

NEW TRANSCONTINENTAL IN OPERATION; NATIONAL MAKES NOTABLE INAUGURAL TRIP

Route Via G. T. R. T. & N. O. and C. G. R. to Winnipeg Traverses Magnificent Scenery. Enormous Farming and Mining Territory and Pulpwood Forests. Paradise for Tourist and Sportsman Now Accessible

Canada's new Transcontinental Railway, the second bond of steel uniting East and West, is now in operation, the first regular train to traverse it having left Toronto at 10.45 last Tuesday night and arrived in Winnipeg, where it connected with the G. T. P. for Prince Rupert, at 8.50 p.m. on Thursday. It is jointly operated by the Grand Trunk, Temiskaming and Northern Ontario and Canadian Government Railway Systems.

Routed via North Bay, Cobalt and Cochrane and thence due west to Manitoba, the "National" as the crack train of the new route is known, passes through twelve hundred and fifty-six miles of Eastern Canada's grandest scenery, with scarcely a glimpse of the barren territory that makes rail travel a matter of endurance rather than pleasure.

In addition to regular passengers, about forty eastern newspapermen went along as guests of the three railways, returning from Winnipeg via the Great Lakes and reaching Toronto Sunday night. It was an experience the delights of which none will forget.

Demonstration at Toronto.
The "National" was inaugurated last Tuesday night, the new train being given a civic send-off at Toronto by Mayor T. L. Church and other officials of the city. There were also at the Enlan station the three commissioners of the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway, Chairman J. L. Englehart and Messrs Denis Murphy and Lee, the latter of whom accompanied the official party to North Bay. The splendid train of nine coaches

pronounced by railway men one of the finest that ever left Toronto, pulled out at 10.45 over the G. T. R. and shortly after daybreak reached North Bay, where the T. & N. O. took her in charge for the run through the world's richest mining district—a country lavishly endowed by nature, for the region between North Bay and Cochrane is one of the natural beauty spots of scenic Canada. It is unfortunate that comparatively few, principally those interested in mining operations, are aware of its charms.

Fascinating Travel Zone.
But the Transcontinental is the Open Sesame to this wonderland of the North and a new epoch has dawned. The tourist and sportsman have found a new paradise, within the range of a few hours' journey not only in the famed Temagami and Temiskaming regions along the T. & N. O., but on the Canadian Government Railway from Cochrane west, and particularly that section of it from Grant, a divisional point two hundred and fifty miles beyond Cochrane, to the Manitoba boundary—a network of sparkling lakes and streams, verdant-clad hills and islands, that thrilled the Isaac Walton of the party with a longing for rod and fly.

A Sportsman's Paradise.
These waters are said to teem with trout, bass, pike, pickerel, etc. No doubt they do, and more. Many a good story surveys and construction men of the pioneer days of the line can tell of the catches made in leisure hours.

"Magnificent game country" is a frequent exclamation of the traveller on the Transcontinental. Passengers

frequently saw deer, surprised along the right-of-way by the new iron denizens of the woods, take frightened flight into the timber. The engine killed a young bull moose near Hearst, one hundred and thirty miles west of Cochrane, on Wednesday night. These were only a few incidents of one phase of a most delightful journey.

Moose and Deer Country.
There are thousands of square miles of moose and deer country up there that have scarcely ever heard the crack of a sportsman's rifle—and it can now be reached in a Pullman. The waters are alive with bass, salmon trout, lake and brook trout, pike, pickerel, whitefish and other varieties. A number of summer resorts in the Temagami region are already fast becoming famous for the sport they yield the fisherman. The Transcontinental is a factor in another branch of the fish industry, as it will facilitate shipment of halibut from Prince Rupert via the G. T. P. to the East in ice cars. This business is already well established, fresh Prince Rupert halibut finding a ready market in New York and even in London and other parts of Britain where the North Sea fisheries are practically dormant owing to the war.

Rich Clay Soil.
The land is a clay loam of exceeding fertility, on heavy clay subsoil, and in the large cleared sections of which Cochrane, New Liskeard and intervening places are the centers it is producing crops with which only the choicest in old Ontario can compare. Grain, hay, roots and small fruits are grown with great success. If you don't think so, visit the fall fair at Cochrane this year.

An Educational Trip.
A great many Canadians have entertained the impression that the Transcontinental is "somewhere in the North," too close to the sub-arctic regions to ever be anything better than a connecting bond of steel between East and West. They let it go at that. Some of the newspapermen in the party frankly pleaded guilty to that belief. But not now; they have been shown.

A Land of Sunshine.
As a matter of fact, Cochrane is in a latitude about fifty miles south of that of Winnipeg. It is almost on the 49th parallel, just about corresponding with the southern boundary of Western Canada. New Liskeard is far south of any point in the West. Summers in the clay belt are hot and the winters could but dry. The season is slightly shorter than in old Ontario, but summer frosts are rare and counteracting the comparative shortness of the season is the fact that there is more daylight and therefore more sunshine in the twenty-four hours, which means that crops mature more rapidly. That is one of the secrets of the clay belt's productivity. Speding along the Transcontinental last Wednesday evening, weather fairly clear, a newspaper could be easily read by sunlight at 9.30 p.m. At this season there are about eighteen hours of daylight.

The Great Clay Belt.
While the country up along the T. & N. O. to Cobalt, Halleybury and New Liskeard is fairly well known to the public, by reputation at least, a description of that farther on is of greatest general interest, for perhaps few knew that at a conservative estimate the Ontario Department of Agriculture figures the available area of virgin farm lands in what is known as the "great clay belt" at thirty million acres.

That estimate is pronounced by people who know the country to undershoot the mark. But let it get at thirty million acres and try to picture what it means. It can't be done. You have to see it.

Area of Farm Lands.
New Liskeard, a fine little town of three thousand people, is one hundred and thirteen miles north of North Bay and just inside the southern fringe of the clay belt, which extends from there to 'way up beyond Cochrane, which is one hundred and forty miles from New Liskeard, at the tip of the Ontario government's long steel finger pointing toward the Arctic. Cochrane is only one hundred and seventy-two miles from James Bay and is the junction point of the T. & N. O. the Canadian Government Railways.

From Cochrane along the C. G. R. the clay belt stretches for approximately one hundred and fifty miles east and three hundred miles west. Square that by the distance between New Liskeard and Cochrane alone and one arrives at stupendous figures, rather hard to grasp at a distance. Of course it is not all future farm land; there is mining country in it, too, including Porcupine, Swastika, Larder Lake, Dane, etc.

Enormous Pulpwood Supply.
But practically the whole of this vast territory and a lot more outside its bounds is covered with timber and standing pulpwood, pulpwood and more pulpwood. One might venture to assert that there is enough pulpwood in Northern Ontario to wrap old mother earth and several of her planetary neighbors many times in news print and have enough left over to tuck them into a comfortable paper sack. Without knowing how many tons such a fantastic feat would require, one can easily believe that his train passes through sufficient forest growth to accomplish it. Properly conserved, Canada's pulpwood resources would appear to be inexhaustible.

Spruce Predominates.
Spruce is the chief member of the tree family in this region, some red and white pine, balsam and poplar and occasional splashes of birch and tamarac—but mostly spruce of a good size for pulpwood. Here and there are evidences that forest fires in other years have wrought some damage, but there is an efficient fire-rangefinding system now and stringent precautions are enforced.

Boon for the Settler.
This pulpwood is the incoming settler's first harvest. He hauls it out to the railway and sells to the mill-

owners at a good price that does himself and his family over the first and hardest years of the pioneer life. And the reaping of this harvest clears up the soil for the annual crop draft on Nature's stores.

Warmer Than Manitoba.
South of Cochrane the average date of last frost is June 5, first frost September 11. The mean average temperature at Halleybury, on the Quebec boundary, is 36.8 degrees and average annual precipitation 21.77 inches. At Kenora on the Manitoba boundary mean annual temperature is 35.5 degrees and average annual precipitation 21.14 inches.

Another thing to be counted upon in reckoning up future conditions is the fact that as a forest country is cleared the mean temperature becomes higher, the soil warms to a greater depth and nature is stirred to a more generous response to man's activities.

Enthusiasm En Route.
From North Bay to Winnipeg everybody along the route seemed to have taken a holiday to see the National flyer go through. At every town, village and station and even from the lone cabin of the fire ranger or settler God-speed was waved as she shot by. It was noon hour at Cobalt and it seemed that the whole town was out for the event. The National pulled in and out amid cheers and during the brief stop the travellers had a fine view of the celebrated silver camp. Cobalt lake, surrounded with great mine shaft buildings, is now drained quite dry, and operations have begun on its bed. A strike had recently been made under the station and the representative of a Cobalt paper regaled his conferees on the train with a vivid description of how his desk danced about to the tune of blasting operations in "shifts" beneath the town.

Similar receptions awaited the National as she skirted beautiful Lake Temiskaming and steamed through Halleybury and on to Englehart and Cochrane. The Ontario government has an eight hundred-acre experimental farm started at Monteth, in the heart of the farming country, and as if to remind one that he is still within the bounds of civilization the T. & N. O. has a large greenhouse and park at Englehart, which is five hundred miles north of Toronto, where all the flowers for the decoration of station grounds along the line are grown.

Velvety Roadbed.
Cochrane is the northern terminus of the Ontario government line and at that point the National swung westward on the Canadian Government Railway System, formerly known as the N. T. R., for the last leg of the run to Winnipeg, an almost straight-away flight of seven hundred and seventy-five miles over a fine, smooth roadbed. Rolling along at forty-five miles per hour, speed was unnoticed. Cochrane is the commercial center of the north country, an advantageous point for outfitting, hunting and fishing parties, and its tributary district embraces rich agricultural lands, gold-fields, nickel and iron mines and pulp and lumber mills. It has a station that would do credit to most big cities.

A Detention Camp.
Westward the line plunges through dense forests cut back from the right-of-way as a fire preventative. At one point the National came to a cleared area of some hundreds of acres. In the distance attention was attracted to about twenty buildings similar in type to the stock barns at the Ottawa fair grounds. A bunch of soldiers in a hot soccer game and a nondescript crowd around the buildings brought everybody out of the train, but they were promptly held up by more soldiers along the right-of-way. It was one of the war internment camps, housing about two thousand Austrians and a few Turks and Germans, who earn their keep and a small wage by clearing land for an experimental farm that will be established there. Attempts to "snapshot" this interesting spot in the wilds ceased at the sharp command: "No cameras."

"Do they ever get away?" a guard was asked. He waved his hand at the country and grinned. "How would you like to try 'hoofing' it out of here?" was all he said. The soldiers were mostly from Toronto and there was a big demand for news-

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ST. JOHN'S

Rivers Numerous.
West of Cochrane a number of majestic rivers wind through the country, including the Abitibi, the Mettagami, Missanabi, and several headwater branches of the Albany. This country is in the James Bay watershed and all flow northward. The water power of these rivers will be enormous when developed.

The Return Journey.
Across the Manitoba boundary the scene gradually changes and a stretch of prairie land unfolds itself to the traveller's view. Winnipeg is reached at 3.50 Thursday afternoon. Representatives of the city's industrial bureau met the visitors and motored them about the city, after which the easterners were their guests at dinner in the Fort Garry Hotel, one of the Grand Trunk's chain of big hostels, on a par with the Chateau Laurier here.

The party left the same night for Fort William over the C. G. R., where it boarded the Huronic, one of the Northern Navigation Company's palatial lake liners, on Friday afternoon. Sunday morning saw them in Sarnia after a delightfully cool passage across lakes Superior and Huron. A wireless from Mayor Walters of Hamilton, received in mid-Huron, asked the newspapermen to spend Sunday in the Ambitious City and a hearty acceptance was flashed back. Hamilton was reached at noon over the Grand Trunk and a motor drive was followed by luncheon at the Yacht Club. Toronto was reached, via G. T. R., at seven p.m., officially ending the great scenic loop by rail and lake.

The tour was personally conducted by Mr. H. R. Charlton, general advertising agent of the Grand Trunk System, and Mr. Walter Thompson, head of the Grand Trunk Press papers.

First Aids to Settlement.
For a considerable distance west on the C. G. R. the country is surveyed into townships and is being opened up with government colonization roads to facilitate settlement, a boon to newcomers in getting pulpwood and other produce out to the railway. The result of this policy is already evidenced by the sprinkling of settlements here and there, cosy little cabins that make the city man almost envy the people whose lives are laid in such inspiring surroundings.

One of the largest paper mills on the continent is being constructed at Iroquois Falls and will shortly begin operations on a huge scale. Others will follow at points along the Transcontinental, several large interests already having experts in there looking into water power facilities, which are abundant all through the region. A number of pulp mills and lumber mills are already operating.

Live Young Towns.
Hearst, Grant, Armstrong, Graham and Reddit are divisional points on the line, all bustling with business and feeders for their respective territories. Between Grant and Armstrong, about midway between Cochrane and Winnipeg, the traveller again enters a wonderland of lakes and islands, stretching over a distance of three hundred miles or more, almost to the border of Manitoba. This is destined to be one of the most famous hunting grounds of America, now that it is easily accessible, and already Winnipeggers are invading it with rod and gun at the western end. Graham is the junction point of the southerly branch to Fort William and Port Arthur.

Good Times Up North.
It has a big iron pyrites industry and extensive fox raising, lumbering and farming interests and is going ahead at a surprising rate. Indeed, depression is a thing unknown in the towns along the C. G. R. In the Temiskaming country, too, things are booming again, it being stated that they are much better in Cobalt than before the war.

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