

Bolton, Ont., on the Toronto-Owen Sound line.—The line will pass along the west side of the Muskoka Lakes, and will probably touch Lake Muskoka at Bala Falls. The Toronto-Owen Sound line of the C.P.R. will be used as far as Bolton. The grading of the northern section of this branch from Romford to Byng Inlet is about completed.

Victoria Harbor to Sharbot Lake.—It is announced that surveys are to be made for a branch line from Victoria Harbor, Ont., north of Lake Couchiching to the Montreal-Toronto line at Sharbot Lake, and that a grain elevator will be built at Victoria Harbor.

Fort William-Winnipeg Second Track.—It is proposed to construct about 50 miles of double-track during the current year, but the arrangements have not all been completed.

Central Division Betterments.—During the current year the work in connection with the reduction of gradients will be gone on with on the different sections of this division. The number of cubic yards of rock and other material to be moved in the various sections is approximately as follows: Fort William to Ignace, Ont., 57,000 cu. yds.; Ignace to Rat Portage, Ont., 59,000 cu. yds.; Rat Portage, Ont., to Winnipeg, 81,000 cu. yds.; Winnipeg to Brandon, Man., 18,400 cu. yds.; Brandon to Broadview, Assa., 55,000 cu. yds.; Moose Jaw to Swift Current, Assa., 95,000 cu. yds. During the season 381.7 miles of track will be ballasted, the mileage being divided among the districts as follows: Fort William, 30 miles; Ignace, 30 miles; Rat Portage, 13 miles; Brandon, 85.8 miles; Broadview, 50 miles; Moose Jaw, 117.8 miles; Swift Current, 23.1 miles, and 32 miles. In the Moose Jaw section there will also be 54 miles of bank widening, and in the Swift Current section there will also be some bank widening done. New bridge work will also be done as follows: a 200 ft. through steel span at mileage 114, Rat Portage section; a 100 ft. steel girder at mileage 27, and a 150 ft. through lattice girder at mileage 40, Emerson section; a 100 ft. through lattice span on stone abutments at mileage 27, and a bridge of five 150 ft. Howe truss spans on concrete abutments at mileage 47, Portal section. There will also be 24 miles of 80 lb. steel laid on the Broadview section, and 88 miles on the Moose Jaw section, releasing 56 and 60 lb. steel, which will be relaid elsewhere. It is also intended to lay out a new sorting yard at West Fort William to facilitate work in handling cars during the wheat rush, and to relieve congestion in the Fort William yards; and to build an addition to the station at Moose Jaw.

Lake Winnipeg Extension.—An extension of 18 miles will be constructed northerly from Winnipeg Beach, Man., during the current season. The line has not been definitely located, but we were advised May 25, that a survey party was in the field. (May, pg. 205.)

Branches from Saskatoon.—It has been arranged to construct a branch easterly and a branch westerly from Saskatoon, Assa., about 25 miles in each case. We have been advised, however, that it has not been definitely decided to take up the construction of these branches this year.

Reston-Wolseley Branch.—A contract has been let to J. D. McArthur, Winnipeg, for the construction of 40 miles of line to connect Reston, Man., on the Arcola branch line, with Wolseley, Assa., on the main Transcontinental line at mileage 295 miles west of Winnipeg. (May, pg. 205.)

Quill Lakes Branch.—The location of this branch of the Manitoba and North-Western Railway has been approved by the Board of Railway Commissioners. The branch as proposed starts from the main line in sec. 15, tp. 30, range 11 west of the 2nd meridian

and runs to sec. 8, tp. 33, range 21 west of the 2nd meridian. We are advised that nothing definite has been arranged as to when construction will be started on this branch.

Pheasant Hills Branch.—This branch, which is in operation from Kirkella, Man., to Lipton, Assa., 146.5 miles, is being extended to a further distance of about 55 miles to Strassburg, mileage 202. The contract has been let to Foley Bros., Larson & Co. (Apr., pg. 151.)

Blenfai Branch.—The Railway Commissioners have approved of the plans for the construction of the extension for 4.32 miles in Assiniboia. (May, pg. 205.)

Western Division Improvements.—During the current year 220 miles of track will be ballasted, the mileage on the different sections being: Medicine Hat, 57 miles; Calgary, 44 miles; Laggan, 20 miles; Lethbridge, 30 miles; Cranbrook, 49 miles; Sirdar, 20 miles. The new bridge work on this division includes a 100 ft. deck plate girder at mileage 109.9; a 150 ft. span at mileage 179.1 Calgary section; a 70 ft. half deck plate girder on concrete abutments at mileage 57, and a 100 ft. through truss span to replace wooden structure at mileage 96.3, Laggan section. It is also intended to lay 80 lb. steel for about 95 miles in the Medicine Hat section; 11.7 miles in the Calgary section, and 81.5 miles in the Laggan section, to replace the present 56 and 60 lb. steel. A new station will be built at Medicine Hat.

The Calgary and Edmonton Ry. now terminates at Strathcona, on the south bank of the Saskatchewan River, opposite Edmonton. The company has a charter to extend into Edmonton, and to cross the river by a high level bridge. The Board of Railway Commissioners has approved of the location of the extension. (Jan., pg. 25.)

Wetaskiwin Branch.—The contract for the extension of the branch easterly from Wetaskiwin, Alta., from mileage 25 to mileage 50, has been let to Breckenridge and Lund, Wardner, B.C. The work is to be completed this year.

Lacombe Branch.—A contract for an extension of this branch for 25 miles beyond the present terminus, 25 miles east from Lacombe, Alta., has been let to Foley Bros., Larson & Co. The contract is for grading, the C.P.R. as usual doing its own track-laying. The work is to be completed this season.

Yahk to International Boundary.—The sanction of the Board of Railway Commissioners has been given to the plans and profile of the proposed branch from Yahk, at mileage 40.8 west of Cranbrook, B.C., to the International boundary, 9.19 miles. Tenders for the construction of the line have been asked.

Pacific Division Improvements.—The ballasting to be done during the current year will be on 80 miles of track as follows: 24 miles in Mountain section; 31 miles in Shuswap section, and 10 miles in Thompson section, and 15 miles in Cascade section. The bridge construction will include: two 60 ft. spans at mileage 106; two 60 ft. plate girders and one 100 ft. deck lattice girder at mileage 106.8; an 80 ft. deck plate girder at mileage 107.2; two 60 ft. deck plate girders at mileage 107.3; two 30 ft. deck plate girders at mileage 111.4; two 60 ft. deck plate girders at mileage 122.5; and a bridge consisting of six 30 ft., one 30 ft. deck plate girder, two 100 ft. deck lattice girders and four steel towers; all on the Mountain section. Five miles of 80 lb. steel will also be laid. The general work to be undertaken includes the rearrangement of tracks and yard improvements at Revelstoke, North Bend and Vancouver, a new station at Revelstoke, and an hotel at Victoria. A description of this

hotel is given on pg. 241. General repairs and a number of improvements are also to be carried out during the year at the company's mountain hotels, and on the mountain trails in the vicinity of Glacier and Field.

Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Ry.—The company has under construction a line from Thief River Falls westerly for 300 miles, to a junction with the main line at Kenmare, N.D., about 32 miles south of the International boundary at Portal, Assa., where a junction is effected with the C.P.R. It is expected to have the line completed this fall.

Transcontinental Railway Surveys.

The first report of the Transcontinental Railway Commission was presented to Parliament May 22. It confirms the favorable reports which have appeared from time to time as to the easy gradients obtainable and the character and resources of the country, not only between Moncton and Quebec, but westerly towards Winnipeg. It has not yet been ascertained whether a line north or south of Lake Abitibi would be more advantageous. The commissioners dissent from the idea that the Intercolonial Ry. could be used for the eastern section of the line. Were this done, they say, the country would be deprived of a more profitable line for freight, and much valuable country would be unopened. Chairman F. B. Wade summarizes the work already accomplished. He states that the commission has decided, subject to the approval of Parliament, to take over a portion of the survey work on the eastern division, performed by the G.T. Pacific Ry., for which \$289,863 will be paid. Although the G.T. Pacific management is strongly of opinion that it has secured the best possible line through the country east of Winnipeg, the commissioners decided it would not be advisable to take this for granted, and further explorations are accordingly being made. "We have reason," Mr. Wade says, "to hope for very substantial improvement upon the line obtained by the G.T. Pacific Ry., but it is too early yet to attempt to go into details."

So far as could be learned the chief instrument men and other men on parties taken from the G.T.P. were mostly, if not all, Canadians. The preliminary surveys in districts A from Moncton to the boundary between New Brunswick and Quebec, and B from the boundary line between New Brunswick and Quebec to Clear Lake, have been completed, and the parties withdrawn from the field. The commission is now possessed of sufficient information to enable a decision to be arrived at as to whether the line via Fredericton and the St. John River valley or one across the centre of New Brunswick shall be adopted. As to whether the line should run north or south of Lake Abitibi in Ontario it will be some time before the commissioners will have sufficient data to make up their minds on the point. It is proposed to commence location surveys in districts A and B as soon as local conditions permit, and it is expected that surveys for this stretch, from Moncton to Clear Lake, in Quebec, as well as for F from Winnipeg to Lake Nepigon, will be completed, so that tenders may be invited in early autumn. As far as the commissioners are aware all their employees are British subjects, and with very few exceptions Canadian-born. They are confident that there will be a full home supply of both skilled and common labor for all their purposes. They have laid down the rule that promotion must be made on merit alone, and in the matter of merit the judgment of engineers in their department will prevail.

Speaking of Lake Abitibi region and the