

proved to be really practicable. It cannot be denied, however, that the circuit described by the valley of the Fraser as far north as lat. $54^{\circ} 45'$ is immense, as compared with a straight line from the Cache to Quesnel-Mouth, both of them in the same latitude—220 miles against 120. So much so, that a shorter line was suggested by the writer as far back as June, 1867, which, though traversing a greater extent of mountainous country, would, if found to be practicable, alike open the Chilecaten plain, and pass over a tract of agricultural country equal to that by the Fraser; at the same time that it would be more central as regards the southern portion of the colony. This line would follow Milton and Cheadle's track,* but only to a point some 20 or 25 miles below the Forks, where the Upper Thompson falls in from the N.E.; so as to cross the Bald or Gold Mountains, about lat. $52^{\circ} 10'$, 40 to 7 miles south of their point of greatest elevation, and, consequently, at a much lower altitude, and reach the Great Quesnelle, or, more probably, Horsefly Lake, beyond; whence the line would continue west to the "Gap," or entrance of the Bute Inlet valley.

Carrying out this idea, the distance from the summit of the Yellow Head Pass to opposite the Cache is 58 miles.

The road would then cross the Fraser, which is here very impetuous, to the Cache, situated in a valley about 5 miles wide at its base on the river, and running to a point 15 miles south. Part of this valley is rich and fit for settlement, but the southern end is sandy and undulating. The road would pass up it over easy ground, cross Cranberry river, a small tributary flowing north to the Fraser, then skirting a small lake, imperceptibly pass the watershed between the Fraser and the Columbia. The valley is divided here by a line of hills to the south, and forks into two narrow valleys. Taking the more westerly one, the road would follow it for a mile or so, leaving the mountains to the east, and reach Canoe river, a rapid stream flowing from the N.W. at the foot of a steep, sandy cliff. Distance

Crossing Canoe river, the road after running a mile or two S.W. would make a detour of a couple of miles to the west, in order to get round the point of a range of hills to the south; and passing among rocks and burnt timber enter a narrow valley to the west of them, drained by a small stream running north. This it would follow up, rising imperceptibly for 8 or 10 miles, to a little marshy lake, called Albreda Lake, occupying the bottom of the valley, and forming the watershed (2,900 feet above the sea) between Canoe river and the North Thompson. Following the stream from this lake, the road would continue south for about 18 miles along a valley closely shut in by steep, pine clad hills, with snowy limestone mountains in the rear, and over undulating hilly ground, requiring a certain amount of

Miles 75

* I am kindly indebted to these gentlemen for a portion of the following and some of the preceding details.