

To the Honorable A. TURGEON,
Commissioner of Colonization and Mines,
Quebec.

Sir.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th ultimo, stating that it was your intention to put all the returns available of my exploratory surveys of the Lake St John, Mistassini and James Bay regions before the House during the present session of the Legislature, and asking in addition to the same that I should give you my appreciation of the most feasible and advantageous route for railway communication between Quebec and James Bay.

The different plans and profiles with accompanying reports transmitted herewith, together with those transmitted in November 1897, June, 1899, and August 1900, complete the whole series from section No 1 to No 16 inclusively, giving the general topography, resources and capabilities of the country, and it only remains now to add a few remarks on the different proposed routes for a railway line or lines to develop that vast inaccessible region.

Many routes have been suggested and more or less advocated to reach James and Hudson Bay, at least seven in the province of Quebec and probably as many more from Ontario.

In 1897 the Quebec and James Bay Ry Company's charter was extended and confirmed by Dominion Act of Parliament, for a railway from some point on the Quebec & Lake St John Railway to James Bay, and it appears by the press that other companies are now applying for charters starting from points west of Quebec even as far west as lake Temiscamingue to reach James Bay also.

Having had occasion to examine more or less during the last twenty years the country traversed by the different proposed routes. I have prepared a table of distances of the seven possible lines which is herewith submitted, giving the number of miles of railway already in operation that may be used, and the number of miles to be built to reach James Bay by each route.

Where no surveys have been made, the distances are obtained by measuring on the plan and adding 10 per cent for curvature in each case.

In my report of progress of the 29th November, in speaking of the route from Roberval to James Bay, I said that this would be the most