

CONCLUDING SPEECHES ON RAILWAY BILLS

Hon. W. J. Bowser in Fighting Speech Slates Criticisms of Messrs. Brewster and Hawthornthwaite

At Thursday night's late session the debate on the railway bills was concluded in the house, Mr. Hawthornthwaite, Mr. Tidall and the Attorney General being the last speakers. In the course of his speech Mr. Hawthornthwaite denied that there was any necessity at the present time for additional railways if their construction demanded such a pledge of the provincial credit as now contemplated. Competition had reached the stage that railways would come in any event, and the present status of the country's credit was wholly due to the policy adhered to in very recent years in refusing to assist with lands or money to private or capitalistic railway builders. Not admitting that this proposed railway system was necessary it was not necessary for the Socialist to propose any alternative construction policy. If the Conservative government decided that railways were necessary, why had they not asked, adopted the enunciated principal of their leader, Mr. Borden, and decided for nationalization? Had Premier McBride elected for such a policy, his party would undoubtedly have supported him. There never was a more devoted and obedient following. The cheering which had followed the Premier's address of a day or so past, had to him appeared to indicate not only the abrogation of the Conservative members of the right to do their own thinking but also the acceptance of a desirable self-respect. It was a mistake to think that government ownership of railways was a necessary proposal. With the wage system perpetuated, in his own opinion government ownership would simply prove a gateway to further corruption and to later grafting. The experience of Russia and of Germany had proven government ownership far from desirable. He agreed with the member for Alberni as to the practicability of the minimum wage clause, but as this was drawn, he said little hope of the labor class deriving benefits from the construction of our railway roads. The member for Esquimalt was wrong at least in his conclusion that construction would be good for our workmen. While it was true that there were quite enough white workers already in the province to do the work required, he noted that interviews had recently been given in Toronto by Mr. William Blakemore (and published in the telegraphic news columns of the Colonist), in which Mr. Blakemore had said—and he had not noticed any correction or denial of the remarks attributed—that ten thousand Italian laborers were to be imported for work in British Columbia, and that the building of these railways. So that not our workmen but the cheap labor of Europe would be the beneficiaries. Farmers would not benefit, for the road, save for a short stretch along the lower Fraser, would penetrate no extensive farming areas. Misapprehension of the facts by the farmers largely accounted for the verdict of the agricultural districts in the late election. There was in this bill no benefit for the farmers of Comox and Cowichan, or of the districts tributary to Nanaimo. And yet the government was enormously increasing the obligations of the province extending as far as the north, paralleled by any Canadian province, nor probably by any state in the adjacent union. This liability, already \$45,000,000, but with the branch lines talked of, it might be run to fifty to seventy-five, or to one hundred million dollars. This then, must be accepted as the final word in assisted railway building so far as British Columbia was concerned. The credit of the country could sustain no more. He was glad that the end had come, and that no more the snare of a phantom—this will-o'-the-wisp of a railway policy! He would have infinitely preferred, had this railway inevitably been built by provincial assistance that it should have entered the island by way of Frederick Arm, and thus by opening up the farming areas, have proven at least some benefit in practical way. The railway policy was not the creation of the government by any manner of means—the government had its brief and acted in accordance with its instructions from the railway company. Reverting to the criticism of the member for Alberni, he could find little value in that member's denunciations of the policy of the Dominion was federal policy of courses had nearly approval of the Alberni member. In Nanaimo members held that of various forms of government assistance for railways, bond guarantees were the best. As to the mortgage promise on the Canadian Northern system, it must at best be but a third class one, as the bond holders of the Dominion had the bond holders to the extent of \$35,000,000 had prior claims. There was no justification for the position that B. C. would not have to pay under the guarantee of bonds. There was no precedent to justify such a conclusion. Experience in the present connection would not again be repeated. In a few years the people of British Columbia would be as strong in their denunciation of its present bargain as the people of today were in denunciation of the wretched arrangement made by the Macdonald government of Canada for the C.P.R. He did not charge that in taking its present stand in this railway matter, the Conservative party was laying the foundation for greater disaster. He did not charge that the Liberal party in this province at the present juncture. The Socialist party too, did not oppose development by capitalistic principles because it was realized that the people must learn by experience, especially with regard to complete its cycle, and railway and capital development generally would be the result. He did not charge that the Socialist party had not been advised by the committee of young Liberal lawyers who prepared his brief, to look over the page in reading the Manitoba act. If he had done so, he would have discovered that in the Manitoba contract which he had no heartily applauded, he would have found that the Manitoba government bound itself to make up any losses in operation which might fall upon the company. Again, while the control of rates by Manitoba terminated in 1920, in the British Columbia agreement, the province could in perpetuity is guaranteed. Mr. Brewster had, as all good Liberals at present were doing, found it convenient to exten-

ing disaster in the bill. When the measure reached committee he and his colleague would do their best to improve it, but as it was not even along the ordinary lines of capitalistic development by fair competition, the Socialists would vote against the measure. Mr. Tidall expressed especial appreciation of the security given the country in the matter of reasonable rates. The rights of the Canadian Northern, of the railway commission, of the shippers, and of the people of British Columbia had all been fairly recognized and protected, and the clause in his opinion represented a most equitable arrangement between the four interested parties. The fourth member for Vancouver went briefly into the matter of rate discrimination from the business man's standpoint and in a business way, the member holding that the government deserved all credit for the way in which it had drafted this agreement and in protecting the rights of all four chiefly interested parties.

Mr. Bowser Crossed Mr. Bowser in beginning what was to be the closing address in the debate, congratulated the member for Esquimalt upon the stand that he had seen fit to take—a manly, independent stand that did him infinite credit. He thought that there was less of politics in his attitude than, because he was a canny Scot, he recognized a good business deal. For the same reason he saw how the people's wish and will inclined, and with remembrance that his ambitions pointed to the chair now occupied by the premier, he was disposed to pursue the lines of least resistance. (Laughter.) The finance minister had experienced difficulty in following the vagaries of the member for Nanaimo, who had ranged farther afield than usual, to deal with single tax, Socialism and all the other "isms" while covering the country from San Francisco to Roosevelt's latest camp in the wilds of Africa. Brewster had the all-important desideratum in connection with railway development. Was it not because the people wanted such competition and a better service than is being given by the C. P. R. that the country had stood by the present government as it had in November last, renegeing the Liberal party to oblivion. (Applause.) The member for Esquimalt had charged that the premier had presented a great issue to the people with "indecent haste." Why had not that member cast his memory back to the course taken by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the Grand Trunk Pacific. The three weeks' notice given by Premier Scott, of Saskatchewan, and also by Premier Borden, of Alberta, were also referred to; and in a rousing manner the finance minister disposed of the arguments of the Alberni member in a manner which elicited the wild applause of the house. As to securities of favorable grades and curvatures, were not Mackenzie & Mann well known as the master railway builders of Canada? Were they not in this every undertaking showing that they take advantage of the mistakes and successes of all other roads? Were they not especially the apostles of low grade, and did they not recognize any other road crossing the continent as to being able to operate more economically than any of their rivals. It was true that the government had declined to consider proposals for a railway crossing the Hope mountains. The government wanted a new trans-continental connection that would be commercially of the greatest benefit—a low gradient road which would make possible such reduction in rates as would be to the immense advantage of business. The province was not building scenic railways, or cog-wheel railways, or cog-wheel railways. This new road would have less than half of one per cent. grade, and would therefore, be economically operated. Without such low grades it could not be the business success that it is destined to be. The member for Alberni had declared the country of the North Thompson as a barren desert land. Those who knew that district knew how utterly erroneous the subject of rates. The North Thompson district was anything but a waste—it contained some of the best lands and fruit areas in all the province, and where rail communication conditions improved this section would be found as favorable to the subject of rates. The agreement with Penney's ranch near Ashcroft, recently bought by an English syndicate, was a landmark in the history of the province in this bill provided, with regard to every incidental condition, for complete control by the government, and with the coming into force of the low rates on the Canadian Northern it was imperative that the Canadian Pacific should cut down its rates in order to secure the share of the business. At the same time that pioneer road was at the present time expending millions of dollars in the improvement of its roadbed, curvature and gradients in order to meet the more favorable conditions under which the Canadian Northern would soon be competing with them.

Mr. Brewster had devoted considerable time to his praise of the Manitoba contract as to rates. His efforts to see that they died-in-the-wool Liberal so enthusiastically applauding the contract as to rates. His efforts to see that they died-in-the-wool Liberal government, while at the same time he (Mr. Brewster) had no desire to see the country shortly thereafter shown by Hon. Mr. Roblin in the making of the Manitoba bargain. But Mr. Brewster had not sufficiently studied the Manitoba contract—or he had not been advised by the committee of young Liberal lawyers who prepared his brief, to look over the page in reading the Manitoba act. If he had done so, he would have discovered that in the Manitoba contract which he had no heartily applauded, he would have found that the Manitoba government bound itself to make up any losses in operation which might fall upon the company. Again, while the control of rates by Manitoba terminated in 1920, in the British Columbia agreement, the province could in perpetuity is guaranteed. Mr. Brewster had, as all good Liberals at present were doing, found it convenient to exten-

THE FASHION CENTRE Campbell's THE FASHION CENTRE

Fashion Interest Centres At Campbell's

Feather Boas A Reminder In Gloves

to the genius of the former Minister of Finance, Captain Tattow. It was a curious circumstance that while that gentleman occupied his place in the Government of the province, there was no one to govern in the North Thompson district was anything but a waste—it contained some of the best lands and fruit areas in all the province, and where rail communication conditions improved this section would be found as favorable to the subject of rates. The agreement with Penney's ranch near Ashcroft, recently bought by an English syndicate, was a landmark in the history of the province in this bill provided, with regard to every incidental condition, for complete control by the government, and with the coming into force of the low rates on the Canadian Northern it was imperative that the Canadian Pacific should cut down its rates in order to secure the share of the business. At the same time that pioneer road was at the present time expending millions of dollars in the improvement of its roadbed, curvature and gradients in order to meet the more favorable conditions under which the Canadian Northern would soon be competing with them. Mr. Brewster had devoted considerable time to his praise of the Manitoba contract as to rates. His efforts to see that they died-in-the-wool Liberal so enthusiastically applauding the contract as to rates. His efforts to see that they died-in-the-wool Liberal government, while at the same time he (Mr. Brewster) had no desire to see the country shortly thereafter shown by Hon. Mr. Roblin in the making of the Manitoba bargain. But Mr. Brewster had not sufficiently studied the Manitoba contract—or he had not been advised by the committee of young Liberal lawyers who prepared his brief, to look over the page in reading the Manitoba act. If he had done so, he would have discovered that in the Manitoba contract which he had no heartily applauded, he would have found that the Manitoba government bound itself to make up any losses in operation which might fall upon the company. Again, while the control of rates by Manitoba terminated in 1920, in the British Columbia agreement, the province could in perpetuity is guaranteed. Mr. Brewster had, as all good Liberals at present were doing, found it convenient to exten-

ED T 118 on Great Appears dies Re-ris DANGER d to Sky-Sleds—ted East ne hundred tra over- snowslide by Seattle orthern o- timate. Of rs, railroad s, and the ere asleep k there is of the bod- were multi- down are on on the who never ed. March 4— es in the e progress soon only out, leav- and men and ers in the working in ed today on which o a train to Everett ad men's nald Cam- 22, whose a formerly mother is a Barbara, Hunter's, of his formerly of Seattle, as connec- temporary ng. The big hotel ried away have been what- en clerks en cars are of trees, ng all the open plow are busy estimates y destruct- e. The dem- valued at from the ed. fear of Wel- were sent a wrapped railroad were a s of vic- Every anxious thing to the. The re- until the away the branch- ad. The y packed not enter avalanche americans. man Ja- he ruins of the dead these men the rail- laborers who was a watch- Everett, erts, to ff John laborers ed by a e, a tunnel, e had been Two men death of are not elved no eads, but ideas have moun- and that a nch, — w York, Railroad, RT, R. hearing, n. R. for mean the hear- house on lib- provincial ad the provincial W. Hib- in (through stock manipulation) in the C.P.R. He did not charge that this significant plot had in reality been hatch- ed, but there was no protection given in the bill for the turning over of the C.P.R. He did not charge that the ultimate end of all competition—trust, organization. He hoped that he was wrong but he could see only independ-