

clusion was forced upon my mind that the railway itself would be least difficult to construct, that when established it would be easiest operated, and that general interests would be most consulted, by following the route to Burrard Inlet."

I was aware that this opinion would not meet with general favor, and in the last-named report I proceeded to say:

"It cannot be said that the selection of Burrard Inlet as a terminus, has given general satisfaction in British Columbia. On the contrary, a claim has been advanced in that Province that another route and terminus are preferable. It is therefore to be considered if additional explorations should be made and more complete information obtained with regard to the northern country, so that it may be definitely determined if a route more desirable can be found. Accordingly I suggest that the unexplored region, lying between Fort Connelly and Fort McLeod, in British Columbia, and those large tracts of vacant territory east of the Rocky Mountains, in the latitude of Peace River, which have never yet been traversed by scientific travellers, be explored and accurate data obtained respecting the feasibility of a railway through that region to the Pacific coast."

The Burrard Inlet route was known to be marked by many difficulties, and to involve an enormous outlay, but with all the disadvantages which it presents, I considered that it was entitled to the preference.

For six consecutive years, and at an exceptionally great cost, unremitting and systematic efforts had been made without success to find a better and less expensive line. Indeed there seemed no alternative but the adoption of that route, unless further examination of the northern country made it apparent that a better and more eligible location could be found under conditions so favorable that it would command ready acceptance.

Owing, in some degree, to the fact that the northern districts of British Columbia are remote from the areas of population, a northern route obtained but little attention during the early stages of the survey. It was only when it was found that no line could be secured in the more southern latitude, except at great outlay, that a northern route came prominently into notice, and that more extended examinations became desirable.