

CORRESPONDENCE, &c.

No. 1.

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COPY of a LETTER from JOSIAH TIMMIS Esquire to EARL GREY.

MY LORD,

Montreal, November 11, 1847.

THE wearisome delays which have occurred to retard active operations on the important work projected by me, of more intimately and firmly connecting the North American provinces to Great Britain, by a railroad from this city to Halifax induces me to lay before your Lordship a statement of what has been done, that I may obtain that patronage and assistance from you which has been so long withheld from me here, for I have not received that encouragement and help from the Provincial Government which was promised to me by Her Majesty's Representatives, their Excellencies the late lamented Lord Metcalfe and also the Earl Cathcart. The Governor-General, Lord Metcalfe, after requesting me to commit to writing the substance of what I had personally stated to him, as per copy herewith, together with Captain Higginson's reply to it, for the purpose of laying it before the Council, gave me every facility, by referring me to the Crown Land Commissioner for a grant of all the land applied for, who, after consulting with his colleagues, subsequent to long discussions in Council, promised to give it, as far as his authority extended, and also to the Royal Engineer Department, where Sir James Alexander and Lieutenant Simmons confirmed my report of its practicability; and, having the Governor-General's authority to give me every information, they pointed out to me that the chief difficulties of the whole line, as laid down by them for the military road, were between Lake Temisquata and River du Loup; and his Excellency desired me to see if those difficulties could be avoided, and expressed his wish for me to carry out the injunctions laid upon me by his predecessor, the revered Sir Charles Bagot, both personally, and, as expressed in his letter, to see the country "with my own eyes," before seeing his friends and my friends again in Staffordshire, to enable me to report the advantages of the proposed line of road, and from my experience and judgment to speak of its eligibility for settlement, both for substantial capitalists and farmers, as well as labourers and their families; and under these auspices I commenced the task of personally examining different tracts for the line, with an assurance from his Excellency and also Captain Higginson that "all expenses incurred should be repaid, and something handsome besides," and by curving a few miles beyond the military proposed road found very favourable gradients presented themselves, and from that place to the St. Lawrence opposite this city, about 300 miles, the country is extremely favourable. On my return, after waiting upon his Excellency, the late Governor-General, the Earl Cathcart, and explaining to him all particulars, his Excellency after assuring me that I was the very individual who was wanted in Montreal; and as his Council did not understand these matters, his Excellency desired me to remove to this city with the least delay, from my other business engagements at Quebec, under a promise of appointing me to a commission for a further preliminary examination of the most eligible line of road; and that under that commission the expenses incurred should be defrayed. On my removal here, now eighteen months back, and waiting upon the Governor-General, his Excellency referred me to the Hon. Mr. Robinson, Commissioner of the Board of Works, and also charged me to organize, with extreme caution, a powerful committee in this city, similar to one which I had previously formed at Quebec; but as his Excellency's Council would not concur in his views, nothing to aid me was done. However, the committee succeeded in obtaining an Act of the Provincial Legislature for the first grand link of "The Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia Railroad Company," and also the sanction of the Governor-General the Earl of Elgin to "promote it by all means in his power, and also an assurance from the Provincial Government