

OVERLAND ROUTE

FROM

Canada to British Columbia.

THE urgency of a direct communication between the Canadas and the Pacific, through British Territory, is becoming every day more and more evident. In a political point of view, and as a natural consequence of the late Confederation, it would contribute essentially to its prosperity; for so long as there is no direct Overland route, any connexion with British Columbia must remain a myth, and the Red River Settlement continue isolated, instead of becoming a valuable annex to the Union. At present England has no other postal communication with the Pacific but by New York and San Francisco; and in case of war with the United States, the only possible postal line would be through her own Territory across the Rocky Mountains; whereas by opening an Overland Communication immediately, a mail service would be established forthwith, not only to British Columbia and Vancouver Island, but before long to Australia and Asia. In the United States the Central Pacific Railroad passes over what is commonly called the great American Desert, a vast tract of country, destitute of wood and water, dry, barren and unfit for the habitation of man; yet in spite of this drawback, and though San Francisco possesses no coal, it is progressing rapidly, and the time is not far distant when it will be opened. Passengers, mails, and the lighter, costlier kinds of goods will pass over it; it is calculated to divert a great part of the trade of China and Japan from the Old to the New World, and if we do not wake up, we shall bitterly regret the lost opportunity, and an important traffic, which might so easily pass over our own territory, and which, from our position, ought naturally to belong to us.

The cost of an Overland Railroad, with a single line of rails, from Ottawa to the Pacific, may be roughly calculated as follows:

	MILES.
Distance from Ottawa to Fort Garry, partly over difficult ground	1150
From Fort Garry to Jasper's House [foot of Rocky Mountains], level plain	1050
From Jasper's House to the Head of Bute Inlet	620
Total	2820