

be the means of developing the resources of this immense territory, the traffic of which will greatly exceed that which the north shore of Lake Superior is likely to afford. If the line however should be located south of the Height of Land, or as a "a lake shore line," the settlement of this territory will be delayed indefinitely. Ultimately, however, there is hardly a doubt that some other company will undertake to make a railway on this northern route, the effect of which must be to intercept and carry off from the Canadian Pacific Railway, not only the whole traffic of this territory, but of the Hudson's Bay itself, while to the south it would have formidable competition for the lake shore traffic, most of which would, in all probability, fall to the share of the steamboats plying on Lake Superior. With such a competing line of railway to the north and Lake Superior to the south, I fail to see what local traffic the Canadian Pacific could possibly obtain from its Lake Superior section, either now or in the far distant future. My own opinion is that in the interest of all concerned, the main-line of the Canadian Pacific Railway should be located to the north of the Height of Land, pass north of Lake Nepigon and join the Thunder Bay branch somewhere between Tache and Wabegoon stations. Ultimately, as population in the North-West increased, a branch would probably be made from the north end of Lake Nepigon to the north end of Lake Winnipeg, and crossing the Nelson River, might be continued up the North Saskatchewan, nor end, possibly, until it reached Peace River.

The Dominion would then have a *back-bone*, which appears to me absolutely indispensable, if we ever aspire to be an *independent* nation, or even if we wish to remain as we are. As such a back-bone, however, for defensive purposes, a railway running along the shores of Lakes Huron and Superior, and thereafter for the greater part of its length, in close proximity to the international boundary, is utterly and completely useless should our independence be at any time threatened from the south, the only quarter from which it is ever likely to be threatened at all.

A glance at the map must convince any man of common sense that communication between our capital, Ottawa, and our North Western Provinces, might be interrupted with the greatest ease at many exposed and indefensible points on the projected route of our great national railway. This too, should be borne in mind, namely, that this railway affords the only communication we are likely to have for many years, with Manitoba, Keewatin, and even British Columbia. If in locating the route of this railway, so essential to the maintenance of our confederation if not also of our independence, such considerations as national defence, or, in plain terms, military considerations, are entitled to no weight whatever, I cannot understand what possible plea or justification there can be for the heavy expenditure incurred in the support of militia, volunteers, military colleges and such like, or indeed for making the Lake Superior section of the road at all. With running powers sufficiently guaranteed over American lines of railway south and west of Lake Superior to the boundary of Manitoba, all that would be needed for many years to carry on the united trade, travel and traffic between Montreal and Toronto on the one hand and Manitoba and the North West on the other, is simply the extension of the Nipissing and Algoma branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway, from Algoma Mills, its present terminus, to Sault Ste. Marie, and a line from Bracebridge to connect with the Canadian Pacific Railway at or about Spanish River.

If, however, other objects than those of mere trade and commerce imperatively demand consideration and attention, then it is abundantly evident that the main trunk line of the railway should pass over the Height of Land before it reaches Lake Huron, and follow some such route as I have indicated. Then a great step will have been taken toward the speedy development and settlement of the territory which forms the more immediate subject of this report, and its importance and value to the Province of Ontario will be greatly enhanced. Until this vital question is decided and our claim to the territory definitely settled, it is unnecessary to deal further with this branch of the subject.

In conclusion under this head, I may observe, that before my explorations in this territory, I fully believed that it would be better, if not absolutely necessary, to locate the main-trunk line of the Canadian Pacific Railway south of the Height of Land and as near to the north shores of Lakes Huron and Superior as possible; but a more impartial consideration of the question, and fuller knowledge of the facts, convince me that