

George, is 1,029 miles. The distance between the same points, *via* the Pine River Pass, measures on the map so nearly the same as the above that a survey alone can determine the precise difference between the two routes."

No doubt the intentions of the Ministry on the subject would be known before the end of the Session; but, in the meantime, he thought Mr. Hunter's reports should be laid on the table, so that hon. gentlemen might be put in possession of whatever information they would afford previous to the railway route being debated.

MR. DECOSMOS said that, before this resolution was accepted, he should like to draw the attention of the House to the importance of these surveys as a means of encouraging settlement and as preparing the best route for the trans-continental railway. They had, he believed, in the possession of this House, a number of reports from various sources. They had the engineers' reports, geological reports, botanists' reports, tourists' reports, and last, though not least, the report of the Minister of the Interior. In these special reports, they found abundance of information, almost full and complete, indicating what route should be taken with respect to the Canadian Pacific Railway. So far as the engineers' reports were concerned, they had left several lines of route to choose from, one by way of Yellowhead Pass to Bute Inlet, the other branching south-west by Fort George to Bute Inlet, and the third by way of the Pine River and then to a point near to what used to be called Fort George, and then to Burrard Inlet, or nearly to Fort Simpson on the Pacific. The Northern route, so far as could be judged from the description of the country given by the engineers, and more especially the report of Mr. Selwyn in his geological survey of Canada, and the excellent account of Mr. Macoun, one of his staff of botanists, was by far the best. There could be no doubt whatever, by taking the Northern route, by Pine River Pass, and across British Columbia, they would have one continuous line of railway, where settlements could be made, where they could find a rich

agricultural country, where they could have a country full of mineral wealth, and a country that would provide traffic for the railway, and where they would have a direct line for the merchandize to pass through the Dominion from its western to its eastern shores. He was aware that it was, to some extent, labour for the House to listen to matters of this character, but he might claim the indulgence of the House to draw attention to the report made by Mr. Selwyn, of the Geological Survey, a gentleman, although connected with the Government, yet occupying such an eminent position in the scientific world that, whatever he said was accepted as being unbiassed and wholly uninfluenced by any sectional feeling, political or otherwise. On page 30 of his book, "The Geology of Canada, 1875-6," Mr. Selwyn stated that he started from the line of the Fraser, in British Columbia, to a point called Quesnel, and from there by Westroad River to Sinkut Lake, following the old overland telegraph line. He said:

"The ground is generally level, or only slightly undulating. There are numbers of small lakes abounding with fish, and although the soil is almost always light, and sometimes on the ridges too sandy or gravelly to be fit for cultivation, there are, nevertheless, considerable tracts of good agricultural land on open or light timbered flats and slopes along the borders of the lakes and along the streams and rivers; among which may be mentioned: Westroad River, Chilacoch River, Nechaco River and Stewart River; also Naltesby, Eulatazela and Sinkut Lakes. At the crossing place on the Nechaco, and between it and Stony Creek, there are extensive acres of the richest land, covered with luxuriant herbage, and similar fine land occurs along the valley to Fraser's Lake."

Here, then, they had a description that gave them an idea of the country at or near Fort George. On page 43, moving still further westward in the Rocky Mountain region, they found Mr. Selwyn saying:

"Notwithstanding this, I do not think there is any serious impediment in any part of the Pass to the construction of either a waggon road or a railway, especially along the right bank."

So much for the construction of the railway in that direction. In passing further up the Pine River Pass, he remarked (at page 48):

"Charlotte cultivates a small garden, and vegetables of all kind grow splendidly. He has potatoes, carrots, parsnips, onions, turnips,