

the city of Winnipeg, in the direction of Portage la Prairie, than to continue to follow the line which the Government had adopted, and they were therefore permitted to abandon that portion of the line between Stonewall—a distance of twenty-one miles—from Winnipeg to Portage la Prairie, and construct the road from Winnipeg in a more direct line to Portage la Prairie. By this change, the distance has been shortened between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie thirteen miles. The Company, however, are bound to continue to operate the line under this alteration—which was agreed to—for twenty-one miles from Winnipeg to what is called Stonewall, the principal place on the line between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, over the line which was being constructed by the Government before the work passed into the hands of the Company. The line as now located is therefore a direct line between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, and in the same westerly direction crosses the Assiniboine at Brandon. It then follows the general course of the Qu'Appelle River to Moose Jaw Creek, a distance of 40½ miles from Winnipeg, which is the most westerly point up to the present time approved of by the Governor in Council; and I may say here, that it is not the intention of the Governor in Council to approve of any further portion of the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway proper, or make any payments in regard to any construction west of that point, until it is ascertained that there is a better line in the interests of the country, so far as we are able to judge, through Kicking Horse Pass, than that we had previously obtained through Yellow Head Pass. From Moose Jaw Creek, we are quite aware there is no difficulty in getting a line to the Pass which was authorized by Parliament, and the Bill, which I have now submitted for the consideration of the House, asks for authority to make the change only if we believe it to be in the interests of the country. I will come more particularly to that point a little later on. I may say, however, Sir, that the section of the country through which the line runs direct from Winnipeg, in the most direct course that could be obtained from Winnipeg to Moose Jaw Creek, and as it is proposed to be constructed, is very favorable both as regards the grades of the railway and also as regards the character of the country which is to be opened up. The district is one of a very promising character, which will undoubtedly be very rapidly filled with a vigorous and enterprising population. Now, Sir, it is expected by the Company that they will be able to lay no less than 500 miles of track in that direction this season; there are 161 miles from Winnipeg now under traffic to a point which, I think, is called Flat Creek, about thirty-one miles from Brandon, which, as