

ment was influenced by several considerations, one of them being, as expressed by Sir Sandford Fleming, as follows:

"There is not at this moment any pressing necessity for the railway for ordinary purposes. For special reasons, however, the construction of the railway to the Pacific coast is demanded, and in the absence of traffic to sustain it, it becomes more than ordinarily important to adopt that route which will least involve the sinking of unproductive capital, and by which the loss to be borne in working and maintenance will be least heavy." Vide his report for 1878.

In his report for 1887 Mr. Fleming, as he then was, expressed the opinion that in the future, the project of extending a railway to the harbors on the western coast of Vancouver Island "would be seriously entertained," and in another place in the same report he speaks of railway connection with the Island as likely to be called for by the development of the Island. Therefore I feel warranted in saying that the fact that the Canadian Pacific Railway was built only to a terminus on Burrard Inlet was due to matters of policy only, and not because of any difficulties of an insurmountable character in extending it to an Island port. It is clear from the reports referred to that the only reason why the railway was not built so as to reach a port on the open ocean was that involved in the cost, and that the cost played a controlling part in the selection because of the absence of any prospective traffic. Times have change dsince 1878.

Vancouver Island is separated from the Mainland by a channel which varies in width from 38 miles opposite Cordova Bay, to 2 miles, which is the narrowest part of Johnstone Strait, geographical miles in both cases. This channel contains many islands, which at one point, namely, in the vicinity of Bute Inlet, subdivide it into a number of narrow waterways. From Nanaimo to the First Narrows of Burrard Inlet, that is the entrance to Vancouver harbor, the distance is 34 miles, and the course is unobstructed by islands. The distance from Ladysmith to the same point is slightly less, but owing to the interposition of islands near the Vancouver Island shore, the distance to be sailed may be a little longer. From Sidney, the terminus of the Victoria & Sidney Railway, to the same point