

APPENDIX No. 13.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF,
OTTAWA, 6th January, 1880.

SIR,—I have the honor to present my report on the progress made within the year 1879, in establishing the Pacific Railway.

EXPLORATIONS IN THE MOUNTAIN REGION.

Early in the season explorations were commenced in the northern section of British Columbia, to obtain information considered necessary to enable the Government to finally determine the route of the railway across the Mountain Region to the Pacific Coast. The attention of the explorers was specially directed to Port Simpson and its approaches from the open sea, to Wark Inlet, to the Valley of the River Skeena, to the wide tract of wilderness country where the tributaries of the Skeena and the Peace take their rise, to the Peace River district, and to the several northern passes through the mountains.

Arrangements had been made to have reports of these explorations forwarded from time to time, and before the end of September the parties who had crossed over the country from the Pacific Coast reached Edmonton, and from that point transmitted to me by telegraph the general results of the season's operations.

I immediately reported for the information of the Government, and on the 4th October an Order in Council was passed finally adopting the route by Yellow-Head Pass and the River Fraser, to Burrard Inlet.

EXPLORATION AND SURVEYS IN THE PRAIRIE REGION.

In order to gain a general knowledge respecting large areas in the Prairie Region which had never been visited by scientific travellers, a number of exploring parties were sent out, each with special instructions as to their duties. These parties have returned with much valuable information which, when arranged in proper form, will be embraced in a special report.

The Government having determined upon changing the location of the railway west of Red River so as to run south of Lake Manitoba, surveys were commenced early in the summer. Starting from the western end of Contract No. 14, at Selkirk, the line was run in a south-westerly direction until it reached the fourth base line, near to the Penitentiary; thence west along the fourth base line to the western boundary of the Province. Another line starting from the same point at Selkirk, but running more directly west, crossing the Oak Hummock marsh, at its narrowest point, and taking advantage of a slightly elevated ridge, followed west on the blind line four and a half miles north of the fourth base line, to the westerly line of the fifth range of townships,