

WEEKLY FOUNDED 1887 DAILY FOUNDED 1897

—FRIDAY MORNING—

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. I., MARCH 18, 1904.

—FRIDAY MORNING—

SINGLE COPY TWO CENTS. TWENTY-FIVE CENTS PER MONTH.

ROAD COSTING FIVE HUNDRED MILLION STILL INCOMPLETE

Twin Thread of Steel Extending Across More Than 5,000 Miles of Country Between the Zone of War and Russia's Based Supplies.

Russia's greatest problem in her struggle with Japan is that of transportation.

Should Japan make good her early naval successes and gain command of the sea in the theatre of action Russia must look to her inland communications alone for means of bringing supplies to her armies in the field.

Chief among these is the twin thread of steel known as the trans-Siberian railroad, a single-track line extending across more than 5,000 miles of country between the zone of war and Russia's base of supplies in Europe.

Will this railroad prove adequate to move the armies of Russia that must be sent to the front to join the forces already there and sustain them while they are in the field?

What is its condition and capacity? Every student of the situation in the far east has asked these questions since the war between Russia and Japan began, about five weeks ago.

As in naval warfare the speed of a squadron cannot be greater than that of its slowest ship, so in military transportation on land the capacity of a line of transportation cannot exceed that of its weakest point.

Such information as has reached the world concerning the railroad shows that far from being the completed line represented by Russian interests, it is, in fact, incomplete, and in its present condition inadequate to the urgent immediate needs of Russia.

The czar has paid \$500,000,000 for a railroad, only to find it needs a few more millions and a few more years of labor to make it a workable military instrument.

This explains in large measure the desire for delay on the part of Russia in entering on the bitter conflict for which Japan apparently was ready and eager.

Much that has been written about the railroad of an unfavorable nature is from English sources, and, therefore, may be accepted as possibly prejudiced, yet the consensus of opinion is that the road, considered in the most favorable light, is far from being satisfactory as a military way.

GAP IN THE RAILROAD.

Its weakest part is a gap 40 miles long at lake Baikal, 4000 miles from St. Petersburg and 2000 miles from the front at Port Arthur.

Here rail communication is broken during the winter months, or is carried forward in makeshift fashion, in the earlier part of the winter, by means of an ice-breaking steamer, and later over temporary tracks laid on the ice, when conditions are favorable.

In summer the traffic is entirely dependent on water transportation. In considering this gorian knot in Russia's main line of military transportation her base, the casual observer asks, "Why did Russia lay out the road to this lake?"

The answer to this query is told by the map. It was the shortest and only practicable route in the trans-Asian survey.

Lake Baikal lies in a generally north and south direction. It is 400 miles long, and surrounded by tall mountains. Those to the south are an impassable range, and on the far side lie still other ranges in northern Mongolia. To pass around the north end of the lake would have lengthened the line about 1000 miles, in a country composed entirely of mountains.

Russia had no choice, then, in bringing her railroad to lake Baikal. It was in the natural line of travel to the far east.

HOCKEY

ARTILLERY VS ALL COMERS (Teams composed of Senior players.)

ALSO DRUGGISTS VS ARMY MEDICALS

TO-NIGHT Admission 20c. WEBSTER & YEO, Risk Managers

The old post road across Siberia took the same route, and the city of Irkutsk was some 40 miles from the lake's west shore.

The railroad was built to Irkutsk and carried straight down to the lake, striking its west shore near the south end.

NO ROUTE AROUND BAIKAL.

The original plan for building the road embraced a line around the head of the lake, or south end. Work on this connecting link was left to the last in the general rush to push the road forward to the Pacific, and so little has been done on it that under the most efficient engineering direction and with ample labor it probably could not be completed within two years from this date.

The distance around the foot of the lake is 157 miles and the route to be taken by the railroad is 180 miles. There are 19 tunnels in the proposed route, the longest two miles in length. Many marshes, ravines and gorges will need to be bridged.

Until this work can be done, or through-out the present war, in all probability, Russia must depend on her ferry across lake Baikal to take care of the trans-Siberian traffic when the lake is not frozen.

For ferrying purposes two steamers are used. They were built in England, and after being turned out piece by piece in Newcastle shipyard were brought by rail to the lake and set up by British engineers.

The steamers are the Baikal, an ice-breaking ferry boat for trains, and the Angara, a steel steamer for carrying passengers only. They are the only steam craft on the lake. Should any accident befall them they cannot be docked nor could they be replaced in less than six months at best.

From the opening of the Siberian line two years ago these steamers have transported all the traffic of the road across lake Baikal except when the lake is frozen over to such a depth that the ice-breaker cannot work.

This winter the thick ice stopped traffic by steamer early in January. Then, with war impending in the east, and vast quantities of goods to be pushed through, the Russian military authorities began a struggle in transportation that is now going on at lake Baikal.

ICE AS A HIGHWAY.

Temporary tracks on the ice had served in other winters, and were tried again. But, owing to heavy storms, to which the lake is subject, the ice had frozen in hummocks, and laying railroad tracks across it has been a difficult work. From latest accounts the attempt proved a failure.

To move her army going forward, and the mountains of supplies that are accumulating on the west shore of the lake, Russia is said to be employing the ice as a highway, as was done in the days before the railroad opened.

The forwarding capacity of the railroad appears confined, therefore, to the volume of traffic that can be taken across lake Baikal day by day, and forwarded from the far side. Soldiers, it appears, go across on foot. A recent report stated that 600 men in one body being moved across the lake perished from cold.

The winter storms at lake Baikal, when at their height, are terribly severe. The winds come down from the mountains with cutting fierceness, and blinding snows bite like the tooth of a hungry wolf. With the temperature often falling to 50 below zero, soldiers caught out in a storm on the ice of the lake are in an unenviable position.

According to all authorities this condition of affairs at lake Baikal cannot be expected to change before the middle or last of April, when traffic by the ice-breaker will be resumed.

It is proper, then, to inquire what the capacity of this vessel is for moving cars.

CAPACITY OF THE ICE BREAKER.

The boat has three tracks, with a stated capacity of 35 cars, more probably

SPRING!

Marbles for the BOYS. Spring Fashion Books and magazines for the LADIES.

Expected any day per winter boats. A big stock RUBBER BALLS

Haszard & Moore.

24. These cars are much smaller than those in use on railroads in this country. The military freight cars are each marked "for 40 men or eight horses."

As the distance across the lake is 40 miles, the round trip 80 miles, the boat can make but two round trips in 24 hours at best, moving 48 cars.

As a soldier and his supplies and impediments when on the march take up about equal space, it may be assumed that half the cars moved contain men and half supplies, the rate of moving an army across the lake is 24 cars of men a day, or, say 960 men. The other boat might take at the outside 300 men a trip, or 1000 more, without freight, so that the limit of men that could be moved across the lake under the most favorable circumstances, provided the line were entirely devoted to such work, would be 2360 a day.

This would mean six weeks in getting 100,000 men across the lake, provided they could all be carried forward when across. That this could be done seems problematical. The condition of the road beyond lake Baikal is the worst in the whole long line across Asia, and such that continuous military traffic cannot be hoped for.

In fact, the road was opened before it was ready. In many places beyond lake Baikal it is hardly better than a contractor's line for carrying dump cars. Bridges in the mountains are of wood. Tunnels are not completed, and the road climbs passes by zig-zags of timber construction. The roadbed is in bad condition, and in many places unballasted.

To understand the causes of these conditions one must know the story of the road.

WHY THE ROAD WAS BUILT.

The project of building the railroad across Asia was presented to the Russian government by generals and engineers in the fifties, but it was not until the awakening of the Japanese had warned Russia of danger to her dreams of expansion in the east that its construction as a through line was undertaken.

On March 17, 1891, the late czar, father of the present emperor, in an imperial rescript, commanded "the immediate construction of a railroad through the entire length of Siberia," and commissioned his son, the present czar, to inaugurate the construction at Vladivostok, the Pacific end of the line.

The first step for the construction of the line was taken by the czar's visit May 20, 1891, and work was begun shortly after at various other points.

There was already a railroad to the Ural mountains, the frontier of Russia in Europe, and on the western end the construction of the new line began at Cheliabinsk, a point near the border. The road was planned in five sections, namely, the western Siberian to the Obi River, the Baikal, the Eastern Chinese and the Ussuri divisions.

The route as first laid out was followed substantially as surveyed to Irkutsk, but from that point on the Pacific there were many changes in direction.

Beyond lake Baikal the road was pushed forward to Stretenok, on the Amur river. The original plan was to build it down the Amur valley to meet the division built north from Vladivostok. This route would have taken the line around the northern end of Manchuria. But it was not the most direct line to the coast. Russia knew this, and depended on diplomacy to secure for her the right to put the road across Chinese territory by the shortest route to Vladivostok.

The securing of this right, in 1896, was followed in 1898 by a Chinese concession to Russia to carry the road to and ice free port in South Manchuria, Port Arthur, though taken from the Chinese by the Japanese in war, and Japan's right of conquest, was secured to Russia by lease, as well as Tientsin, now known as Taly.

The protests of other powers to this arrangement were silenced by concessions. England secured Weihaiwei for a naval base. Germany got important concessions farther south.

The Chinese were powerless to prevent the three powers named from securing what they wanted, and Russia, with the greatest share, was content.

The plan of the railroad across Asia was to be made perfect by the outlet in Manchuria.

THE MANCHURIAN ROAD.

In carrying through the negotiations for its Manchurian concession, the Russian government worked through the Russo-Chinese bank, its fiscal agency in the east. By the terms of the concession it made China a party to the enterprise, by stipulating that at the expiration of 35 years China could take over the road by purchase, and at the end of 90 years the road should become the property of the Chinese government without further consideration.

Some very important conditions in Russia's concession were that Russia should have the right to maintain troops along the road, and that all goods in "transit from one Russian station to another" should be free from all duties or taxes to China, and that discriminating, or differential rates could be enforced against any place or nation.

Only Russian and Chinese subjects can hold stock in the road. All matters of management are in the hands of the Russian government. The capital stock is 5,000,000 rubles, about \$2,500,000. The line through Manchuria is known

as the East China railway. Its length from the Manchurian frontier to Port Arthur is about 1500 miles. In management it is distinct, though it works in close connection with the trans-Baikal section of the Siberian road.

In construction the East China, or Manchurian road, is superior to the eastern sections of the road in Siberia, though by no means as heavy or strong as a standard gauge road should be.

Much money has been spent on heavy and ornate brick stations, but the roadbed, hastily constructed, is not yet all ballasted. The rails for many miles in some sections are laid in loose sand. The Chinese use it for highways, and think it fine.

The Manchurian road, like the Siberian, is single tracked throughout. The highest rate of speed for express trains is 11.1 miles an hour. Freight trains run about six miles an hour, and construction trains eight miles at their best rate of speed.

At present, according to despatches, regular train service is suspended, to leave the lines free for military movements of troops and supplies.

In some parts of Manchuria the engines are obliged to take their supplies long distances, as the arid northern country does not supply water at all points where it is needed.

CONDITIONS EAST OF BAIKAL.

The condition of the Siberian road east of lake Baikal all the way to the Pacific, is stated to be bad by all who have seen it and are free to give an opinion.

Mr. Charles Klein, an Englishman in the Chinese customs service, who was in New York recently, having lately come from the east, said of the road:

"Official corruption was responsible for the road being improperly constructed at the start. Instead of being a well-built, safe and serviceable track from St. Petersburg to the far east, the greater part of the trans-Siberian railway is a cheap and dangerous makeshift."

"The rails are light and the ties too far apart to bear heavy traffic. The former are 20 feet long, and usually rest on three ties, one in the middle and one at each end. In laying the ties the workmen simply cut down trees as they went along, splitting the logs and laying the round side uppermost. The rails are insecurely fastened to the ties and to each other, not half the requisite number of spikes being used at the ends.

"To attempt to convey a large body of troops over the railway in a hurry would be attempting an impossibility. In the first place, the trains cannot consist of more than four or five cars, because of the character of the track.

"This partly for the same reason, a speed of much more than 20 miles an hour is not attainable. Likewise the transportation of heavy goods would be attendant with vexatious delays."

Another Englishman, Mr. Wirt Gerrard, author of a book on Russia recently published, traversed the road not long ago, going over the trans-Baikal section and through Manchuria in the disguise of a railroad tramp. He says of it:

"Work of the best class is not conspicuous on the Siberian railways, but Americans who remember the completion of the Union Pacific line say that the track is no worse than the first put down in the United States, and that is the highest praise I heard of it from experts competent to form a just opinion."

This writer states that the rails are from 42 to 48 pounds to the yard, though 74-pound rails were specified in the contract, and 80-pound rails are used in other countries. The gage is 5 feet, against 4 feet 8 inches in this country.

Some rails, Mr. Gerrard states, instead of being hard rail steel, are of soft steel, the weight of a heavy train passing strains them beyond the point of elasticity, and they do not recover, but remain sunk between the sleepers. On one curve it is said a certain rail is crushed every time the "express" passes. The buckling of the web of the rail renders it useless, and it has to be replaced by a new one each time; that is, four rails each week. Generally the rails are just able to sustain the weight of trains at slow speed, and no more.

Mr. Gerrard states that the embankments are too narrow and to steep, the cuttings the same, and the sleepers too soft and too thin. In construction no allowance has been made for differences in soil and material. Consequently there are subsidences in the track, falls of loose earth in the cuttings and spreading of the rails, and, this witness adds, there always will be until the road is rebuilt. Much ballasting of the tracks will not remedy these mistakes in construction.

It appears that heavy freight trains bring down falls of earth and cause subsidences in the track, and following trains are obliged to wait until these are made good.

WASTE AND INEXPERIENCE.

The reason for the road's shortcomings is found in the fact that only Russians were employed as civil engineers on the road, and that many of them were direct from technical schools, without practical training.

Such are summer conditions on the Siberian line. In the winter the earth is firm enough, but snows and frosts make traffic slow. There are more than 800 miles of snowbanks and snow fences on the line. In the spring the frosts leaving the earth, heaves the roadbed up in many places, and causes it to subside in others. At one point on the line in the Khabarovsk mountains, the temperature sometimes goes to 76 below zero, the lowest known for that latitude.

On this road Russia has been working unremittingly since the announcement of its opening, Nov. 9, 1901. That her efforts are not always wisely directed is shown

REPORTED QUIET AT PORT ARTHUR

Belief Growing that China will Join Japan— Russian Torpedo Boat Blown up by a Mine —Length of the War and How it will Benefit Russia.

CHINA MAY JOIN JAPAN.

LONDON, March 17.—(Special).—All is reported quiet at Port Arthur.

The belief grows that before long China will join hands with Japan.

RUSSIAN DESTROYER BLOWN UP.

While entering Port Arthur harbor the Russian torpedo boat destroyer Skovri

struck a mine and was blown up.

WAR WILL BE LONG.

PARIS, March 17.—(Special).—Count Nelidoff, Russian Ambassador here, declares the war will be a long one and will greatly benefit Russia, as the large body of soldiers sent out will make Eastern Siberia thoroughly Russian.

BY THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE AUTHOR

quoted, who went into the incomplete tunnel in Great Kingham, the mountain range east of lake Baikal. While work on this tunnel is going forward, the road climbs the pass by temporary trestles.

Entering from the east end, Mr. Gerrard found that the tunnel, which is to be 12 miles long, had progressed but 130 yards. Only a few men were working, and they had no power drills, or compressors, but were drilling by hand. Water greatly impeded their progress. There was a perfect electric installation for lighting, signalling and firing blasts, but all progress had to wait on the hand drills.

The writer cited this state of things as characteristic of the way work has been done, and is being done, on the railway.

Farther eastward, in Manchuria, he saw water conduits made of thin sheet iron, where culverts of masonry or earthenware pipes should have been used. Being near the surface these makeshifts were insufficient to support the heavy weights passing over them.

Great expenditures were apparent, but woful waste of good material on every hand.

Coils of telegraph wire were seen lying rusting in the bottoms of mountain streams; crock insulators, both broken and whole, lay scattered about the tracks; dog nails, nuts and bolts, and small metal fittings were scattered around the ground. Cases of screws, spikes and the like, when broken, were scattered. In many laborers' camps the ground was littered with wasted railway material.

(Continued on page 3.)

COMFORT FOR THE AGED

Judging from the letters of people up in years there is no medicine which so promptly frees them of aches and pains and insures regularity of the liver, kidneys and bowels as Dr. Chase's Kidney Liver Pills. Even when all other means have failed old people can turn to this great medicine with full assurance of relief and cure.

ZION CHURCH GIVES A CALL.

At a large and harmonious meeting of Zion Church congregation last night an unanimous call was extended to Rev. Gordon Dickie of Bras d'Or, Cape Breton. John T. McKenzie, S. A. McDonald, S. C. Moore and Cyrus McMillan were appointed to appear before the P. E. I. Presbytery and J. E. Matthews before the Sydney Presbytery.

IF TORMENTED WITH CORNS.

What's your Choclates are done up in one pound and half pound boxes and sell at 40, 30 and 60c per pound. Get a box.

A ROYAL DUKE ENDS HIS CAREER

Duke of Cambridge Dead at Gloucester House

He Married an Actress and Marriage was not Recognised by Queen — Royal Visit to Ireland— Liberal Victory.

DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE DEAD.

LONDON, March 17.—(Special).—The Duke of Cambridge died this morning at Gloucester House.

THE ROYAL MOURNING.

While the social functions will not be abandoned, the King and Queen will not alter their plans for proposed visits to Ireland and Denmark.

A ROYAL MESALLIANCE.

The Duke's wife was a burlesque actress and dancer named Farebrother. The late Queen never recognized the marriage, but visited the sons.

ANOTHER LIBERAL VICTORY.

The vacancy in the parliamentary division of East Dorset, caused by the accession of Humphrey N. Sturt to the peerage resulted in a victory for C. H. Lyell, Liberal, defeating Van Roolie, Conservative by 82 votes.

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY.

You will be surprised in trying Catarrhazone to find how quickly it cures colds in the head. The agreeable, penetrating vapor traverses every air cell and passage of the nose, throat and lungs. In one breath it carries instant death to the millions of germs infesting the respiratory organs and breaks up a cold in ten minutes.

A trial will convince you that Catarrhazone is the most potent, satisfactory and pleasant cure for Colds, Cough, Deafness, Bronchitis, Asthma and Lung Trouble. Complete outfit, 50c; small size 25c. Druggists or N. C. Poulson Co., Kingston, Ont.

HAMILTON'S MANDRAKE PILLS CURE BILIOUSNESS.

What's your Choclates are done up in one pound and half pound boxes and sell at 40, 30 and 60c per pound. Get a box.

Hyndman & Co.

Represent in Province of P. E. I. the following First-Class Insurance Companies:

- North British and Mercantile Fire Insurance Co. of G. B. Union Fire Assurance Society, of London, England. Phoenix Fire Assurance Co., Ltd., of London, England. Guardian Fire Assurance Co., Ltd., of London, England. Maritime Marine Insurance Co., of Liverpool, England. Mannheim Insurance Co., of Mannheim, Germany. Standard Life Assurance Co., of Edinburgh, Scotland. Employers' Liability Assurance Co., of London, England. Canada Accident Assurance Co. (Plate Glass) Also "Lloyds" Underwriters, London, England.

A General Insurance Business Transacted. Office—33 Queen St., Ch'town.