

Coast-Boundary Railway in B.C.

The British Columbia Government recently invited offers for the construction of a Coast-Boundary railway to be submitted to them by April 15. The Co. desiring to construct the line must pay the Government 4% of the gross earnings of the road, such percentage to be a first charge on the railway; all contracts to be subject to the approval of the Lieut.-Governor-in-Council, who will also approve of all material used in the construction of the road; no aliens to be employed unless it can be shown to the Lieut.-Governor-in-Council that the road cannot be built without them; a daily ferry must be operated to some point on Vancouver island from the mainland and all rates are to be subject to the supervision of the Lieut.-Governor-in-Council.

In the spring of 1898 the Government voted a cash subsidy of \$4,000 per mile to the Victoria, Vancouver and Eastern Ry. Co., which had been incorporated to construct a line from the mouth of the Fraser River, proceeding along its southern bank, thence through the Similkameen country to the eastern boundary of the Province. On the strength of this subsidy it is claimed that work was commenced at several points along the proposed line. The Semlin-Cotton Government revoked the subsidy and claimed that the work done was confiscated, and that the charter was forfeited by reason of the fact, among others, that the Co. had not obtained a subsidy from the Dominion Government. The Co. have also a Dominion charter, and is negotiating with the Ottawa Government for a subsidy; and holds that the powers under Provincial charter have not lapsed. The V. V. & E. Ry. Co. has behind it Mackenzie & Mann, and the Great Northern Ry., U.S.A., as the following telegram addressed to E. V. Bodwell, Victoria, shows:

"New York, March 21.—If you think it advisable you may announce that the Great Northern Ry. and Mackenzie & Mann are equally interested in the V. V. & E. Ry. Co. stock. (Signed),

"J. J. HILL,
"WM. MACKENZIE."

This Co. asked for a renewal of the subsidy, and those interested in the development of the country through which the line will pass have petitioned in favor of it, asking the Government to secure the building of the line by a Co. independent of the C.P.R. The petitioners further ask that the Government do not give a charter to the C.P.R. even if it offers to build without a subsidy, which it is reported it has offered to do.

The C.P.R. is interested in two bills before the Legislature, one of which is to incorporate the Coast-Kootenay Ry. Co., and the other to authorize the construction of a Vancouver-Grand Forks line.

The V.V. and E. is projected to cross the Fraser River at Westminster, then running along the south bank of the river through an agricultural country to Hope landing. From here, where the mining regions commence, the line will leave the Fraser river and follow the windings of the Coquella river to Coldwater, where a short spur will tap the Nicola coal fields. The main line will follow a branch of the Coldwater down to the Otter, where another spur will be built to reach the Aspen Grove camp. The Otter valley will be followed to Otter lake and along its shores to the Tulameen river, the mining camp near here having been tapped by work done in 1900. At the junction of the Otter and the Tulameen the Provincial Government owns a town site which is being developed, and from here a third spur line will be carried up the Tulameen river to the Slate Creek, Bear Creek, Kelly Creek and Summit City camps. The main line will be carried past Collins' Gulch to Granite Creek and thence to Princeton, from whence a spur will be built to reach

the Copper and Kennedy mountain, Friday Creek and the Roche river mines. The line will follow the Similkameen to its confluence with the Okanagan. The survey now being made, of which J. H. Kennedy has charge as chief engineer, will leave the Similkameen at this point and follow up the Tonasket Bonaparte pass to Myers' Creek, down Myers' Creek to Rock Creek, and down that stream to Kettle river. In going this way the line will be carried across the mountains with nearly 1,000 ft. less climbing than by any other route.

The Manitoba Railway Contracts.

The question of the ratification of the agreement entered into by the Manitoba Government and the Northern Pacific Ry. Co., for the taking over of the lines owned and operated by that Co. in Manitoba, and of the agreement between the Government and the Canadian Northern Ry. Co. for their future operation (see R. and S.W., Feb., pg. 39), was the principal subject for discussion during the last session of the Manitoba Legislature. The act confirming the agreement with the N.P. was passed on Mar. 12, by a party vote of 23 to 12, after an amendment that the bill be read that day six months had been defeated by a similar vote. On the following day the bill ratifying the agreement with the C.N. was passed by 23 to 10. The Lieut.-Governor gave his assent to the first on Mar. 15, and to the second on Mar. 20.

From the time of the publication of the agreements with the railway companies there has been considerable discussion in all parts of the province and resolutions approving or disapproving of the Government's action were adopted for presentation to the Dominion Parliament which has to approve of the acts before they become operative. The most important of these gatherings was one held in the Winnipeg Opera House on Mar. 15, when a resolution was passed protesting against the confirming of the agreements and authorizing a deputation to go to Ottawa to oppose the legislation in the House of Commons. The resolution passed sets forth "that the said contracts are not in the interests of the Province of Manitoba, inasmuch as the said contracts do not secure the building of any additional railroads, and there is no positive assurance that they will bring about any regulation of rates, and inasmuch as they involve the Province of Manitoba in a liability which, if called upon to pay, would seriously embarrass the financial position of the Province, that the contracts should not be ratified unless and until the electors of the Province of Manitoba have had an opportunity of signifying their wishes at the polls with reference to the same." In conformity with this resolution a deputation waited on the Government and presented their views. They have also issued a pamphlet setting forth at length the grounds of their opposition. There is appended to the general statement of opposition an opinion signed by C. Robinson, K.C., Geo. F. Shepley, K.C., A. B. Aylesworth, K.C., Wallace Nesbitt, K.C., on the contracts; and the resolution of the Winnipeg Board of Trade, which has been assented to by 65 public meetings in various parts of the Province.

The Dominion Parliament has the agreements before it in two bills, both of which have been given a second reading, the first before the Easter recess, and the second April 15, and will now go before the Railway Committee for consideration. The first bill was one introduced by Mr. McCreary to confirm agreements between the Canadian Northern Ry. Co., and the Manitoba and Southeastern and Ontario and Rainy River Ry. Co.'s, to which was subsequently added clauses confirming the agreement of Jan. 15 between the Manitoba Government and the Northern Pa-

cific Ry. Co., and the agreement of Feb. 11 between the Manitoba Government and the C. N. Co. Other clauses give an option to the Provincial Government to acquire at any time during the 999 years of the lease, the N. P. lines in Manitoba with their rolling stock and equipments for \$7,000,000, and further provides that the C. N. may, in the mortgage, securing the bonds at the rate of \$20,000 per mile for its 290 miles of railway from Port Arthur to Rainy River, agree to such terms to amplify and carry out the provisions of the contract and such other terms as the Lieut.-Gov.-in-Council of Manitoba may deem necessary in the public interest, though the same may be at variance with any of the provisions of the contract. The second bill is a private one, to introduce which a petition was presented to have the usual rules dispensed with. It is this bill which was read a second time without discussion on April 15.

A deputation from Manitoba will appear personally and by counsel before the Railway Committee to oppose the bills when they come up.

Branch Lines in Manitoba.

The Manitoba Act of last session to grant aid for the building of branch lines in various parts of the province provides for the construction of 110 miles of line. The aid is to take the form of a guarantee of the first mortgage bonds of the lines constructed to the extent of \$8,000 a mile, and is accompanied by conditions as to the control of rates by the Government. The Act, passed on Mar. 28, provides that the aid guaranteed by the Greenway Government in 1898 to the Canadian Northern Railway Co. for the construction of a line from Sifton to a point on the Saskatchewan river shall be varied. Of this line 132 miles were to be in the N.W.T., and 22 miles have been built. The Act provides for the revoking of the guarantee of \$8,000 a mile to the 110 miles of this railway not constructed, and its application to aiding the construction of a similar mileage of branch lines within the province.

The lines to be constructed include the following:

From Brandon, northwesterly, about 50 miles.

From the terminus of the Waskada line towards Souris, about 12 miles.

From Carman to Union Point or some other point on the N.P. line, about 24 miles through the Bates district.

From Beaver to Neepawa, with short spur line of 8 miles to Gladstone.

A Big Jump for the Q. and L. St. J. R.

The following, copied from the Railroad Gazette, New York, will be "news" to Manager Scott:—

"Quebec and Lake St. John.—The company has decided to build from Valcartice to St. Catharines, Ont., four miles."

It need hardly be said that the distance between the Q. & L. St. J. Ry., and St. Catharines, Ont., is something over 500 miles. What the Co. is doing is building from Valcartier, not Valcartice, to St. Catharines, Que., not Ont., a distance of about 4 miles. This cut-off will save 1¼ miles in distance, and will reduce the grades about 6-10's of 1%.

Hereafter the Baltimore & Ohio Rd. will not engage engine-drivers weighing 200 lbs. or over, although those now in the employ of the Co. will not be dismissed for this cause. The reason for the rule is said to be the narrowing of the space for the engine-driver caused by the extension of the boiler through the cab of the newer types of engine, & large engine-drivers might not be able to move rapidly enough in emergencies.