

south of Lake Nipigon. Further exploration may possibly unravel, from amidst the labyrinth of lakes and rivers that fill the shallow troughs of the Laurentian range to the north of Lakes Huron and Superior, a roadway near enough to the lakes to still further shorten the through-line, and bring it into closer relation at Sault St. Marie, with the Western States. To complete the trans-continental line this section is necessary, and must sooner or later be built, but better later than sooner if there be any possibility that delay and further exploration may reveal a more desirable route than even the last proposed.

The most fertile part of Ontario is almost an island of triangular shape. Taking as the apex the junction of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence, one side of the triangle is formed by the Lakes Ontario and Erie, whose general direction is S.W.; the other side by the River Ottawa, the River Mattawa, Lake Nipissing and French River, which make a water channel with but one short break, whose general direction is almost due west; and the base of the triangle by the Detroit River, Lake St. Clair, and the S.E. end of Lake Huron and the Georgian Bay. Within these limits lies the agricultural wealth of Ontario, and to these limits will probably be confined her population. Hence, private railway enterprise is rapidly rendering accessible its most distant point, Lake Nipissing, whence Government proposes to carry forward the work which private enterprise is not found rash or courageous enough to undertake. For, once beyond Lake Nipissing, we pass forward to Hudson's Bay amidst the tributaries of the Ottawa and the Abbitibi through a tangle of rivers and swamps where the white pine has disappeared before the spruce, red pine, birch, and poplar, and where the soil is not so rich nor the climate so salubrious as to tempt the settler away from more southerly zones. Going west from Lake Nipissing we enter at once the sterile mountain range which skirts the northern shore of Lake

Huron. No one who has sailed through the intricate channels and amidst the myriad islands of the Georgian Bay, and of the basin enclosed by the Manitoulin Islands and the mainland, or who has seen Killarney, the very skeleton of a settlement, and the arid hills behind the Bruce Mines—hardly less bare than the refuse ore-heaps themselves, and who has continued his voyage under the cliffs that abut on the shores of Lake Superior, refusing a span of level beach large enough to land upon, will hesitate to accept the decision that a feasible route does not exist along the Lake Shore for a railroad. This sterile region is, however, a mere strip, especially to the north of Lake Superior, where the Laurentian rocks, which give it its repellant physical and agricultural character, have but a narrow lateral development. The line of junction between these fundamental strata and the newer rocks which lie to the north and form the rim of the basin washed by the waters of Hudson's Bay, corresponds in a general way with the *height of land* between the adjacent fresh and salt water seas, and marks the transmission from the rugged, corrugated, thinly-timbered tract along the lake, to the level swampy ground, clad in dense forest, which descends with almost imperceptible slope to Hudson's Bay. The sinuosities of the *height of land* or water-shed so far as traced, follow the curves of the shores of the Georgian Bay and Lakes Superior and Nipigon at a distance of from 20 to 50 miles. This only once apparently undergoes a deflection that does not correspond with the coast line. This is where Lake Long, a spindle-shaped body of water, which is supplied by streams that rise within ten miles of Lake Superior, is interposed between the Pic River on the east, and Lake Nipigon and its feeders on the west. Lake Long discharges through the Albany into Hudson's Bay; the Pic rises in a lake not ten miles from the foot of Lake Long, and after running parallel to Lake Long, discharges into Lake Superior, where it meets