

The Trans-Canada Railway.

By an Act of the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada passed in the year 1895, chapter 68, a charter was granted for the construction of this railway from a point at or near Quebec to the Pacific Ocean at Port Simpson or Port Essington. This Charter was amended in 1897, chapter 65, so as to provide for the commencement of the works not later than 29th June, 1901, and for their completion within ten years from the passing of the Act, and granting power for the construction of a branch line to Montreal.

As the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway runs north-westward from the City of Quebec in a direction suitable for the shortest location of this railway, and as the rivers flowing into Lake St. John on the one side and James Bay on the other offer a route which will give the easiest gradients crossing the height of land between the waters flowing into the St. Lawrence and those flowing into James Bay, and as this route will give the railway the advantage of two eastern seaports, namely, Quebec and Chicoutimi, it has been decided to make use of that line between Quebec and its north-western terminus at Roberval, Lake St. John.

Work was accordingly commenced at Roberval on the 28th June, 1901, in the presence of an immense concourse of people, the clergy of the district giving the enterprise evidence of their sympathy and support by an impressive religious ceremonial on that occasion. Sixty miles of the railway have also been located from Roberval westward towards James Bay, and the plans and profiles have been deposited with the Dominion and Provincial Governments according to law.

The first division of the railway from Roberval to James Bay, 350 miles in length, will pass through the centre of the new territory recently acquired by the Province of Quebec from the Dominion, so that it would be in the interest of the Province to develop this new territory, 70,000 square miles in area, by this route, in preference to any other. Application has been made to the Province for a land grant, and the question is now under consideration.

Three different explorations of the James Bay territory have been made by Mr. Henry O'Sullivan, C.E., F.R.G.S., director of Provincial surveys, and his opinion of the country and its resources is given in a short report to him, annexed hereto.

The Hon. Lomer Gouin, Minister of Colonization and Public Works of the Province of Quebec, made an inspection of the country to be traversed by a portion of the first division of the railway in September last, and expressed himself as being very much surprised and impressed with the fertility of the soil and the resources of the country.

• On the 16th February, 1901, the President and other representatives of the Quebec Board of Trade and of the Company had an interview with the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier at Ottawa, and submitted a memorial, a copy of which is annexed, setting forth the advantages of the railway at considerable length.

After due consideration the Government recognized the merits of the project and submitted to Parliament a subsidy bill, which was duly ratified, granting a subsidy of \$3,200 per mile—or \$192,000—in aid of the first sixty miles of the railway from Roberval westward, to be increased to \$6,400 per mile, should the cost be in excess of \$15,000 per mile to that extent.