

### A Grand and Excellent Scheme.

The proposed construction of a canal to connect the waters of Shuswap and Okanagan lakes, or rather to connect the waters of the latter with those of the Spallumcheen River, which flows northward and empties into the former, would, if carried out, open up an immense area of the finest agricultural and grazing lands in the province and afford a continuous line for steam navigation not less than 240 miles in length. This would render the extensive coal deposits at and near the southern portion of Okanagan lake available and, besides enhancing the value of the rich silver mines on Cherry Creek, it would become an important feeder to the C. P. R., the line of which crosses the Spallumcheen near its mouth.

Mr. L. B. Hamlin, C. E., who was employed by the federal government last year to examine and report upon the cost and feasibility of the proposed canal, states that he found the river to be 20½ feet higher than the lake, and that a canal, fifty feet wide, eighteen miles long and carrying a depth of five feet of water, could be constructed at a cost of less than half a million of dollars. The draining of the marsh by this canal would reclaim an extensive tract of land, the soil of which is alluvial and very rich, the enhanced value of which would more than pay for the total cost of the canal. The report concludes as follows:

"The importance of this canal scheme cannot be over-estimated. It would establish an unbroken navigable water stretch of over 240 miles, opening up a rich agricultural country, which is unsurpassed in British Columbia for its fertility, and which, in many sections, has a sufficient rainfall to enable farmers to produce crops without irrigation. The nucleus of a thriving settlement is already formed, most of the prairie land having been taken up and occupied. Several fine farms are cultivated on a large scale with all the modern appliances, particularly that of Mr. Lumby, which is equal to anything of the kind in the Dominion of Canada. The grain crops of this year were magnificent, both as regards yields and samples, the estimated average of grain to the acre reaching to the large amount of thirty-five bushels, and this I am informed is considerable below the usual average. Winter wheat has been tried and proved a great success. Messrs. O'Keefe and Grenow, who reside at Okanagan Lake, have a large stock of cattle. They harvest a large quantity of wild hay in the meadows and marshes of the valley, which answers for winter fodder. The general character of the country is rolling and lightly timbered, with the exception of the prairies. The soil consists of rich clay."

The canal, as an economic means of internal

transportation, is now receiving a degree of consideration and practical adoption of a more extensive character than has ever been accorded to it at any previous time in the world's history. The *New York Sun* points out this truth and produces a long list of such enterprises now under way that abundantly prove the growing popularity of water routes. The great success of the Suez canal has induced the construction of another artificial channel by its side at a cost of \$150,000,000. At Manchester, England, a great ship canal is under way that will cost \$40,000,000. In Scotland, a canal eighty miles long, connecting the Tyne and Solway Frith, is being constructed at an enormous expense. In France a ship canal from the bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean to cost \$200,000,000 has been commenced. In Denmark one between the German ocean and the Baltic, and in Greece one across the Isthmus of Corinth have recently been undertaken. In Asia a canal across the Malay peninsula, which will bring Europe closer to all Chinese and Japanese ports, is also projected. These facts show plainly that the canal is being more widely recognized by the first engineers and nations of the world as the most useful and indispensable adjunct to inland commerce.

### The Island Railway Lands Reserved.

From the following announcement in the Official Gazette dated 13th ult. we learn that all the public lands in the electoral districts of Victoria and Esquimalt exclusive of the Island Railway belt, will be open for purchase and settlement on the 13th of this month:

"All the vacant public lands which are situated within the electoral districts of Victoria and Esquimalt, and which are not included within the tract reserved for Island railway purposes, will be open for purchase and settlement thirty (30) days from the date hereof; and that all persons claiming any of these lands must prove their title to the same prior to that date. The Order in Council of July 1st, 1873, reserving the Island Railway Belt is rescinded by the government; but the Order is re-enacted as follows; A tract bounded on the south by a straight line drawn from the head of Saanich Inlet to Mair Creek, on the Strait of Fuca; on the west by a straight line drawn from Muir Creek aforesaid, to Crown Mountain; on the north by a straight line drawn from Crown Mountain towards Seymour Narrows, to the 50th parallel of latitude; thence due east, along said parallel of latitude, to a point opposite Cape Mudge; and on the east, by the coast line of Vancouver Island to the point of commencement."

Manitoba's aggregate lumber cut last winter was 78,500,000 feet. It now sells for \$25 per thousand ft.