

from Halifax to Quebec will be 635 miles, and from Montreal 803 miles, and from St. John's to Quebec about the same distance; making the entire distance by railroad, from Western connections, 511 miles shorter to Portland than to Halifax and St. John's. This great increase of distance cannot compensate for the less ocean distance from the two British posts. We thus stand in this strong position; the great water-line of the lakes, and its system of canals and rivers, has the shortest railroad connections with American ports, both on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts; making Puget's Sound the great port for all seasons of the year, and Portland the winter port of the Canadas, and the depot for the business which will pass over the rail at all seasons of the year.

Mr. President, I did not suppose, when I entered upon this subject, that I should occupy so much time. There are other subjects that I desire much to dwell upon, in regard to which I have made a most careful examination. Since I accepted the invitation of your committee to address your society on the subject of the Northwest, I have endeavored to exhaust all existing information respecting the climate of this great region of country.

I will refer for a single moment to the isothermal lines laid down upon this map.

In constructing this isothermal map, the curves have not been reduced to the level of the sea, but have been laid on the natural surface of the ground. They have been deduced from the observations of temperature brought down to the present time. This method, though not strictly correct, will be near enough for practical purposes. The rolling character of a country will make it impossible to arrive at perfect accuracy in establishing the isothermal curves of the natural surface. But it is not probable that the error in any case will exceed one degree.

The altitudes of important points, as the passes of the Rocky, Bitter Root, Cascade, and Sierra Nevada mount-