

The railway bill proves to be a sort of double barreled measure, dealing as it does with two apparently distinct propositions, though both are controlled by the same persons. The first proposal is to guarantee the principal and interest of the first mortgage bonds, to the amount of \$8,000 per mile, at four per cent., for a road from Sifton station, a point on the Dauphin railway, to a point on the Saskatchewan river. The Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Co. (the Dauphin road) is to receive this guarantee. The proposed road will really be an extension of the Dauphin road to the North Saskatchewan river. A portion of this road will extend beyond the northern boundary of Manitoba, and for every mile so extending beyond the province, the government is to be given 2,133 acres of land, in Manitoba, as security for the payment by the company of the obligation guaranteed by the government. The government is further to receive 256,000 acres of land, on account of aid granted the Hudson Bay railway some years ago. It will be understood by this that the Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal company now controls the Hudson Bay charter, and in view of the aid now granted by the government, the province is to be recouped for its outlay in connection with the Hudson Bay road. Through a blunder at the time this aid was granted, the province did not receive the security which it was intended it should have received on account of this aid. The company is to further receive exemption from taxation upon its property for thirty years. The length of the proposed extension is about 140 miles.

Of course a great deal will be made of this proposed extension of the Dauphin road to the Saskatchewan river, as a big link in a road to Hudson Bay. To this extent the proposed road may be valuable for political campaign purposes. The company which is to construct this railway already has a heavy land grant from the Dominion besides a mail subsidy of \$80,000 per year, \$40,000 of which has been earned by the construction of the Dauphin road, and the remaining \$40,000 when the road is extended to the Saskatchewan river. This added to the guarantee from the Manitoba government, and exemption from taxation, gives it a pretty good thing. Whether or not the road will be extended to Hudson Bay, is a matter the future will decide. At present it cannot be considered as a feature of the bargain. The best that can be said is, that for a portion of the distance the road will develop a good agricultural region.

The second part of the railway bill provides for the same amount of aid to the Winnipeg and Southeastern railway, for a road from Winnipeg to

a point at or about the Lake of the Woods. The important feature of this road is, that it is expected to become a part of a through line to Lake Superior. The unfortunate thing about the measure, however, is that the government has no guarantee that it will ever become a through line, and further there is no guarantee as to rates should it become a through line. For a long time back the people of Manitoba have been kept in suspense by rumors that the government had an important railway enterprise in hand, by which the province was to secure a competing line to Lake Superior, with guarantees of great reductions in freight rates. It was even alleged that a rate of ten cents per bushel on wheat had been secured. The measure has been presented to the legislature and adopted, but the province receives nothing by this bill but a local road through the muskeg and rocky country lying east of the Lake of the Woods. The members of the legislature may have great faith in the ultimate extension of the line to Lake Superior, with guarantees of freight rates to be secured in the future, but the actual fact as the case stands at present, is, that the province has assumed a heavy liability without securing any guarantee either as to the extension of the road or reduction of through rates. The only guarantee the province secures, applies to freight rates on cordwood and sawlogs. The rate on logs is not to exceed \$2.50 per thousand feet from the Lake of the Woods to Winnipeg. On cordwood the rate is not to exceed 21-2 cents per 100 lbs. for 25 miles, for 50 miles or less 3 cents, for 75 miles or less 31-2 cents and for 100 miles 4 cents. It is questionable if the guarantees secured are worth the heavy obligation assumed by the province in this matter. Besides, it would appear that by giving this aid without securing any guarantees either as to the extension of the line to Lake Superior or regarding through freight rates, the province is really throwing away any opportunity which the government may have had to secure any such guarantees. The promoters of this road will prove themselves very different from the general run of humanity, if they come meekly to the government and give a guarantee of freight rates, after they have pocketed the provincial aid. This whole railway business has been bound up in the popular mind with the belief that a great reduction in through freights to Lake Superior was to be secured. Not only is there no such guarantee as to freight rates, but there is no guarantee that the road will be anything more than a local line to the Lake of the Woods. The whole thing seems to be a most

dismal failure and a total collapse of the high hopes which have been built up by the rumors of a through line and low rates to Lake Superior. It would appear that the province has simply thrown away its case in a most unbusinesslike way, at the very beginning of negotiations in this matter. The road may be of some value by reducing the price of wood fuel in Winnipeg, and if it leads to the establishment of a large lumber industry here, it will add very materially to the prosperity of the country. The great central point in the matter, however, was low rates to Lake Superior, but as regards this there is simply nothing in it. If the road is to be simply a local line to the Lake of the Woods, it should be considered on its merit as such. If it is expected to become a through route to Lake Superior, which is to bring great reductions in freight rates, the time to give the aid would be when the company is in a position to give the necessary guarantees. By giving the aid in advance the province has simply lost the opportunity of securing a guarantee of rates, in case this road ever becomes a through line.

#### Successful Manitoba Farmers.

W and J. Fulton are successful farmers of the Portage la Prairie district of Manitoba—the famous Portage Plains' country. They came from Scotland originally and settled in Ontario, moving to Manitoba in 1873. Mr. W. Fulton said to a representative of the Portage la Prairie Liberal: "We had about \$1,000 when we came here, but everything was so high that the money did not go far in making a start. We first built a house in the village, to live in until we could get some improvements made on our land. As to the price of building material, I will just quote a few. Floorboards were then \$40 per 1,000; flooring and siding, \$50; shingles, \$8; nails, \$13 per 100 lbs. These were the prices in Winnipeg, and the freight by wagon to Portage was one-half as much more. We bought two yoke of oxen, for which we paid \$180 per yoke; two breaking plows, at \$40 each; one wagon, \$90, a small stove was \$50; and as for furniture, we had to make it ourselves, as there were no house furnishing shops in the province at that time. The first year we broke and backset twenty acres of prairie land and put in wheat. The next spring, the second year, we broke an additional thirty acres, and harvested what we had in crop, and it was very good. On the 17th of July, 1874, the grasshoppers came in clouds from the southwest, and overspread the whole face of the country. They injured the crop to such an extent that the yield was about twenty bushels per acre. The season of 1875 was the year of the great grasshopper plague. The eggs deposited in the ground the previous year commenced to hatch out about the 24th of May, and in a month the whole country was covered with them.

Very little grain was raised that year. These were Manitoba's darkest days. Hundreds were so discouraged that they left for other parts,