

The Trans-Canada Railway.

QUEBEC, 16th February, 1901.

The Right Hon. SIR WILFRID LAURIER, G.C.M.G.,

PREMIER,

OTTAWA.

SIR

The Quebec Board of Trade and the promoters of the Trans-Canada Railway Company, represented by the delegates now present at this interview, beg respectfully to submit to the Government a very important project, probably the most important which has been brought before the Government of Canada since the inception of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

By an act of the Dominion Parliament passed in 1895 and amended in 1897, a charter was granted for a railway from the City of Quebec, passing north of Lake Winnipeg, to Port Simpson on the Pacific coast, with a branch to Montreal, and this charter is now being amended to provide for branches to Winnipeg and Toronto, and to give the Company the option to start from Lake St. John instead of Quebec.

The annexed map shows the proposed line from Quebec and from the head of navigation of the River Saguenay to James Bay, and thence touching the north end of Lake Winnipeg, passing through the Peace River district and the Peace or Pine River pass, to Port Simpson on the Pacific coast, with branches to Toronto and Winnipeg.

The advantages of such a line would be, briefly, these:—

1. **DISTANCE**—The distance from Quebec to Port Simpson would be 250 miles shorter than that from Quebec to Vancouver by the C. P. R., and from Chicoutimi to Port Simpson 370 miles shorter. The distance from Chicoutimi to Winnipeg would be 280 miles shorter than from Quebec (C. P. R.) to Winnipeg. The distance from Chicoutimi to Yokohama would be 720 miles shorter than from Quebec to Yokohama by C. P. R.

2. **GRADIENTS**—The summit of this line, in the Pine or Peace River pass, would be about 2,000 or 2,800 feet above tide—The C. P. R. summit, further south, is 5,400, and one of the American Pacific roads reaches an elevation of 11,000 feet. The summit between the St. Lawrence and James Bay is less than 1,200 feet, and the approaches to both summits are so gradual that there should be no difficulty in obtaining a maximum gradient of one per cent., from ocean to ocean, and possibly the maximum of 6-10ths of 1%, which is now so eagerly sought for by American Trunk lines.

3. **SEAPORTS**.—The harbor of Port Simpson is said to be the finest on the Pacific coast north of San Francisco. Nottaway is the only deep water harbor on James Bay, and with some dredging can be entered by vessels drawing thirty feet. The coast line of James and Hudson Bays tributary to this railway, will be about 4,000 miles. Chicoutimi (six miles below the town) can be reached by vessels of any draught, and Quebec has magnificent docks, which have cost the Government \$3,000,000, with deep-water berths and elevator facilities for steamships drawing (should such draught be necessary hereafter) forty feet of water. It