

GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC CONSTRUCTION

One Hundred Miles of Railroad Built Monthly Last Year—Six Hundred Miles of Branch Lines

The work accomplished by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway for the twelve months ended December 20th is contained in the chief engineer's annual report issued in Winnipeg. It shows that construction has been undertaken on 563 miles of main line, and on 688 miles of branch lines, making a total of 1,251 miles of line on which clearing, grading and track-laying have been done. Track has been laid on 128 miles of main line, and on 331 miles of branch lines, making a total of 459 miles of railway completed exclusive of second tracks and sidings.

On the section known as "main line Winnipeg west," grade is now completed to mile 1,124, Rau Shuswap crossing, and track should be laid to that point before the close of the year. The line is in operation from Winnipeg to Tete Jaune Cache, mile 1,095. From the Rau Shuswap crossing at mile 1,124, westerly to mile 1,403 (Endako river crossing), the right of way is being cleared and at those points where clearing has been completed, active grading operations are under way. For instance, the grade from Rau Shuswap crossing to the second crossing of the Fraser river at mile 1,190, should permit of track laying in the space of a month or two.

Work is Nearing Completion

From Prince Rupert easterly the track is laid to mile 189, being held up at that point, owing to the erection of steel bridges. Eighty-nine miles of this track were laid during 1912, and the line is in operation to Hazelton. From mile 189 to the Endako river crossing (mile 341 Prince Rupert, or mile 1,403 Winnipeg), active grading operations are in progress.

Harte to Brandon—Grading is under way on this branch and although 10.8 miles are ready for track no steel has yet been laid. The total length of this branch is 25 miles. Regina to international boundary, only the last 19 miles of this line require to be graded. The track is laid for 106 miles, and was all put down this season.

Prince Albert Branch—This line extends from Young on the main line, and is in operation from that point to Wakaw, a distance of 67 miles. No track was laid in 1912. A large steel bridge has yet to be erected over the South Saskatchewan river, but with the exception of the entrance into Prince Albert the grade is practically completed.

Tofield to Calgary—This line is 202 miles long. A few steel bridges have yet to be erected but grading is almost completed. During 1912 steel was laid from mile 07 to mile 165.3, and the track will be continued to Calgary in the early spring of 1913. The line is in operation to mile 62.

Branch Lines Receive Attention

Other branch lines reported upon are the Talmage-Weyburn line, 15 miles in length, of which 39 per cent. of the grade is completed; and the Regina-Moose Jaw connection, of 49 miles, which is now completed, and its terminals at Moose Jaw in course of construction. Grading is completed on Moose Jaw-Northwest branch, but no steel has been laid. All the track on the Oban-Battleford branch was laid during 1912, and the line, 48.5 miles in length, is now completed. The Cut Knife branch from Battleford westerly toward Wainwright is finished, so far as grading is concerned, and four miles of track are laid. Steel will be laid throughout its length in the early spring of 1913. A branch line is surveyed from Biggar to Calgary, and it is stated by the chief engineer that for the present time this line is only being constructed as far as the Saskatchewan-Alberta boundary, a distance of 104 miles from Biggar. Grading on this portion was completed in 1912, and steel is laid to mile 37. The Alberta coal branch, which extends 56 miles southerly from Bickerdike on the main line, is graded for the whole of its present length.

UNITED WORKMEN RATES STAND

By a decision of the Divisional Court delivered in Toronto the Grand Lodge of the Ancient Order of United Workmen are restrained from increasing the assessment rates to members until after the annual meeting in March next. This decision was made upon the appeal of the Grand Lodge from the judgment of Mr. Justice Riddell on October 11 last.

The order of Mr. Justice Riddell was made when some of the older members of the order moved for an injunction to restrain the officers of the lodge from taking any proceedings towards increasing the assessment, as was decided upon at the last annual meeting on June 21, 1912, upon an amendment to the constitution introduced by Mr. W. H. Mills.

The court ruled that this amendment was not legally passed, on the ground that no notice of the proposed change in rates has been sent to the subordinate lodges, as was required by the constitution.

The Grand Lodge will pay the costs of the action in both courts.

CITIZENS SHOULD BUY LOCAL DEBENTURES

So Says Finance Committee Chairman MacLaren of Brockville, Who Knows the Market Pulse.

The town of Brockville had a surplus on hand at the end of 1912 of \$246. This is noted in a comprehensive report of the town's finances compiled by Mr. W. C. MacLaren, chairman of the finance committee. "The past year," he says, "has been the worst in a great many years for the sale of municipal debentures; especially a 4½ debenture such as ours."

"In the past few years conditions were more favorable and your then finance committee were fortunate by watching and taking advantage of the market at the right moment, and in October, 1910, sold the \$50,000 Light and Power 4½ per cent. debenture close to par, or at 99.52 per cent., and in May, 1911, the \$13,741 local improvement 4½ per cent. debentures were sold above par, or at 101.16. This was a record sale as far as we can learn for many years.

Drug on the Market

"The situation changed, however, in 1912, and municipal 4½ per cents. were a drug on the market and could only be realized on at a price to yield 5¼ per cent. in competition with other good municipal bonds. A sale at this price would have involved a serious loss to the town, and as Brockville is particularly fortunate in its banking arrangements, we were enabled through the assistance of our bank to hold these unsold bonds for a more favorable market and avail ourselves of an extended use of an overdraft in the bank.

"The amount of unsold debentures on hand is \$9,542.74, so that with the new issue a total of about \$73,000 will have to be financed in the ordinary course of business in 1913.

Should Buy Local Securities

"The new council will have \$73,000 of debentures to place on the market and sell. To those who give the financial signs of the times any consideration, it must be evident that the indications for the year 1913 are that the municipal debenture market will require careful watching and judgment to effect a wise and profitable disposal of such securities. Those who lend money are receiving now, and in the ordinary run of present industrial and agricultural development are likely to continue to receive, more for their money in the way of interest or income than for some time past. The demand is for greater income on even gilt-edged securities, and when we see municipal securities selling around us at a rate to yield 5, 5¼ or even 5½ per cent. on the investment, it at once suggests the competition that at such times exists in the debenture market.

Will be Market Surfeit

"No doubt other towns like ourselves, where they can afford it, have been withholding their offerings of debentures until next spring. This further suggests at that time a possible surfeit of the market and a corresponding bearing of the market in these securities. Some of them by no means so safe as the debentures of this town. There seems no reason why under the circumstances that with such unquestioned security as the bonds of our own town offer, the people of Brockville should not invest some of their savings or surplus moneys in the banks now yielding but 3 per cent., and buy Brockville debentures yielding 4½ per cent., or a clear increase of 1½ per cent. per annum on such idle moneys. It would, besides, be a less expensive way for Brockville to dispose of their debentures, and we believe this phase of municipal financing might be given some consideration by our loyal citizens between now and next spring. If we don't show our faith in our own perfectly sound securities and participate in their ownership we can hardly complain seriously if our town fathers find it laborious to induce outsiders to do so."

MUNICIPAL BONDS AND FINANCING

Five bids were received for the Swift Current, Sask., \$20,000 6 per cent. 20-year school debentures. As previously noted, the offer of Messrs. Wood, Gundy & Company, Toronto, was accepted.

Calgary will probably change the rate of interest on its bonds from 4½ to 5 per cent.

The estimated expenditure of Montreal for 1913 is \$10,384,473 as against \$8,185,000 for 1912.

Toronto's assessment for 1913 amounts to \$423,573,540 as compared with \$343,598,145 in 1912, an increase of \$79,975,404. The assessor's valuation was \$426,127,851, against which there were a number of appeals to the Court of Revision and the county judge, which resulted in a net reduction of \$2,592,228.

UNITED STATES STEEL COMPANY IN CANADA

An unconfirmed story stating that the United States Steel Company will establish a large mill at Sandwich, Ont., has been issued in New York.