

an agreement entered into by the Attorney-General of British Columbia, which provides that a traffic of the Grand Trunk Pacific from Moncton to Fort George and from intervening points, destined for Vancouver, will reach the commercial metropolis of the country over the lines of the Pacific Great Eastern. Here is a combination of conditions that ought to make honourable gentlemen rest satisfied that there is ample security to the treasury of British Columbia for every dollar guaranteed to be paid.

Dealing with the line from Grand Forks to the North opens up at once a new vista of possibilities. We have on record in our archives and in our various departments many different accounts of the Peace River Country, some of them extending back over fifty years. Many of them are most interesting, but they all deal with the same theme, namely, the wealth of that country. I have yet to hear one single word that has been said in favour of the development of this zone without having that word associated with the building of a railway. It is this that the Government now proposes to provide. We have watched with increasing interest the settlement of the Peace River Country, and we are advised on authority that in one part of it several hundred people settled there this year. We hear from reliable sources at Edmonton that people are going into that part of the country not in hundreds, but in thousands. It is common knowledge that there is a very considerable settlement there today. It is equally well known that, with a view to having their share in the benefits to be derived, the Government of Alberta has very heavily assisted a road from Edmonton, whose terminal will be located in the Peace River Country, and whose operations must be designed to perform a very wholesome work in the expansion of that portion of Alberta and Northern British Columbia. Unquestionably, the Edmonton merchant is alive to the business of the Peace River Country, and he has every right to be. He would not be entitled to a part in the business unless he were a man fully alive to the possibilities of the right kind that might offer.

This is the reason, sir, why we should be spurred on to action. We should conceive it to be in the general public interest that the Province of British

Columbia should not be behind in the march of progress and should attack without delay the proposal to build a standard gauge road into the Peace River Country and give to the people of Vancouver and Victoria and the other Southern sections of the country every advantage that the pioneer section of British Columbia has a right to expect from the growth of the new and great North.

The stories that come to us with regard to the Peace River Country make most interesting reading, but I would be trespassing upon the time of the House if I attempted to relate any of them. I wish to say, however, that they have a tremendous bearing upon the issue. The coal fields of the Peace River Country to be traversed by this road are of undoubted value and considerable extent, and upon proper development they promise to give to the world the greatest producing coal mines extant. The quality of the product is not surpassed anywhere, and our information is to the effect that there is an abundance of it.

We are advised, too, that the iron deposits of British Columbia are of an excellent commercial quality. Reports have come in recently which go to show that almost along the tracks of the line there are almost limitless iron deposits, from which the mineral may be brought presently to a point where, with fuel conditions warranting, we shall be able to turn out an iron product second to none on the continent of America.

But, in addition to coal and ore deposits, we have extensive grazing lands, wonderful timber belts and vast waterways. All of these things seem to me to offer an irrefragable case that would more than justify the project to which the Government proposes in this bill to commit itself.

Since it has been reported to the Administration that in four months' time, or, at the most, six months, the main work of the Grand Trunk Pacific will have been completed, and upwards of four or five thousand men will have been discharged from their daily vocation, it will be a fortunate thing for the company and for these workmen as well that, without having to leave the Far North and seek a new field for their labours, they can at once apply them to the extension of the Pacific Great Eastern into the Peace River Country.