

THE WEST

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WEDNESDAY, March 20, 1907.

HUDSON'S BAY RAILWAY

The people of this province are almost unanimously in favor of a railway to Hudson's Bay as early a date as possible, and the recent announcement of Hon. Frank Oliver will be read with a good deal of interest.

The general principle of the scheme having been endorsed by every expression of public sentiment for some time, there only remains for consideration the method by which this road should be constructed.

The government proposal as announced by Mr. Oliver is to build this railway out of the proceeds of the sale of pre-emptions under the new Dominion land bill, and with this proposal there is one fault apparent on the face of the scheme.

It is open to doubt whether the Grand Trunk Pacific, even with all the facilities which it will offer, and as much as we appreciate them, will benefit this province as much as the construction of the Hudson's Bay railway, and the road to the bay will be in every sense more of a national highway, having no connection whatever with a foreign country.

We find that the cost of the G.T.P. is being borne by the people of Canada out of the Dominion treasury. It is a proper question to ask, when in the history of Canada a railway being so national in character as the Hudson's Bay road, or a road of any proportion at any time, has been built from funds raised in the manner proposed by this bill.

It takes twenty acres of land to keep one head of cattle, and the Dominion government has estimated the land to be worth only two cents an acre to the rancher. The occupant, however, although he is only a lessee has to pay the regular local improvement tax and the ordinary school tax, for much of the ranching country is organized into school districts.

Mr. Wylie is no bluffer. He asserts that this two and a half cents an acre direct tax is "the last straw that will break the camel's back," and that ranchers will "chuck" the leases and take their chances. This will certainly have a disastrous effect, for it was only recently that the Dominion government decided to withdraw, after inspection, large areas of this grazing land from entry for homestead purposes until there is a general demand from intending homesteaders.

With this safeguard the ranchers have fenced sufficient to keep their stock from drifting during the early winter and to enable them to select, do breeding and proper feeding.

Now, however, the province adopts a direct taxation scheme, which more than doubles the grazing rent charged by the Dominion government. This is unbearable, and as Mr. Wylie says, the ranchers will not stand for it. There is a way out of the difficulty at a cost both to the province, and the stock breeders, and that is to

upset the whole taxation scheme by throwing up the lease. It is regrettable that after the injustices of the proposal has been shown by Mr. Wylie, the government insists that this measure shall become law.

EDITORIAL NOTES If the Angel Gabriel came to Saskatchewan The West would not fail to invest his visit with some political significance—Regina Leader.

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The city is a model of order and neatness, a credit of all kinds, laid forward with such strides. The general appearance of the place commends itself to every tourist and visitor, and its solid character is much superior to the majority of cities on the American side. All the manufacturing establishments, saw mills and steam canneries, etc., are well built, substantial-looking structures. If we reckon the age of the city by decades, in 1881 it did not exist; in 1891 its population was 18,798; in 1901 it had 49,133, and today it is nearing the 60,000 mark.

The six thousand feet of docks give accommodation to an ever-increasing fleet. Here you will find the "Floating Palace" which ply between Vancouver and China, and the steamers of the "All Red" line which have Australia as their trans-oceanic destination; the larger coast steamers engaged in the Klondike and Alaska traffic; the Union Steamship Company's boats plying up the coast, making Vancouver their headquarters; also the magnificent palatial steamer "Princess Victoria," which plies between Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle. Millions worth of silk and Oriental merchandise are landed here every month and it is safe to say that in a few years the Pacific commerce will rival that of the Atlantic.

The eyes of the world are now centered on the Pacific. The vast trade to be done with Japan and China will soon assume gigantic proportions. In the City of Vancouver the enterprises of the Province have their rise, and the substantial business blocks, the well-paved streets, the excellent system of electric lighting, and the street railways and the uncommonly good water are always favorably commented upon by visitors, while the comfortable hotels, the well-appointed theatres and shops, the general air of solidity and progress, fill with wonder travellers who have novel-manufactured ideas about "this far-western town."

Vancouver is a commercial city. The chief industries of the place are timber, fishing, manufacturing on a large scale, and an ever growing wholesale trade dealing in nearly all classes of merchandise. The most characteristic feature of the Pacific Coast is, of course, the lumbering industry. In a country where nature deals so largely in superlatives, one is led to expect something very big indeed from the British Columbia forest, and in this expectation there is no disappointment. The average height of the trees ranges from 150 to 170 feet, and in diameter from five to seven feet. As for the really large trees—what are known as British Columbia "redwoods"—if one were to give a faithful account of their proportions it would be considered a gross exaggeration, and therefore it is better to leave them to the personal observation of the tourist.

Comparing British Columbia timber with that of Eastern Canada, particularly Ontario, forest land that carries 20,000 feet to the acre is considered a good average yield in the latter region while in British Columbia a fair average yield is from 50,000 to 70,000 feet per acre. A lumber camp is a very interesting sight, and a

visit to a typical coast mill no less so. The Hastings mill on the harbor front, at Vancouver furnishes a very good example of one of these. Here one may see the great logs, that have been floated down in the "boom" from the camps, converted into marketable lumber and loaded on a fleet of sailing vessels that await their cargoes, bound for the United Kingdom, Australia, China, Japan, India and South American ports.

Last year the total pack of salmon at the Fraser River canneries alone was 800,000 cases. Exports to the United States from Vancouver (Circular District during the year just ended amounted to \$1,938,113.34, as shown by figures compiled in the office of Colonel Dudley, American Consul.

Building permits for the City of Vancouver for twelve months now ending will amount to \$4,000,000. The following are a few extracts from the report of E. Curtis, of the Chicago Record-Herald: "Vancouver is properly called the 'Liverpool of the Pacific.' It is a solid, well-built town, nothing shabby about it. The streets are well paved and well kept, everything seems to be shown by figures compiled in the office of Colonel Dudley, American Consul.

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