

And the conclusion I came to was, that if there was a single, modest, gentle, unassuming individual in all the crowded scenes, that individual was the heir to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland, with all the colonies and dominions - himself.

The Northern Railway

On the 15th October, 1851, the friends of railway progress had the pleasure of witnessing the turning of the first sod of the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron - now the Northern Railway - by the Countess of Elgin, assisted by His Excellency the Governor General, in the presence, it may be said, of all Toronto - ministers of state, professors of the University and Upper Canada College, and a crowd of other dignitaries and citizens. The mysterious nature of the ceremony to the untutored masses, the brilliant prospects of commerce to the mercantile class, the perfect novelty of the occasion to all, made it perhaps the liveliest event which Toronto has experienced.

The real hero of the day was Frederic Chase Capreol - a man with a temperament so enthusiastic as to expose him to the charge of eccentricity, but who has lived to see his brightest visions respecting this road more than realized, although the rewards of his energy has, as is not unusual, gone to other men.

The population of Toronto was then 27,000 but has since (1884) grown to over 100,000, including the suburbs. The railroad was opened for traffic on the 16th May, 1853. The second locomotive engine was built in Toronto by James Good, Queen Street East and was moved on temporary tracks down Yonge Street escorted by a crowd of delighted citizens big and little, amid the exhilarating strains of a band of music.

The Canada Pacific Railway

I have mentioned that a surveyor named Lynn had, so long ago as 1834, published a chart of a transcontinental railway through Canada and the North West, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In 1851, the subject was introduced into our Canadian legislature by the Hon. P.B. de Alaqui re, who moved a series of resolutions on the subject in the Legislative Council. The same year appeared in the Patriot newspaper an advertisement signed by Allan McDonell, brother of the late Bishop MacDonell, giving notice of application to the Legislature for a charter for the construction of a railway from the headwaters of Lake Superior to the Pacific Ocean. Also included was a letter from the same gentleman from which I quote the following:

"Liverpool to St. Lawrence (miles)	-2600
St. Lawrence to British Boundary on Lake Superior	- 900
Lake Superior to Fuca Straits	<u>-1500 (?)</u>
Total	5000 (?)

"The distance from Fuca's Straits to Japan is about 4000 miles, to Shanghai about 5000. Vancouver Island commands the Straits, and abounds in excellent harbours. Coal of a superior quality is found there; the Indians mine it, and deliver it on board the Hudson's Bay steamers at a mere nominal charge. No