

It has been found impossible to make any comparison with the Northern Pacific Railway, projected through the Territories of the United States to Puget Sound, as no reliable information could be obtained respecting distances, gradients, elevations, or probable route, except on that portion of the undertaking east of the Red River.

In concluding this Report it may not be out of place to remark that a Survey of such magnitude through a country for the most part uninhabited and destitute of the means of shelter or subsistence could not be prosecuted without encountering risks and hardships to the individuals engaged.

The serious responsibility of keeping all the various parties properly supplied with at least common necessities of food was fully appreciated from the beginning, and although supplies may, in isolated cases, have run short, no actual suffering from want has been reported.

It greatly grieves me to report the loss of seven poor men, who perished last summer through forest fires while engaged in carrying provisions to one of the surveying parties north of Lake Superior.

No other very serious disaster has occurred, although several narrow escapes have been met with. Since the winter set in several men have been badly frozen.

It is impossible to speak too highly of the courage and endurance displayed by members of the Staff, more especially of those who, in order to carry out the wishes of the Government with as little delay as possible, did not hesitate, after the summer's campaign had terminated, to remain out on the exploration during the winter.

Some of these parties have been out for nearly ten consecutive months embracing the whole of winter with all its severity. The service under the circumstances of country and climate could not fail to be a very severe one. It was impossible to supply them adequately with shelter or change of diet, in consequence of which several painful cases of scurvy have resulted.

All hardships and deprivations have, however, been braved and endured in a manner deserving of the highest commendation.

It is extremely gratifying to be able to report that with very few exceptions all the members of the Staff, including those engaged in the Commissariat Branch, entered on their several duties with great zeal, and exerted themselves in every possible way to bring the work to a successful issue.