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THE BRITISH PACIFIC.

Protest Against the Unqualified Rejection of the Proposals Lately Submitted.

Mr. Rithet and His Fellow Members Explain Their Position to the Electors.

The Premier Makes a Vigorous Defence of the Action of His Government.

"Whereas the early construction of the British Pacific railway is a work of the greatest importance to the province generally:

"And whereas the present government have continually asserted that they were the leaders of the party of progress in this province:

"And whereas from the public statements made by prominent members of the executive, it has always been understood that it was their policy to promote the building of the said railway by public aid in addition to the land grant appropriated to the said enterprise when the company was originally incorporated:

Resolved, that in the opinion of this meeting, the unqualified rejection of the proposals lately submitted on behalf of the said railway company is an unwarranted departure from the position which the government assumed when appealing to the electors, and upon the faith of which they acceded to office; and that this meeting approves of the stand taken by their representatives who have called it together, and requests them to continue their efforts to obtain such public aid as may be necessary to secure the financial support required for the immediate completion of the railway."

The above resolution, moved by Dr. G. L. Milne and seconded by Mr. A. J. McLellan, was the outcome of a meeting of the citizens which last evening filled the Victoria theatre from pit to roof. Every available space was occupied, and hundreds were turned away unable even to get standing room. The proceedings opened shortly after eight o'clock and it was close to midnight when it broke up.

When the curtain rose there were present upon the platform the three representatives of the city—Messrs. R. P. Rithet, H. D. Brown and John Braden; Mr. D. E. Crow, chairman of the board of trade; Messrs. G. E. Renouf, A. J. McLellan, Dr. G. L. Milne, Wm. Jensen, L. C. Macaulay, E. Crow Baker, E. V. Bodwell, R. J. Woods, (Vancouver) and others. Mr. Rithet opened the proceedings by moving that Mr. E. Crow Baker be chairman of the meeting; this was seconded by Mr. Helmecken and carried unanimously, as was also the proposition that Mr. C. E. Renouf be secretary. The chairman then invited one of the members of the provincial cabinet who might be present to take seats on the platform. Premier Turner here rose from the audience amidst applause and addressed the chair, but repeated cries of "platform!" made it impossible for them to be heard. The Premier therefore made his way to the platform accompanied by Hon. Col. Baker and Hon. Geo. B. Seymour, who had been seated beside him, and at the same time Hon. C. E. Pooley, and Hon. D. M. Eberts appeared at the side entrance. The whole cabinet thus were present on the platform. Capt. John Irving, M.P.P., Mr. A. L. Belyea, M. McCahill and others also took seats there before the chairman made his opening address.

The chairman asked for a patient and pleasant hearing for the three city representatives who had called the meeting, and also for the Premier and any other ministers who might speak. He considered that this splendid gathering had met as a family party—there being no politics in this case as there had been the last time he had the honor to preside over a large meeting in this hall—and he therefore hoped that there would be no interruptions. He asked the audience to remember also that Hon. J. H. Turner is not only one of the representatives of Victoria City, but also that he is shouldered with another and greater responsibility as the premier of the province. He first of all called on Mr. R. P. Rithet, the senior member for the city.

Mr. Rithet came forward amidst general applause, and read from type-written sheets his explanation of his present position, as follows:

"While I am glad to meet my constituents to express my views upon any important matters, I deeply regret to find circumstances which have called us together this evening.

When, on the 6th of July, 1894, at a public meeting held in this place, I was pressed to refer to the position and prospects of the early completion of the arrangements then pending for the construction of the British Pacific Railway, I informed those present that I was not at that time in a position to give any definite information, but that I was endeavoring to bring to a point arrangements to secure the necessary capital for that purpose, and hoped before long to be able to make such a proposition as would not only be satisfactory to the people of Victoria but to the whole province; further, that even if I might not consider the proposition as satisfactory as I would like to see it, that I would not take the responsibility of declining it, but would call my constituents together and place the responsibility of accepting or rejecting the proposal, whatever it might be, upon them.

It is, therefore, as stated in the notice calling this meeting for the purpose of explaining the position in reference to the proposals lately submitted to the

provincial government, relating to the construction of the British Pacific railway, that my colleagues and myself have asked you to meet us. (Applause.) The full text of the proposals made to the government has been published for some days, and I am sure all present must have availed themselves of the opportunity, not only to read them over carefully, but to study and consider them. They are such as to entitle them to the fullest consideration, not only by you, but by all who are interested in the welfare, advancement and development of the province, affording, as I believe they do, upon economic and business lines, the opportunity for opening up a large and rich section of the country which must remain, to a great extent at least, undeveloped until opened up by railway communication with the coast. (Applause.)

It is not so much, perhaps, to the rejection of these proposals to which I and others have taken exception, as it is to the fact that the government have shown so little disposition to encourage in any way any

MODIFICATION OF THESE PROPOSALS, and while they profess to favor railway construction throughout the province, and "especially the line under consideration," they claim that they have not sufficient data that the railway would pay; and that the province should not make what "is practically a gift of six millions of bonds of the province," and also that there is no assurance that it will be a transcontinental road. All these objections have been so fully covered by the correspondence which has been published that I need not repeat them now, and will confine myself as far as possible to dealing generally with the subject itself, as your representative and a supporter of the present government, which has claimed itself to be the progressive party in connection with the politics of this province, and the leader of which at that time as well as Mr. Turner, who is now the leader, announced themselves in no uncertain terms as to their position in regard to the British Pacific railway. So strong indeed was the statement made on the evening before the election by Mr. Turner that I think it well to give in full, so that you may be aware of its bearing upon the present position taken by him on that matter. It was this:

"They (the farmers) are also warned against supporting the party to which Mr. Rithet and he (Mr. Turner) belong, because they are told that these gentlemen are going to try to have a great railway built from Victoria city through the northern part of the province. He had endeavored to impress upon the farmers of the Fraser what is the fact, that if the Canada Western railway is built, and if as the expected result Victoria does go to be a city of 100,000 or more, the result will be so

SEVERAL OF THE FARMING DISTRICTS of the Mainland that there will not be a vacant farm between Hope and the mouth of the Fraser. He found that the farmers, when the matter was put before them in this light, largely agreed with him, and when he felt that this view would ultimately prevail, it is at present the duty of the Victoria electors to protect themselves against those who seek to get into power to hurt the city, and it is the duty of Victorians to stand by the government, which has risked itself to do justice to Victoria.

Reviewing the railway policy he showed the necessity for the large expenditures at the present for opening up the province, and the large returns which this will yield."

Mr. C. E. Pooley's reference to the question was as follows: "He agreed with what had been said on the subject of the British Pacific railway, for he felt that when a proposition is laid before the government, it will be in such a shape that all parts of the province will approve of it."

Mr. D. W. Higgins also said that Mr. Pooley had been returned by acclamation as straight supporters of the present government, and without hesitation they stood up as Canadian Western men. The voters of Victoria should mark their ballots for the four gentlemen who say that they will support the government policy, and that they will go into the house to fight for the Canada Western railway. He considered that it ill became the inhabitants of this beautiful city to

NEGLECT THE OPPORTUNITY now afforded them to assist in the effort to open up that splendid inland empire through which the Canada Western railway would run, and that they should lay down their arms until that road is completed."

At that time the charter was in force, as it is now, and it was generally known that the railway could not be built without further aid from the government. It was also generally known that additional aid was to be asked for as stated in the correspondence, viz., a guarantee for twenty-five years on a guarantee for twenty-five years, which is \$240,000 a year. This sum was named in a letter dated 3rd April, 1893, to the then attorney-general and premier, as being the smallest probable aid which together with the land grant would ensure the necessary capital. It has, therefore, been on these lines that I have been proceeding and virtually with the consent of the government, as previous to Mr. Turner's departure for England I had a conversation with him, and he then offered no objection to the proposal, beyond asking the probable time when the subsidy would begin. I was told that it would be some years before that it would be some years before that large sum could be claimed, as I then thought it would require from five to eight years to build the road, and that for the first few years the payments on account of the guarantee would be very small. When in England the parties who have undertaken to find the money for this enterprise, saw Mr. Turner, and talked over various ways of financing it, and in consequence of some suggestions arising out of these meetings a change in the method of financing was sug-

gested, which would have involved the construction of much larger amount, and which, as soon as it was sent to me, I declined to accede to, and insisted that the original lines should be adhered to. This caused much trouble and delayed the completion of the arrangements for submitting the proposal now under consideration, and in consequence Mr. Turner complains it only reached him during the session. During these interviews between the parties, Mr. Turner and Mr. Turner, I am informed no intimation was given that the government would not grant the additional aid since applied for. If such an intimation had been made, the negotiations would have ended the negotiations on these lines, and would have avoided time, trouble and expense to Mr. DeFriesse and Mr. Armstrong in having to come here to look over the situation and complete negotiations.

Believing in the sincerity of the government several members of which had expressed themselves during the election in favor of the line under consideration, doing everything in my power to get what would be a businesslike proposition to lay before them, and in doing this I have had constantly before me the lines upon which similar proposals have been made, both in Canada and the United States, have been aided by the state, and in submitting the proposal now under consideration I considered

IT WAS SO FAVORABLE that, outside of the working out, or in harmonizing some of the details, little was made to it. It was certainly not prepared to have it objected to because it did not provide for a connection to make it a through transcontinental railway until the company now what the province is now to apply for a Dominion charter. If this were done first and we were to allow our arrangements to be as at present, I am very much afraid, unless the present views of the government in connection with we should go on with these negotiations and arrangements, complete our connection to the east and all matters incidental to the carrying out of so large an undertaking, and I think I must only call their attention to the wonderful discoveries, proved by actual working of rich mines in the Kootenay country immediately to the south of the Cariboo region, and also to the wonderful richness of the

ALLUVIAL DIGGINGS ON THE YUKON, to satisfy them that the intervening territory, which is to be reached by the British Pacific, large as it may appear to be, is not likely to be less in average mineral richness, whether found in quartz or alluvial deposits, than has been proved to exist in the territory already referred to, lying to the north and south of it. I hope I have clearly shown what I have tried to show, viz.: that the territory which this railway is to develop, and will now endeavor to show you that the proposal for the railway is one strictly within business lines. Perhaps this can best be done by first pointing out the advantages which have been extended to other railways constructed within the province. The Esquimalt & Nanaimo railway received, as most of you know, a cash bonus of \$750,000 and about 2,000,000 acres of land for the railway already built is about 75 miles. The land grant is therefore about 25,000 acres per mile of the most valuable country lands in the province, and the cash bonus about \$10,000 per mile. The Kootenay & Okanagan bonds are guaranteed by the government for \$25,000 per mile, and the Nakusp & Stickeen for \$17,500 per mile. In Manitoba a grant of \$5,000 per mile in cash and 100 acres of land for each mile has been granted to a line from the C.P.R. to Dauphin Lake, which passes through very easy country. The

PROPOSALS OF THE BRITISH PACIFIC is a guarantee of interest equal to less than \$5,000 in cash, and a land grant of 20,000 acres for each mile for the first section and 10,000 acres per mile for the Island extension. (Applause.) The cost of building the British Pacific will be between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per mile, and it is proposed to be willing to have been built for a little more than half of that sum per mile. In addition to all the subsidies mentioned it is estimated that in order to provide the money to complete the British Pacific the land grant has to be utilized, at a value of \$1 per acre, at which price it will probably take many years to realize it, so that I think the contention that the 20,000 acres was practically making a gift of \$6,000,000 to the company is hardly a fair statement of the case. (Hear, hear.) While the government are asked for the interest on \$6,000,000 to complete the British Pacific, I think that the railway grant is kept in mind that the railway grant is for the sections of land, so that the government sections now valueless, or almost so, will be brought within reach of the settler, and if the railway is built the \$1 per acre, the government lands will be made equally valuable, and will amply repay to them the money grant applied for. (Applause.)

The railway, when constructed, will remain for the use of the province, and surely that is a consideration which should be highly valued. In every other province of the Dominion, cash as well as land, has been given to secure railways. In the Eastern provinces and in the neighboring provinces of the Northwest, where the construction of railways is less difficult and less expensive, such a policy has been found expedient, and even necessary. Ontario, the most conservative of all the provinces, for some years abandoned the policy of subsidizing railways, but three years ago resumed it, and has since voted large subsidies for the purpose.

OPENING UP THE UNSETTLED PORTIONS of the province. Why then should this province be expected to be able to secure its railways upon different and more favorable conditions? Having shown this much I think it will now be in order for me to inform you what my position is and always has been as your representative. I have supported whatever measures were introduced, which appeared to be in the interest of the province. I believed I was in accord with them in reference to the construction of the British Pacific railway, but I frankly confess that if the government or any other member of the house had not before the legislature any other proposition for the settlement and development of the province of greater merit and comprehensiveness I would have considered myself, not only justified but in duty bound to support it, under the general policy of the party as understood by me. What then is the present position: supporting a government pledged to this railway as business lines

country. With the facilities which a railroad would afford it cannot, in my opinion, be doubted that the development would be enormously increased, both by small and large undertakings, and what is considered that the field for placer mines has only to a very small extent been worked, in spite of the fact that the output has been \$55,000,000, and quartz virtually untouched since the first days of the gold believing (as I do believe) that the population of Cariboo would be so increased in a few years, by an industrious

WEALTH PRODUCING COMMUNITY, large consumers of the products of other sections of the province, as to cause a corresponding increase in the other sections to be traversed by the proposed railway. Such settlement of the country would in my opinion very soon, if not immediately, go a long way towards providing the annual subsidy which is now proposed to provide for this undertaking. Up to this date I have only spoken of the enterprise as affecting the development of Cariboo and the intervening country to the coast, and I believe that the development of the province, inasmuch as it places within easy access all the country lying to the north of it, which like Cariboo has been proved rich in gold mines, and also the proposed line beyond the Cascade range, Omineca and the country intervening as far north as has been prospected, can be readily and at a minimum expense reached to the coast, and also that large fertile section of this province known as the Peace River district. (Applause.) If any doubt exists in the mind of anyone here present to-night, as to the richness of the province, Dominion as a whole, call their attention to the wonderful discoveries, proved by actual working of rich mines in the Kootenay country immediately to the south of the Cariboo region, and also to the wonderful richness of the

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and to the opening up and development of the country when it could not accept the proposition for this railway as submitted, it was surely not in keeping with their policy to decline it as they have done. Their duty, I take it, was to point out any inconsistencies wherein it was not business-like as being inconsistent with other similar enterprises having similar objects, and to endeavor to harmonize such divergence. No effort in this direction was made, nor has the government attempted to put forward any other proposal having a more than or even as

COMPREHENSIVE AND ECONOMIC an outline for the accomplishment of the object in view.

My support of the proposal which has been before the government, and which is before you for consideration to-night, is that it is a comprehensive and economic scheme for the opening up and development of about three-fourths of this province, and while it is the largest in area it is also believed to be the richest in mineral wealth and other resources, and until it is shown to the contrary by the government or some one else, I claim that I am still justified in the contention which I made during the election that when the scheme was put before you it would be such as would commend itself not only to Victoria, but to the whole province. Not only has the proposal a local and provincial, but a Dominion and Imperial importance. Local and provincial because it will open up a large tract of country for settlement and development, which is now valueless, and make tributary to each other the large consuming sections and the commercial and producing sections of the province; Dominion as affording another highway through the vast interior of the Northwest Territories; and Imperial as affording another line of communication between CHINA, AUSTRALASIA AND THE MOTHER COUNTRY.

so far removed from the reach of our good neighbors to the south as to make it almost beyond their power to interfere or interrupt, and as an outlet for the products of the territory traversed to the produce markets of the world, when the already much talked of route via the Hudson's Bay is an accomplished fact which I am confident it soon will be, and which will save a rail carriage of over 1,000 miles, and not increase the distance to be travelled by water over the existing routes, so shortening the time between the Pacific ocean and Great Britain as to reduce the time to nine days.

With these great advantages would it not have been within the rights of the province to assume some considerable responsibility, and would it not come within the privileges, if not the duty of the government, to take upon itself to represent these factors as of special moment to the Dominion and Imperial authorities. Of much more importance to the Dominion is an enterprise such as the British Pacific, in my judgment, than the last Atlantic steamship service, for which the Dominion is willing to pay \$750,000 a year. Much greater benefits might be expected to result from an expenditure of that large sum in opening up our own Canada, and by this means so increasing the population and thus the travel, so as to make it sufficiently large to secure the great advantage of a fast steamship service from our own ports without necessitating the granting of so large or indeed any subsidy. I must now refer to the

FINANCIAL ASPECT OF THE PROPOSAL,

and see in how far the contention and fears of the government are justified in this regard. In doing this I must assume that the claims I have all throughout my remarks advanced, as to the desirability and richness of the country are conceded. Indeed, I cannot see how they can be disputed successfully with such evidence as to the facts as has been referred to. During the construction of the railway a large force of men must be employed, from whom the revenue tax would be collected, while the expenditure on the part of the government would be very small. The demand for many manufactured articles of necessity in the construction of the work would call for the employment of much unskilled as well as skilled labor; more or less settlement as the railway reached desirable localities along its line would take place, and the population of the country would be 200 settlers yearly on the land, so that by the time construction reached Cariboo it would be reasonable to estimate that the additional population induced by this railway would not be less than 20,000, and that a considerable increase would follow yearly, and in a few years there would be sufficient to provide

THE WHOLE OF THE ANNUAL SUBSIDY stipulated for. It is not, in my opinion, to be entertained for a moment that this railway would entail further burdens upon the present population of the province. Indeed, exactly the opposite should be the case, because the general expenses of governing the country would be spread over a larger and constantly increasing number. Then if we are to take the estimate which one of the greatest statesmen Canada ever had, put upon each immigrant, which was \$1,000, see the immense gain to the country.

In this connection I must again refer to the rapid growth of the Kootenay during the working of the mines, and the railway connection which has been the immediate cause, without which it would not have been possible for the population to have been increased to that great and rich section of our country would have been reached, and having reached its present stage, who is there among you (who has given the matter any attention) willing to attempt to gauge its future development and productiveness? It is perhaps more due to the fact that this enterprise is to be largely for the purpose of developing and opening up

The World's Fair Tests showed no baking powder so pure or so great in leavening power as the Royal.

the gold fields of Cariboo, that the parties who have the financing of the matter in hand have been enabled to make such favorable arrangements to build this road. In the moneyed centres for some years much attention has been given to the development of countries where gold is found, and

HAVE PROVED SO SUCCESSFUL that our conditions and possibilities are regarded with favor, even in the face of the fact that our population is so small. In illustration I will refer to Western Australia, where in 1894 the population was only 82,072, and increased in 1895 to 101,000. In 1891-2 this immense country had only 657 miles of railway, while in 1894 it had increased to 1,142 miles. In 1891 the population was only 53,285, so that the increase in three years was nearly 30,000. The revenue in 1891 was £497,670, and increased to £833,670 in 1894, and to £1,498,747 in 1895. This is almost entirely a mining country, and the disadvantages owing to the scarcity of water are such that it is surprising so much development has taken place. While this revenue, in addition to customs, railways, and other sources, indicates the enormous expansion which has taken place owing to railway construction. Then, if we come again to our own province, the white population in 1881 was something like 20,000, while in 1891, after the construction of the Canadian Pacific railway, it was about 65,000, which is an increase of over twice as much for ten years since the inauguration of railways within the province as it had been during the 20 years previous. (Applause.)

Much has been said in the press of late regarding the

COST OF BUILDING THIS ROAD. In 1878 H. J. Cambie estimated it would cost from Esquimalt to Yellow Head Pass, \$50,000,000, and \$35,000,000 from Waddington Harbor to Yellow Head Pass. Now the estimated cost from Comox (where it is proposed to connect with the E. & N. railway) to Yellow Head Pass is about \$25,000,000. Under these circumstances it cannot be claimed with fairness that the road cannot be built within economic lines, for a railway which is to pierce two mountain ranges.

In examining my scrap book, while I was studying opinions published in reference to the building of the road now under discussion, I was greatly pleased to find in the Vancouver World, published in 1889, the following, viz.: "In this connection it may be of interest to know that Mr. Van Horne, contrary to the belief of many here, especially our Cambie street organ, warmly favors the construction of another transcontinental line through this province. In reply to a question put to him he said: 'The more railways we have the better it is and will be for the country. The construction of the Canadian Western will not take place for some time, but such an event can in no wise interfere with or retard the

PROGRESS OF VANCOUVER. This is sound doctrine and the World is pleased to know that so enlightened a gentleman as Mr. Van Horne undoubtedly is, takes a broad and patriotic view of the question, realizing, no doubt, that unless opened up by railways the northern section of this province is of but little value."

This opinion I most heartily concur in, but I am afraid a change has since come over the opinion of the World, as at that time endorsed Mr. Van Horne's views. I it seems strange to believe that the World should, seven years later, think the time for building the road referred to had not yet arrived, and now proclaims against it.

It is not, in my opinion, to be entertained for a moment that this railway would entail further burdens upon the present population of the province. Indeed, exactly the opposite should be the case, because the general expenses of governing the country would be spread over a larger and constantly increasing number. Then if we are to take the estimate which one of the greatest statesmen Canada ever had, put upon each immigrant, which was \$1,000, see the immense gain to the country. In this connection I must again refer to the rapid growth of the Kootenay during the working of the mines, and the railway connection which has been the immediate cause, without which it would not have been possible for the population to have been increased to that great and rich section of our country would have been reached, and having reached its present stage, who is there among you (who has given the matter any attention) willing to attempt to gauge its future development and productiveness? It is perhaps more due to the fact that this enterprise is to be largely for the purpose of developing and opening up

AMOUNT OF THE AID REFERRED TO was 4 per cent. on \$6,000,000 for twenty-five years. This will give the electors and the people of the province to understand is only equal to a cash payment of \$4,363,363, for the reason that the company was to provide the difference between this latter sum and \$6,000,000 by a sinking fund. The proposal also provides that the government were to be made the trustees for any other subsidies granted to the company, and also for the land grant bonds of the company, thus controlling all the assets of the company excepting the share capital, which they would only be called upon to pay out to the company as the work of building the railway proceeded, and the engineer's certificates were granted. This surely showed the bona fides of the company, and was a guarantee to the government that these amounts would be applied for the purposes of the undertaking, and in proportion to the work done by this point I must, even if I am repeating myself, impress upon you the fact that the whole liability of the government was to be the payment of \$4,363,363 for twenty-five years, and that under no circumstances could they be called upon to pay any larger sum. (Applause.)

The reason for asking the government to issue its bonds in lieu of their annual subsidy, and any other money which might be transferred to them, was because many holders of trust funds in England and elsewhere can only invest them in government securities, and in this way the money would be obtained on much more favorable terms, while the

GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE CALLED UPON to take any additional liability. The government having (whether wisely or not) I do not undertake to say) stated in

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