

the exceptional section alluded to, will on the average show lighter work, and will require less costly structures than have been necessary on many of the railways now in operation in the Dominion." The Yellow Head has been definitely determined upon as the best pass through the first range of the Rocky Mountains. By it "a railway can be carried from the North Saskatchewan to the central plateau of British Columbia, with gradients as light as those on railways in Ontario, and with works of construction scarcely heavier than on the Intercolonial line. We are thus enabled to project a satisfactory route from the railway system of the Atlantic Provinces to a point within about two hundred miles of the Pacific tide water." The character of the climate about the eastern approach to the Yellow Head Pass may be judged from the fact given in the report, that out of one hundred horses and mules engaged on the survey, nearly starved when they reached the Jasper valley, and turned out in mid-winter to shift for themselves, not a single death occurred, and that all resumed work in March in fair condition. The extraordinary significance of this fact will be appreciated when it is remembered that the Jasper valley is 3,300 feet above the level of the sea, or very nearly as high as the Pass, and about ten degrees of latitude further north than Toronto.

All this is extremely satisfactory; but the difficulties on the last two hundred miles referred to—the western end of the Canada Pacific Railway—are sufficient of themselves to make the undertaking a formidable one for a richer country than Canada. An army of engineers has been employed among the mountains of British Columbia since 1871; the Cascades have been pierced by twelve lines of survey, terminating on the coast of the mainland at seven distinct harbours; every attempt has been made to wrest from the mountains the secret of an easy passage to the ocean; but, though the outlook has more than once been promising, the attempts have failed. There is

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