

Nanaimo and Victoria and Sidney railways on the Island and points on the Mainland, but the connection is only incidental and does not form any part of the regular and permanent daily service of any railway system. Such as it is, it demonstrates, if demonstration were necessary, that the inland waterways can be advantageously used for the transportation of trains. As long ago as 1879 Marcus Smith wrote to Sir Charles Tupper, then Minister of Public Works, in regard to the Bute Inlet route:

"The difficulties of carrying railway trains across the Strait to Vancouver Island are greatly exaggerated by the opponents of this route. The Great Western and Grand Trunk railway companies have conducted a large traffic for 25 years by means of a ferry crossing a current of four to six miles an hour, and obstructed by ice in winter. Surely we can manage a smaller traffic with a ferry free from such drawbacks."

I quote this extract for the purpose of showing that in the opinion of one of the greatest authorities on railways in Canada, or anywhere else in America, thirty years ago, the waterway was not an obstacle to railway connection with the Island, as part of a transcontinental road designed for both military and commercial purposes. Since Mr. Smith wrote the Memorandum from which this extract is taken, wonderful developments have taken place in car-ferries, and there is no railway man, whose opinions are worth anything at all, who looks upon a ferry as an obstacle. The General Manager of the Pere Marquette railway, which operates car-ferries across Lake Michigan, a distance of 75 miles and more, once said to me in response to a question as to the cost of ferry transportation: "The Almighty makes the track for the car-ferry and keeps it in repair." I shall endeavor before concluding this series of articles to give some information on the subject of car-ferries. For the purpose of what is now to be said I shall treat them as of proved advantage for the carriage of trains, in places where for some reason a land line is inadvisable or impossible, and that the cost of transportation by ferry is not more—I think it can be shown that it is less—than by a similar length of land line.