having also the advantage of havens of refuge at two places in the Grenville Canal, viz: Klewnugget Inlet and Lowe Inlet, besides Kitkatlah Bay on the west side of the Douglas Channel, and "Coghlin Anchorage" under the lee of Promise Island, not to speak of Clio Bay situated five or six miles south from the mouth of the river Kitimat, which not only affords anchorage, but also facilities for the construction of a dry dock, I dare affirm that it is extremely well situated for a terminus, being as near to Yokahama, Japan, as Port Simpson, viz: 4,000 geographical miles, and 400 miles shorter than the southern passage from Burrard Inlet.

I shall refer further on, to the marine engineering works required to transform the upper end of the Douglas Arm into a good harbour, and shall now proceed to describe the features of the railway route from

*NOTE.—Mr. Marcus Smith was the officer in charge of the western section until 1877. He has an intimate knowledge of British Columbia.

Kitimat, eastward to a point on the now located southern line, known as "Livingston," distant 682 miles from Thunder Bay, on Lake Superior.

A circumstance which, more perhaps than anything else, commends this route to our consideration, is the extraordinary fact that the formidable coast range of mountains which necessitates such frightful expenditure on the "Yale Kamboops," "Homathco," "Kemsquit," and Port Simpson routes, can be passed upon this one, with nearly as little trouble, danger or cost, as upon an average prairie section, the valley of the Kitimat being several miles in width, of a nearly level character, and clothed with a magnificent forest of heavy spruce, hemlock, cedar, and other trees, amongst which crab-apple and maple may occasionally be seen.

From tide water at the head of Douglas Arm, the valley rises almost imperceptibly for about 20 or 25 miles, at the rate of four-tenths per hundred to the "Divide," near Lake "Killoosah" or "Lakelse," thence the descent to the Skeena, or to some point upon that river nearly opposite the "Kitsumkallum" River, is very gradual, the entire distance probably not exceeding forty (40) miles. The mouth of the "Kitsumkallum" River is, by Mr. Keefer's estimate, about seventy-five miles above Port Essington, or rather more than 100 miles from Port Simpson, within which distance the work of railway construction along the Skeena would be extremely heavy, the line proposed being carried in the river bed in many places where the mountain bases afford little chance for a road-bed. In more than a dozen places the precipitous slopes are swept by avalanches of the most dangerous character. The shores of Wark Inlet are but little better. The contrast between those routes is very striking, and, as has been shown, the distance between Kitsumkallum and the sea is very much more than doubled on the difficult and expensive Skeena line. Roughly estimating, for the sake of comparison, the cost of construction on that portion of the Skeena route at six million dollars, and that of the Kitimat at one-and-a-half million dollars, we have a difference in the first section from tide water of four-and-a-half millions dollars, not to speak of extra cost for maintenance and repairs, which would, of course, be very much greater on the Port Simpson, Skeena route. One-fourth of that difference would go far towards the formation of an excellent terminal harbour at the head of the Douglas Arm.

From a point opposite Kitsumkallum River, on the left bank of the Skeena, the distance, to Hazelton, or the "Forks," is little more than seventy