

the waters that have flowed from as near the foot of Lake Long to the west, through the Nipigon River. The water-shed, therefore, whose general direction has been E. and W., on approaching Lake Long curves sharply to the South, approaches within ten miles of Lake Superior, then sweeps round the edge of Lake Long and returns north to enclose Lake Népigon. This deep indentation as it were in the area of the Laurentian hills, is found to afford passage for a railroad line to Lake Superior on either Nipigon or Thunder Bay, and thus one of the most objectionable features of the first survey is removed when the long Nipigon branch is expunged.

Three practicable routes have thus been discovered: (1) that originally surveyed, north of Nipigon; (2) another crossing the Nipigon, ten miles from its mouth and then regaining the *height of land* by following the S.W. shore of Lake Nipigon; and (3) a third which, after crossing the Nipigon at the same point as the last, skirting Nipigon Bay, Black Bay, and touching the lake at Thunder Bay, will ascend to the common track upon the *height of land*. But before discussing the merits of these rival routes and the respective claims of Népigon Bay or Thunder Bay to be the railroad port of Lake Superior, let us see what is known of the long stretch of 400 miles from Lake Nipissing to Lake Long, and the almost equally long reach from the western shore of Lake Nipissing to Fort Garry.

The line of 1871-72 took its departure from the mouth of the river Mattawa, followed the right bank of the Ottawa to the mouth of the Montreal river, and the left bank of that river to its very source, where its tributary streams at the *height of land* seem to flow from the same swamps as feed the Abbitibi, which discharges into Hudson's Bay. Further explorations, however, indicate that the valley of the Sturgeon River, which flows into Lake Nipissing, affords a shorter and easier route to the same point; and as the whole

section must be built merely for purposes of communication with the western section, and the country traversed by one projected route is likely to be as valueless as that penetrated by another, the object kept in view has been, and is, to discover the line which will be shortest and most level, and therefore least costly in construction, and most cheaply run. The shortest route would be one almost due W. from Lake Nipissing, touching Lake Superior at the mouth of the Pic River, but the country through which it would run is even more forbidding than that 50 miles to the north. The longer route therefore, with lighter work, must be chosen, and this seems to be up the Sturgeon River, which gives passage through the naked rocky country which cuts off progress to the west, over the *height of land* to the level heavily-wooded country on the Hudson's Bay slope. Along the rim of this basin it runs almost due west, crossing the innumerable tributaries of the Abbitibi—the south and north branches of the Moose River, and of the Albany. All these rivers have served as canoe routes between the Hudson's Bay posts on the lake, and on James' Bay—(Hudson's Bay)—all are comparatively sluggish, and run through a low, often swampy, country, clad in a dense forest of spruce, birch and poplar. The character of the ground and forest is, however, but little known; as, till the survey parties passed from east to west, that is across the direction of the river courses, no white man had ever seen more than the banks of some of the rivers, and these white men were Hudson's Bay officers, who, whether good observers or not, have left but scanty records of the localities they have visited. And the survey parties complain that their field of observation was much contracted by the difficulty of finding hills whereby they could command the view of a large extent of scenery. It seems, however, to be admitted on all sides, that the agricultural resources of this extensive region are scanty, and that the timber, though

abundant of the country, the cultivation, population, other may be unless the desolation when the pine of the Albany tract is in building through is the few individuals these were road, the road poses of local end In 1871 a flying eagle in-Chief across the Abbitibi Factory northern down the On the boulders traces of says "is There are petroleum miles south locality a fish spring Bell, of the summer N. E. of waters of Albany from and if his rest the outlets, for