

Proposed  
exten-  
sions.

521. The total mileage controlled by the company is now 4,306 miles. The Company are building a line from Smith's Falls to cross the St. Lawrence at Lachine, where a bridge is being built, and to go in as direct a line as possible to the harbours of St. John and Halifax. Contracts also have been let by the Government for a line across Cape Breton from the Strait of Canso to Louisburg, which is the port nearest to Liverpool on this continent, and it is believed that when these lines are built the time between Liverpool and Vancouver can be reduced to 11 days.

Steamers  
from Van-  
couver.

522. The Company have also established a line of steamers between Vancouver and Hong-Kong and Japan, the first of which will probably arrive while this chapter is in the press. Application has been made to the Imperial Government by the company for the establishment of a regular mail route over this line, between England and China and Australia, and for a subsidy towards the line of steamers to run in connection with the same, the Dominion Government undertaking to grant a certain sum. The question is still under consideration.

Advant-  
tages of  
the road.

523. The advantages of this road, not only to Canada, but to the whole British Empire, are very great. By it communication is established through British territory with all parts of the Empire; the distance between Liverpool and Hong-Kong and Japan is materially reduced, and troops can be sent to India in at least the same time as by the Suez Canal, and without running the same risk of interference in time of war. For commercial purposes, also, its advantages are very great. The longest winter route through Canada is 144 miles shorter than the shortest route through the United States, while, during the season of navigation, the route by the Straits of Belle-Isle and Quebec is 800 statute miles shorter than the shortest American route.