

*The Acting - President  
of the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway  
Company  
C. Bonin*

## QUEBEC AND LAKE ST. JOHN RAILWAY.

The annual general meeting of the Shareholders and Bondholders of the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway Company was held at the Company's offices, Commercial Chambers, at three o'clock, on the 8th February, 1881.

There was a large and influential attendance, and much interest was manifested in the proceedings, which lasted until five o'clock.

Amongst those present were Messrs. T. LeDroit, Frank Ross, R. Chambers (ex-Mayor), John Ross, E. Gagnon, Hon. D. A. Ross, F. William Roy, Rev. M. Paquet (of the Seminary), Wm. Home, H. J. Peters, T. A. Piddington, J. F. Peachy, Alex. Fraser, J. G. Scott, A. L. Light, Consulting Engineer, James Cadman, C. E., and others.

A map of the location of the railway showing the country to be opened up, with the new townships recently laid out, and plans and profiles of the line, were exhibited for the information of the shareholders.

After the reading of the minutes and other routine proceedings, the following annual report of the Directors was read and adopted:

### ANNUAL REPORT.

The Directors of the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway Company beg to report to the Shareholders and Bondholders, with regard to the operations of the past year, as follows:—

### PROGRESS OF WORKS.

Since the date of the last annual meeting, the works of construction upon the first section, between Quebec and St. Raymond, have been actively pushed by the Contracting Company. It was hoped that this portion of the road would have been completely finished by December, 1880, but owing to the unusually bad weather in the fall, and other delays, a portion of the work will have to remain uncompleted until the spring. However the track has been laid into the parish of St. Raymond, some 200 men being still employed upon the line, and the works are so far advanced that arrangements have been made to run regular trains as far as St. Catherine by the 1st of June, and to St. Raymond by the 1st of July next.

The class of road being built with its stone culverts, steel rails, and iron bridges, is acknowledged by the Inspecting Engineers of the Government, and by other competent judges, to be superior to any road in the Province, with the exception of the Government line, to which it is in many respects equal.

### SURVEY TO LAKE ST. JOHN.

During the past year a complete instrumental survey of the country between St. Raymond and Lake St. John was made by the Company's engineers. The Provincial Government co-operated in this survey, and it was carried out in accordance with the instructions of the Government Engineer. In order to set at rest any possible doubts as to the advisability of building the railway by way of St. Raymond and the valley of the River Batiscan, a further exploration—in addition to those carried on during the previous year—was made of the country between the Jacques Cartier River and the headwaters of the River Metabetchouan.

The result of these surveys not only proved that the route via St. Raymond and the Batiscan was the best, being 1,000 feet lower in elevation than the other, but it also established the existence of a most satisfactory line for the economical construction and working of a railway, with gradients and curvature well within the limits prescribed by the Government Engineer, and crossing the Laurentian range, between St. Raymond and Lake Edward, at an elevation of only 950 feet above tide.

### COLONIZATION.

The recent explorations made by the Crown Lands Department in the laying out of townships and other surveys, have furnished a great deal of information with reference to the country to be opened up to colonization by this railway; and the Assistant Commis-

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sioner of Crown Lands has been enabled to furnish the Company with a definite statement of the area of good lands to be opened up to settlement by the road. By this official information it is now established that within a radius of about forty miles from the proposed location of the road, and around Lake St. John, there are 6,000,000 acres of land, of which 3,000,000 acres, chiefly formed of an alluvial deposit, are well adapted for colonization and farming, and the balance of great value for lumbering purposes.

The immense importance of this territory, and its capability of development may be judged from the fact that the total area of cleared lands in the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, sustaining a population of over 670,000 souls, is only 2,800,000 acres.

#### LEGISLATION.

During the last session of the Provincial Legislature a bill was adopted allowing the Company to make some changes in the location of the road, which had been recommended by the Engineers. A clause was inserted by the Legislature in this bill, limiting the time for the completion of the road as far as the foot of the Island of Lake Edward to 31st December, 1882, or in default thereof cancelling the charter of the Company for the balance of the road. The length of this section will be about 45 miles, so that in order to comply with the law it will be necessary to put it under contract at once, and push the works vigorously during the two seasons which are allowed for that purpose.

#### SUBSIDIES.

Negotiations are now in progress with the Provincial Government, which it is hoped will lead to their subsidy being placed upon a more satisfactory footing; more particularly as this road will run, for almost its entire length, through Crown property, and as roads on the South shore, much inferior in point of construction, have—through the division amongst them of the lapsed subsidy of the Baie des Chaleurs Railway—received a larger subsidy than this Company.

The subscription of the city of Quebec, although pledged to the Company for the entire length of the road to Lake St. John, has so far only been voted by by-law from Quebec to St. Raymond. The carrying out of this subscription for the remaining sections will have to be arranged before the works of construction can be commenced beyond St. Raymond.

Negotiations have been and are being carried on with the view of obtaining from the Federal Government a guarantee of interest upon the Company's debentures. It is hoped that these efforts will not be without result.

During last year, the Contracting Company sent two delegates to London and Paris for the purpose of making arrangements for the capital required to complete the whole line. Although no definite arrangements were made, the most satisfactory assurances were received, that so soon as the financial basis of the scheme is established, by the completion of the subsidies above referred to, the necessary capital will be furnished on very favorable terms. In the meantime the Contracting Company are prepared to push on the next section, so as to complete it by December, 1882—as soon as these subsidies have been voted. It is to be hoped that this will be done before the spring, in order that the working season of 1881 may not be lost.

#### TRAFFIC.

The prospects for traffic upon the opening of the line are satisfactory. Some 20,000 cords of firewood for the Quebec and Montreal markets are being got out, and considerable quantities of other descriptions of lumber are being made.

#### LAKE ST. JOHN.

In August last, Messrs. E. Beaudet, M. P. P., and J. G. Ross, Directors of the Contracting Company, accompanied by the Hon. J. G. Robertson, Provincial Treasurer, the Hon. P. de la Bruère, M. L. C., and representatives of the press, made a visit to Lake St. John, going to the furthest extremity of the district where settlement has been commenced. These gentlemen returned deeply impressed with the fertility and extent of the country and its great capability of development when opened to settlement by means of railway communication.

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## DOMINION CHARTER.

As it is the opinion of many eminent engineers that the shortest, cheapest and most feasible route for the construction of the Pacific Railway, from Manitoba Eastward, lies to the North of Quebec, it might be advisable for the Company to obtain a charter at next session of the Federal Parliament, authorizing the construction of such a road, from some point on the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway to connect with the Pacific Railway.

In conclusion, the Directors would congratulate the Shareholders and Bondholders upon the satisfactory position of the enterprise. The road has been commenced in a solid and substantial manner, and the prospects of its being carried through to completion in the same manner are encouraging. The board feel confident that, with due perseverance, their successors in office will be enabled to bring to a successful termination an undertaking, the immense importance of which to the city and Province of Quebec, is becoming more and more appreciated.

The whole respectfully submitted.

FRANK ROSS,  
President.

JAS. G. SCOTT,  
Secretary.

A ballot was then taken for the election of Directors for the ensuing year, and resulted in the return of the following gentlemen, viz.:—Messrs. T. LeDroit, Frank Ross, Hon. D. A. Ross, S. Peters, T. A. Piddington, R. P. Vallée, M. P., Lt.-Col. M. W. Baby, and the Mayor of Quebec, (ex-officio.)

At a subsequent meeting of the Directors, Messrs. T. LeDroit and J. D. Brousseau (Mayor) were elected respectively President and Vice-President for the ensuing year.

Quebec, 3rd February, 1881.

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## Department of Crown Lands,

QUEBEC, 28th JULY, 1880.

JAMES G. SCOTT, Esq.,

Secretary, Quebec and Lake St. John Railway,

QUEBEC.

SIR.—In answer to your letter of the 20th instant, requesting that certain information be furnished to the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway Company, relative to that section of country traversed by their proposed railroad, I have the honor to inform you that the territory to be thus opened comprises an area of about 6,800,000 acres, which may be divided into two regions, having, with regard to soil, distinct physical features.

1st.—The superficies of that part of Lake St. John and Chicoutimi basin, formed of an extensive and almost continuous alluvial deposit, to be within a short period benefitted by the construction of the contemplated railway, may be set down at 3,500,000 acres.

2nd.—That of the Batiscan region, cut up by large streams and lakes intermingling in their courses, and running in opposite directions: some in Lake Saint John, others in the Saint Maurice, and in the River Saint Lawrence, with restricted areas of alluvial flats, covers an extent of about 2,800,000 acres. Both sections of country being shewn and distinguished by letters A and B on the map of the Province of Quebec herewith accompanying.

Out of the first of these sections, 2,200,000 acres can be counted on as well fitted for colonization and farming. Of the second, about 800,000 acres will be found arable, and that principally along the line of the projected railway.

Up to date, 475,310 acres have been sold by the Crown for purposes of settlement: 387,631 acres in the Lake Saint John and Chicoutimi territory, and 87,679 acres in the County of Portneuf, at the Southern extremity of the Batiscan region; forming, with the 174,000 acres of Siegniorial grants, included in the same County, a total of 649,310 acres alienated.

Up to the present, from the best data which can be obtained, about 180,000 of the 6,300,000 above stated have been cleared, more or less improved, and settled upon; the remainder consists of forests or wild lands, of which 3,000,000 acres are under license or permit to cut timber.

The predominating forest trees covering the greatest part of this extent of territory, are the spruce, tamarac, white pine, cypress, (a kind of pitch pine of a dwarf species), white birch, black birch and cedar. As a rule the spruce is found the most abundant, and other trees in accordance to the order in which they are now given.

Wheresoever settlements cannot, on account of the soil, extend over a whole country, as in the Batiscan region, these timbered lands, if judiciously managed, will be found an everlasting source of revenue; as is well established in Canada, that tracts of land covered with spruce, fit for saw logs, can be cut over every thirty or forty years.

I regret exceedingly that the records of this office do not contain information, such as to enable you to form a correct idea of the amount of timber, which in the territory above described, has been, and can be derived from a given area.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed),

E. E. TACHÉ,

Assistant Commissioner

