

is unreasonable to expect that parties of geologists surveying over 500 miles of lakes and rivers in a few weeks, will make mineral discoveries which are generally the result of very patient search! And therefore the few accidentally made give us good reason to believe that were the country even thinly peopled, others of more importance would quickly be announced.

On the shore of Lake Superior there is every indication of great mineral wealth. Silver islet in Thunder Bay has become famous, and other silver locations give promise of a profitable yield. There is a large development on the islands and promontories of our shore of those same trap-rocks, which on the south shore are yielding such enormous quantities of native copper. Though on our side they have never been systematically explored, they are known to carry copper on Michipicoten Island in quantities that would be considered remunerative on Kewunah promontory. Gold also is known to exist on Lake Shebandowan and elsewhere. There is a fair presumption, therefore, from what has been found in the parts already visited, that the still larger area which will be rendered accessible by the railroad may undoubtedly still greater riches. At any rate the mining interest around Thunder Bay will be stimulated by the railroad.

Whatever route be taken round Lake Nipigon, there seems to be little alternative as to that from that lake to Fort Garry—as the same obstacles which exist in Nipissing and Moose river sections, here also indicate that the southern slope of the divide must be avoided, and the northern selected—the northern being rocky, bare of timber, and thinly covered with sandy soil—the northern flat heavily wooded, and, if there be any choice, more inviting to the agriculturist. The divide here, however, does not separate the waters flowing on one side into Lake Superior, and on the other into Hudson's Bay; as those flowing both south and north are carried by their respec-

tive chains of rivers and lakes to the junction of the Winnipeg and English Rivers, where they unite to flow together into Lake Winnipeg, and thence into Hudson's Bay. The area, therefore, between Lakes Nipigon, Superior, and Winnipeg, is almost as complete an island as the Province of Ontario, and has much the same triangular outline. The base is formed by Lake Nipigon, Nipigon River, and Nipigon Bay; the northern side by Sturgeon River, Lonely Lake, English River, and a chain of connecting lakes and rivers, whose waters flow from the north-east to the apex of the triangle, where they meet the discharge of the Lake of the Woods, Rainy Lake, and others which compose, at most, unbroken water communication with the base of our triangle on Lake Superior. The railroad is laid down almost from the centre of the base of this huge triangle, whose area is not less than two-thirds that of Ontario, to the apex. As the railroad will open up from end to end this tract, it will add a Province to the Dominion; and if its value be at all commensurate to its extent, a very rich one. Unfortunately size and value are often in inverse ratio to one another. At about 30 miles from Red River the road will issue on the Prairie. The only debatable division of this long section is, as already pointed out, that which unites the two extremes, and here three alternatives offer: either to run the main line north of Lake Nipigon, and connect it with Lake Superior by a branch 150 miles long, or else carry the main line to navigable water, on either Nipigon Bay, or Thunder Bay on Lake Superior.

As to distances, the advantage lies with the Nipigon route, for whereas the distance

	Miles.
From Fort Garry to Mattawa by Northern route, main line, is.....	982
Branch from north of Lake Nipigon to Nipigon Bay.....	110—1,092
And that from Fort Garry to Mattawa by the Kaministiquia and Thunder Bay is.....	1,038

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