

mense value and importance, both commercially and politically, my proposed railway would be to the British Empire, to the Dominion of Canada and to British Columbia.

In the years 1860 and 1861 I was engaged in constructing a trail for pack animals and a portion of a wagon road between Fort Hope and Princeton and availed myself of the opportunity of making explorations in that section of the country, and also of making more extensive and accurate explorations of the valleys of the Fraser and Thompson Rivers.

All the explorations I had now made convinced me that the proper line to adopt for a great trunk wagon road to ensure the substantial development of British Columbia was by the valleys of the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, &c., and that it was by this route my proposed transcontinental railway should also be built, provided I could find a practicable line from Kamloops to the valley of the Columbia River.

As I now saw there was no prospect of my being able to get the money needed to make an exploration of such a difficult and then practically unknown and inaccessible country as that east of Kamloops to the Rocky Mountains was, I decided to defer my efforts in that direction to a more favorable time, and in the meantime embark in the rather unpromising undertaking of getting a wagon road built from Yale to Cariboo. In an address to the Art, Historical and Scientific Association of Vancouver in March, 1907, I gave the History of the Cariboo wagon road, and at the end of the year 1864 I saw that the opportunity had arrived that would enable me to get the money granted by the Government to continue my explorations east of a meridian passing through Kamloops.

I was in Cariboo completing the wagon road to the Cottonwood River, &c., &c., at the latter end of the year 1864, and as two members were to be elected, one for Cariboo East and the other for Cariboo West, to represent those districts in the Legislative Council, I decided to contest the election for Cariboo West and the evening before the nomination I forwarded to the Governor my resignation of the office I held, which was that of Government Engineer in charge of all works, surveys, &c., going on in that part of the colony.

I was duly elected and as soon as I reached New Westminster I arranged with Governor Seymour for the money to make "the Columbia River Explorations," and at the end of the session I resigned my seat, was appointed Assistant Surveyor-General and resumed my explorations. Six weeks after leaving New Westminster I reported that I had discovered

THE "EAGLE PASS."

through the Gold Range and the probability of a pass through the Selkirk Range by the valley of the Illecillewaet River. From the day that I finished my traverse through the Eagle Pass up to the present time I never had the slightest doubt where the line for

Canada's first and greatest transcontinental railway should be constructed west from Revelstoke to Coal Harbor, and that a large and beautiful commercial city would grow up on the shores of Burrard Inlet, and as the City of Vancouver now fully confirms my belief, formed at the time I discovered that long wished for pass, I don't think I made a very bad mistake and trust the people of Vancouver will think I did them some substantial benefit, and that Vancouver will become to them, as it has been to me, more loved as longer known.

From my own exploration of the valley of the Illecillewaet River made in 1865, and of its southeasterly branch and Rogers Pass made in the year of 1866 by one of my assistants, Mr. Albert Perry, nearly twenty years before Major A. B. Rogers explored that pass, it is my opinion that the location of the Canadian Pacific Railway across the Selkirk Range of mountains is a very serious mistake. In fact I think the entire line of the Canadian Pacific Railway between Revelstoke and the northwest corner of the Lake of the Woods is on a very inferior location to one that would have been obtained had it not been for the very peculiar course pursued by the engineer-in-charge, who disregarded my recommendations relative to the location of the railway through the mountains and attempted to decide such an all-important matter as the location of the Canadian Pacific Railway through the "Sea of Mountains" from his comfortable office in Ottawa.

As soon as I found out the very objectionable features that a line across the Selkirk Range would have, for all time, to contend with, and which were steep grades, sharp curves, rock and snow slides which would endanger life, delay traffic and necessitate high transportation charges, I decided to explore for a line by the valley of the Columbia River from Revelstoke around the "Big Bend," passing the Boat Encampment, and thence to and through the Howse Pass, and thus avoid the Selkirk Mountains altogether and cross the Rocky Mountains with a very much lighter grade than could be obtained through the Kicking Horse Pass.

My proposed line would have been favorably located for a branch line running northerly through the valley of the Canoe River, and which branch might eventually be extended to Dawson, and also for a southerly branch through the valley of the Upper Columbia River and lakes, a portion of the Kootenay River and ultimately connect with American railways to Spokane Falls and other points in American territory that were at that time being rapidly settled and developed by the extension of the railway system of the United States.

The Winter coming on when I was exploring the headwaters of the Illecillewaet River, I was forced to discontinue my explorations for that year and returned to New Westminster.

Early next Spring I again resumed my explorations and on my way back to the Columbia River, on arriving at Snuswap Lake, found it covered with ice and the