

one whereby a railway can be brought "from the Plains of Alberta to the ports of Vancouver Island," to quote the report of the Royal Commission on Transportation. I am told that a reconnaissance survey, by a party of three or four people, one of them competent to take elevations, would occupy less than six weeks and would not cost more than \$600; but even if the cost would be greater than that sum, it might prove to be money very well spent, for if it disclosed such a route as I have been informed is available, the advantage of the information to the people of Vancouver Island would be very great indeed. If it is true, as I am led to believe, that a better route than that via Bute Inlet—which is not an objectionable one by any means—is to be found from the interior plateau of British Columbia to the sea coast, through a region where there may be 30,000 acres and more of land suitable to settlement, and reaching tide water at a point only two miles from the opposite shore of Vancouver Island, within a radius of 75 miles from which are several admirable ocean seaports, surely the fact is worth ascertaining, and if it proves to be a fact, surely it will have a very important bearing on the determination of future routes of transportation.

Some Comparative Distances

When railway connection with Vancouver Island is spoken of, and the question is regarded from the transcontinental point of view, it is necessary to select some point east of the Rocky Mountains as a centre common to competing routes. For this purpose I have selected Edmonton, and for several reasons. One is that the information accumulated during recent years as to the adaptability of the prairie region for colonization shows that the position of Edmonton is more nearly central than any point further south. Another reason is that Edmonton is already a point in common to three lines of railway, The Canadian Pacific, the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific. Three routes were surveyed by the Canadian government as available for the Canadian Pacific between Edmonton and the head of Bute Inlet. They all cross the Chilancoh at the same point, and hence would be utilized by a line of railway terminating at Blenkinsop Bay.