

Taking, first, the leading idea of all the Island contributors to the discussion, viz., that Esquimalt *must* be the terminus, in order, as they argue, to give the Canadian Pacific a chance to compete successfully with American transcontinental lines. Now, we think it may be stated as a proposition which will admit of no dispute, that the *shortest* line, in these go-ahead days, will naturally have the best chance in any such competition, provided that line does not possess any serious counterbalancing disadvantage, such as great cost in constructing or heavy expense in operating. And it may also be taken for granted that the line which can be most cheaply maintained and operated will have a great deal in its favour. Taking the question of distance first, we turn to Mr. Fleming's latest report, and find this:—

Let us assume, for the sake of the argument, that a railway is completed and in operation to both points, Burrard Inlet and Esquimalt, and a person at Esquimalt desires to travel to Ottawa. He has the option of crossing by steamer, 100 miles, to Burrard Inlet, and then using the railway, or of taking the train at Esquimalt and proceeding on his journey from that point. In the latter case he would, taking the most favourable view, have to travel some 150 miles farther; or, if the line were carried through by Pine River Pass, fully 200 miles more than by way of Burrard Inlet.

It is evident that even were the wide channels at the Valdes Islands bridged, the Railway carried to Esquimalt would present no advantage in time or cost to an ordinary traveller. If passengers from Esquimalt could secure no benefit from the extension of the Railway to that place, it is certain that there would be a loss sustained by carrying freight by the longer route.

This, coming from the Chief Engineer, must be acknowledged to be exceedingly strong testimony in favor of the Fraser Route, in the matter of distance, proving, as it does, that by that route, passengers and freight could most speedily perform the journey. Now, considering the question of cost, we turn again to the same report, and find this:—

The cost of extending the Railway to Esquimalt would greatly exceed that of taking it to Burrard Inlet; there are no sufficient data to form a proper estimate of the cost. But even by leaving a gap near Valdes Islands of fifteen miles, and substituting a ferry for the enormously costly bridging at that locality, the excess would probably reach \$15,000,000 or \$20,000,000. The cost of maintenance would be great in proportion, and the annual losses on working the extra mileage would, under the peculiar circumstances, be serious.

Turning now to Mr. H. J. Cambie's carefully studied report, we find the cost of building the line to English Bay, Burrard Inlet, estimated at \$32,000,000, while the cost of the line to Esquimalt is set down at \$52,000,000, *without* what Mr. Fleming calls the "enormously costly bridging" of the Straits. We will, therefore, be well within the mark in estimating the cost of an all rail line to Esquimalt