

The Weekly Times

Victoria, Friday, May 10

HUDSON BAY RAILWAY.

The announcement is made that the contract for building 250 miles of the Hudson Bay railway, from Winnipeg to the Saskatchewan river, has been ratified by the company at Winnipeg. This contract was concluded between Hugh Sutherland and other promoters of the railway and the St. Paul contractors, Messrs. Foley and Grant, with whom Mr. Isbester, of Ottawa, seems to be associated, and was made possible by the Dominion government's new arrangement in regard to the subsidy. Premier Bowell's explanation of this arrangement is reported in the Ottawa dispatches.

As many of our readers are aware, this Hudson Bay project has been hanging fire in the hands of Hugh Sutherland and his associates for some years. In the first place two companies were formed to build roads to Hudson Bay, one being intended to terminate at the mouth of the Nelson river and the other at the mouth of the Churchill. These two were amalgamated by act of parliament, and the resulting single company, with Hugh Sutherland at its head, was voted liberal aid by parliament at the instance of the government. The terms were, we believe, that the company should receive 6,400 acres of land per mile as the line was built, and, by a later act, that it should be paid \$80,000 a year for twenty years after the line should reach the Saskatchewan. This last conditional grant was set down as consideration for certain services which the company undertook to perform for the government, whereby it advances to the company \$10,000 a mile for that portion of the road between Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan, 250 miles. The government keeps control of the land grant and the \$80,000 a year subsidy as security for the advance. It is to be noted here that this arrangement was made by an order-in-council, whereas the former one was made by an act of parliament. Why should the government have undertaken to vary by an order-in-council the terms of an act of parliament? The obvious answer is that the ministers at the time expected to bring on the general election right away, and they wanted to have this project set going as a vote-making machine in the Northwest. That is about the only utility they see in the affair. Of course the order-in-council will have to be ratified by parliament, and the proposal will in all probability meet serious opposition there from some of the government's supporters. Sir Donald Smith, for instance, can hardly give it his assent. The Montreal Gazette, the Hamilton Spectator and other Conservative papers condemn the Hudson Bay road in unqualified terms.

Naturally enough, the scheme does not evoke so much enthusiasm in the Northwest as the government would like to see, chiefly for the reason that the past history of the project is rather unsavory. The Norquay government issued provincial debentures to the extent of \$250,000 and handed them over to the company, on which debentures the province has ever since been paying interest. Forty miles of the road were built and ironed, and incredible though it may seem, these forty miles not only used up the \$250,000 given by Manitoba but ran the company into debt besides to the extent of at least another \$200,000, which sum has remained as a liability against the road ever since. Forty miles of prairie railway costing over \$110,000 per mile pretty well holds the record as a wonder of railway construction. There were statements that "hoodle" had something to do with the matter. Even at this the road was so badly constructed that it would not pass inspection so as to secure the Dominion land grant. Now this forty-mile piece of road is to be abandoned—it has become worthless, practically—and the line is to be started from Winnipeg anew. Facts such as these might well cause some distrust among the people of the Northwest as to the future of the project.

TOO HIGH A PRICE.

The Montreal Witness in discussing the Newfoundland question says: "Newfoundland wants very much to make St. John's the chief Canadian ocean port for steamships running between Canada and Europe, and she thinks this may be secured by a railway to Cape North, the point of Cape Breton nearest the coast of Newfoundland, and the establishment of a ferry from Cape North to Port au Basque, on the south coast of Newfoundland, which is the western terminus of the Newfoundland Island railway, now two-thirds built, which, when completed, will connect with St. John's. The hundred miles of railway necessary in Canada will be costly to build, and it is doubtful whether the scheme could ever prove successful. Certainly Canada has good cause in the present state of the finances for hesitating to undertake such a burden. The other condition Newfoundland asks is that the Canadian government shall pay an export bounty on codfish equal to that paid by the

French government to French fishermen. That also would be a big drain upon Canada's treasury, and the government is quite right in holding out against it." We should think that if Newfoundland's conditions are correctly set down there ought to be no hesitation whatever in dealing with them. The condition of our finances described by Minister Foster in his budget speech is rather too alarming to allow of these Newfoundland ideas being entertained. While the addition of the Island colony to Canada would be a good thing for both, on proper conditions, it is hard to see why anybody should be so crazily anxious to bring it about as to be ready to consent to willfully extravagant terms.

A COSTLY FARCE.

Rev. Principal Grant when asked concerning the liquor traffic commission, "would not defend the appointment of a royal commission for the taking of evidence in such cases, and was inclined to think such a method was intended to practically shelve the question at a cost of \$100,000." The principal appears to have put the truth in few and plain words. For about two years the commissioners went to and fro and up and down asking questions about the liquor traffic, and now four of them say prohibition would not do at all, while the other one says it would be just the thing. In other words, each one of the commissioners had certain opinions formed before he started to make inquiries, and he kept to those opinions all through. For confirming these five gentlemen in the ideas they had at the start the country pays \$100,000. Well, perhaps that is none too much for so valuable a purpose, since Mr. Foster has "figured down" the deficit to \$4,500,000.

UP WITH THE TAXES.

Poor Mr. Foster has been constrained to admit a deficit of four millions and a half. Nor has he been able to make good the proposition that the expenditure should be brought down to the level of the income, which was somewhat boldly advanced by ministerial speakers in the debate on the address. Retrenchment and economy are not just the weapons with which the Tory government would choose to enter on a political campaign. So that these may not be too dangerous altogether the government now proposes to clap on taxes and bring the income up a notch or two. Half a cent a pound on raw sugar is quite an item, as last year's imports amounted to over 300,000,000 pounds. Then Mr. Foster takes care that the refiners do not lose their protection, raising the duty on refined sugar by half a cent a pound. From these increases he would on last year's importations have raised nearly a million and three-quarter dollars of revenue. After the flourish of trumpets which accompanied the removal of the raw sugar duty a few years ago its re-imposition now must be a rather disagreeable task for the government. If there were any strong indications that the ministers have honestly determined to abandon the administrative methods which have brought the country into its present plight there would be less for the people to condemn, but no indication of the kind is given. Nothing but punishment is likely to affect the impenitent, and the taxpayers seem ready to administer the necessary dose.

Tax canal revenue, \$126; Tax canal maintenance and repairs, \$2,458; Mr. Foster's deficit, \$5,000,000.—The Globe.

The Nelson Tribune says that Mr. Bostock is half owner of the Times. Our esteemed contemporary is the unfortunate possessor of a too fertile imagination, and very often commits itself to most astounding statements. As Mr. Bostock has no financial interest in the Times directly or indirectly, our advocacy of that gentleman's candidature cannot be attributed, as the Tribune evidently seeks to imply, to "business" considerations. The Times supports Mr. Bostock because he is an opponent to the present government and is in every way qualified to represent Yale-Cariboo.

The Detroit Tribune has been making a comparison of the criminal records of Canada and Michigan, and sums up in this fashion:—

The Dominion of Canada, with a population of nearly 5,000,000 people scattered from Newfoundland to the wild frontier of the unexplored Northwest Territories, has had less than five murders for each 100,000 of her population during the past ten years. Michigan, with nearly 2,000,000 inhabitants, nearly every one within gunshot of a school house and a church, has had over 23 murders for each 100,000 of her population during the same period.

In ten years Canada has tried 223 people for the crime of murder, Michigan, with less than one-half the population, has tried 484 people for the crime during the same period.

Canada in ten years has hanged 49 people for murder. Michigan has hanged none.

Under the Michigan system of punishing murder the state has during ten

years at great expense to herself preserved the worthless lives of 122 convicted murderers. As an offset the state has mourned the untimely end of over 300 more victims of the crime than would have been murdered if the Canadian ratio of less than five to 100,000 population during the period had prevailed in Michigan.

It is rather odd to find the Montreal Gazette, a prominent and faithful Conservative paper, talking in this way: "The United States pension expenditure of 1894 was \$141,177,284, or some \$18,000,000 less than in 1893. From 1878 till 1894 there was a steady increase in the pension charge on the revenue, the growth being from \$27,137,019 to \$159,257,557. The decrease is not likely to be at so rapid a rate, but it will be continuous, and will be one of the main influences in restoring the times of surplus in the national finances. In time, indeed, it is likely to lead to a reduction of the rate of taxes, which is a matter that concerns Canada to some extent. There is not now between the two countries that difference in the rate per head of customs and excise taxation that used to exist in favor of the Dominion, and it will not be a good thing in comparisons if our neighbors' burden falls much below ours."

Trustee Marchant in a letter published in this issue announces that he will propose that the board establish a swimming bath and undertake the instruction of the school children in the art of swimming. He further suggests that the Times should allow the question to be discussed in its columns. We have pleasure in adopting the suggestion, though it was hardly necessary for Mr. Marchant to offer it or for us to formally announce its adoption, since the columns of the Times have always been open for the discussion of any question of public interest. Unless a better case can be made out for it than now appears, the majority of the public will probably declare against the proposal. It is a good thing for the boys and girls to learn swimming; everybody is prepared to admit the value of the accomplishment, both as a means of securing wholesome exercise and a means of life-saving. That is not to say, however, that the school board should undertake the expense of giving the instruction.

The Ottawa correspondent of the Globe said recently: "The answer given in the senate to-day by Premier Bowell to a question concerning Fitzsimmons, deputy warden of the New Westminister, B. C., penitentiary, forms an amusing contrast to the diplomacy of the commonsense contingent of the government. Mr. Curran yesterday, answering Mr. Edgar, said that James Fitzsimmons had been dismissed or suspended from the office of deputy warden of the New Westminister penitentiary. Pending the investigation he was relieved of his duties, and in October last he was retired from office, without prejudice to consideration for re-employment. He was reinstated March 25th last. Premier Bowell lacks the shrewd caution of the solicitor-general, and, in reply to the same question to-day, said Fitzsimmons was dismissed by order in council and re-appointed by order in council. Sir John Thompson dismissed him for cause on the report of a commission, and Sir Hibbert Tupper reinstated him also for cause, supposed to be political influence." Another report says that the British Columbia members are indignant over Fitzsimmons' reappointment, and it is well known that some of them at least were not in favor of it. Who, then, exercised the "political influence" in Mr. Fitzsimmons' favor?

IRON AND HARDWARE.

So outrageous was this (the iron) schedule that the government was obliged at the session of 1894 to amend it. By the new tariff then adopted, pig iron secured a duty of \$4 and a bounty of \$2 per ton, making the total protection \$6 on the net; the duty on scrap was raised to \$3 per ton for the remainder of 1894 and to \$4 per ton beginning January 1st, 1895; the bar iron duty was reduced from \$13 to \$10; puddled bars reduced from \$9 to \$8, and the other iron and steel duties equalized. This is a much more symmetrical schedule than the one it replaced, but it will fall almost as lamentably in its attempt to "give employment" to iron as it has done so greatly during the last few years that despite the excessive protection of \$6 per ton Canadian iron cannot hold its own let alone supplant the imported article. In Montreal Scotch iron is very largely used, though American is beginning to get a footing. But in Ontario American iron is almost exclusively employed in manufactures. It can be bought in Pennsylvania and laid down in Toronto with all charges paid for less than would have to be paid there for the Canadian article. Is it not therefore as clear as daylight that the effect of this duty is to handicap every manufacturer in Ontario to the extent of \$4.48—the amount of the duty—on every long ton of iron he uses? The American manufacturer gets his iron from \$4 to \$5 a ton cheaper; his coal costs him 60 cents a ton less and in consequence he can manufacture much cheaper than his Canadian rival. The latter finds it difficult to compete in the Canadian markets notwithstanding the excessive duties against imported manufactures of iron, and when it comes to exporting he would not be in it for a single second had the government not granted him relief by a device which illustrates the

uselessness and costliness of protection. By an order-in-council passed last fall the Canadian manufacturer can recover on exported goods 99 per cent. of the duties paid for raw material. The government in making such a regulation destroyed completely its own theory that the protection duty does not add to the cost of the goods, and they dealt a deadly blow as well at the native iron industry, the encouragement of which has been the ostensible object of the legislation of the past 16 years. Mr. George E. Drummond, of Montreal, at the last meeting of the Quebec Mining Association, said that the "way in which this enactment is framed and the manner in which it works are most detrimental to the development of the Canadian iron industry in its broadest sense." He said, furthermore, that it "simply serves to nullify the protection and encouragement to the Canadian iron industry granted by the Dominion government itself at the last session of parliament."

NICARAGUA TAUGHT A LESSON

Indemnity Guaranteed by Salvador—Will be Paid in London in a Fortnight. Rear-Admiral Stephenson Receives Orders to Withdraw from Corinto.

Washington, May 4.—The guarantee by Salvador of Nicaragua's indebtedness, it is said, is simply repayment of the favor rendered by Nicaragua to Salvador at the time of the Ezeta incident, when Dr. Guzman, the Nicaraguan minister at Washington, took up the case of Salvador by instructions of his own government, and worked so hard to secure the extradition of the refugees to Salvador. In addition to this consideration, based on gratitude, the Salvadorians are supposed to be influenced in espousing the Nicaraguan cause by a feeling of apprehension at the presence of British troops on Central American soil. It is quite certain that all of the countries of Central America have been deeply impressed with some such fear. It is felt here that the Nicaraguan incident may, perhaps, be the direct means of bringing about again the long expected revival of the union of the Central American republics, the small republics now existing having been brought to a realization of their inability to protect themselves in a conflict with any considerable power.

Although it may be safely assumed that the acute phase of the Nicaraguan incident has passed, supposing that there should be no hostile collision before the formal orders have reached the commanders on either side, there are yet some matters to be adjusted before the incident can be regarded as entirely closed. After the settlement of the "smart money" claim on account of the treatment of Hatch, a commission must be selected and proceed to adjudicate the claims of other British subjects, not officials, who were expelled from Bluefields at the time of the outbreak last summer, and if this commission assesses damages against Nicaragua on this score, there may be some grumbling before the account is settled. This is not likely to lead to serious trouble, but the Nicaraguans, smarting under the sense of oppression in this case—for they declared that Hatch had never been granted an exequatur and so was never recognized by them as a British official—may be counted on to do everything they can, without good cause for an open rupture, to give their patronage in the future to any other nation than Great Britain. It is just within the bounds of possibility, too, that the old question of British rights in the Mosquito reservation may arise again at some future day, for it will be recalled that General Barrios, who went to London as special commissioner for Nicaragua, to come to an understanding with Great Britain on the subject, and to secure a revision of the treaty of Managua by which the British right of protectorate over the reservation was recognized, was met by a polite but positive refusal on the part of Lord Kimberley to enter upon a discussion of the subject until Nicaragua had first adjusted the claims growing out of the improper treatment of British citizens at Bluefields. Thus the subject was left in abeyance, though if it should arise again it is probable that the United States would this time side with Nicaragua in the contention that the Mosquitoes, by formal act of convention last summer, in merging their territory into the body politic of Nicaragua had absolutely terminated the British protectorate.

The British diplomatic officers uniformly follow the practice of keeping their home government informed as to the state of public opinion in the coun-

try to which they are accredited on any issue touching that country, as shown by public declarations and utterances of leading newspapers, and it has been suggested that the foreign office in the case of Nicaragua may have been somewhat influenced in this last action in closing up the case, or at least may have been hastened in its disposition, by notice from the British ambassador here of the action yesterday of the New York State assembly. It was definitely developed when the official announcement of the agreement was made, that the United States had taken a very important part in the negotiations within the past 24 hours. A cablegram of instructions was sent to Mr. Bayard yesterday, laying down a positive line of action. Mr. Bayard received these instructions so late yesterday that they were undoubtedly communicated to the foreign offices to-day. It is a singular coincidence, therefore, that Great Britain's acceptance was given almost immediately after Mr. Bayard carried out his instructions. Previous to yesterday the compromise was being urged by the Salvadorian minister in London, but his efforts seemed to be ineffective, and there was no certainty that Great Britain would agree. It was this doubt that led to the cable to Mr. Bayard. He was directed to urge the reasonableness of the compromise proposition and to seek an early acceptance. The results proved that his offices were more effective than those of the Salvadorian minister.

Dr. Guzman, the Nicaraguan minister here, received the news from the state department to-day. "I am much gratified with the result," said he, "but now that it is all over, I don't mind saying that I was apprehensive up to the time the official message came from Mr. Bayard. There is no doubt that the affair is at an end, as no circumstances can now intervene to prevent the execution of the agreement. The question that Nicaragua has yet to accept is a mere formality. She has already accepted, and, in fact, has urged the agreement through her representatives. But such further assurances as are necessary will be made. The payment of the money is beyond question. Nicaragua's word is sufficient, but, in addition, there is the assurance of Salvador."

Dr. Guzman was asked what other steps would be taken. "There is only one more step," said he, "and that is for the British ships to sail from Corinto. I expect that will occur by Saturday, perhaps to-morrow."

As the interview closed, Mr. Guzman said: "One thing I want to emphasize, and that is my appreciation of the consideration shown me and my government by the state department. The kindly manner in which Secretary Gresham and all the officials have treated the subject at the time of emergency is a source of congratulation to me, and certainly will be to my government when the facts become known."

Dr. Guzman sent a telegram to his government, informing them of Great Britain's acceptance.



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LATE CABLE

The Chancellor of Exchequer, Sir William

Noisy Demonstrations Agitated in

London, May 2.—Commons to-day the Exchequer, Sir William court, presented the budget that the deficit £319,000, which would be a surplus of £181,000 of a duty of six beer. The only other abolish the extra tax which was imposed unsatisfactory. In the budget the chancellor estimated a surplus of £7 million less for our country than the tea receipts of the tobacco receipts estimates. Contingent said that the returns of the condition of the improved in 1894.

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