

# THE CARBONEAR HERALD

## AND OUTPORT TELEPHONE

Vol 3

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No 5

### THE CARBONEAR HERALD

#### OUTPORT TELEPHONE.

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All communications for the "Herald" to be addressed to the Proprietor and publisher;

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Herald Office, Water St.  
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The following gentlemen have kindly consented to act as our agents, all intending subscribers will therefore confer a favor by sending in their names and subscriptions that they may be forwarded to this office.

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Notice.—This paper will not be delivered to any subscriber for a less term than six months—single copies fourpence.

All correspondence intended for publication must be sent in not later than Wednesday evening.

#### HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, April 27.

#### SPEECH OF MR WINTER

Continued

He (Mr W) did not say that they would do this, but that they were at liberty to do so under the present contract. They might do so at a period when the line was worn out, and when it would cost an enormous sum to rebuild it. In such a case he should have no alternative but to offer them additional terms and it might be for this purpose that they would be proceeding not altogether in America or among the American Railway Companies. But worse than this, we have not security even for a return itself, as the Company has the power to mortgage it by this Act and the mortgagee or purchaser is not bound by this contract. We would then be absolutely at the mercy of the assignees. Under the contract now before the House it is in the power of the company to adjust their rates, as to every capitalist in the colony out of our mining operations. If they had the power of pre-emption under this charter, it would be a wholesome check to any irregular practices in which the company may try to indulge. I cannot at the present moment point out the many improper practices which they may be disposed to adopt and which we may be in a position to prostrate if we had this power of pre-emption. But here they have the power given them to crush out any competition in traffic upon their lines. We know very well that there is an identification of interests in our mineral property north, and the railway project. The question therefore suggests itself which will pay them better, the ordinary traffic along the line, or to create a monopoly in the transfer of copper ore to St John's or some other seaport. And moreover in the latter they will have the large subsidy of 180,000 dollars to assist them. The whole people of the colony will be sufferers from such a condition of things as this they will be obliged to look on without the power to prevent it. I am not now taking an extravagant view of things, but I am supposing a contingency which is now unlikely to happen. There could be no injury to any interests in embodying this suggested clause in the contract. Put it there and my objection is removed. The contract as at present framed virtually puts us in this position, that if we want better times hereafter we must pay duty for them. They will have it in their power to say "if you want better times give us another 180,000 dollars year additional subsidy and we will deal with you." They can by

a single stroke of the pen assign over to other parties their interest in this Railway, parties, too, who are not bound by the contract. There should have been stipulated a sufficient money security for faithful performance of this contract; and failing that we should at least have the power of pre-emption. Under the present contract any mortgages may come in and take possession of this line of Railway, without the consent of the Government. There are other difficulties and objections with reference to the wording of the Bill itself, and there are other necessary stipulations which have altogether been omitted. It looked as if the whole scheme was unsound, because there are terms in the contract touching shareholders which are upon the face of them, dishonest. It will be said, it is not our business to look after the interest of the shareholders. It may be so, I am not, however, offering those objections in the interest of shareholders but merely for the purpose of showing that the contract is a bogus one. In other countries it is considered necessary to have the strictest legislation in matters of this kind, and notwithstanding the large protection afforded by law people are taken in every day. The shares of this company may be, and in all probability will be transferred into the hands of other people whose only interests may be to make money. Any power they can possibly exercise they will exercise at the expense of the colony. The defects in this contract are of too serious a character to be got over by the consideration that we could not get better terms, that is not a sufficient answer to meet its glaring defects. We ought to commit ourselves and posterity to a contract like this merely upon the hope of the immediate benefits it might confer. I might admit that we can afford to pay the subsidy, but only upon the grounds of the faithful performance of the spirit of the contract. If, however they fail to do that we shall find ourselves burdened with a heavy additional taxation to support a scheme which is of no benefit whatever except to contractors themselves. I have done what I considered my duty to the House and country.

Hon the Premier.—There would appear to be a reluctance on the part of hon members to give expression to their opinions upon the subject matter before the House. This matter of a Railway has been before the House since 1875; and yet the hon and learned member, Mr Winter, in a most elaborate speech told us that he was not prepared. I dare say if some other hon members, who like the hon member Mr Winter, made a similar unprepared effort, they would be equally as successful. It is my province, having, as it were, charge of this matter, to sum up at the close of the debate, and I cannot at the present juncture assume that there is no other hon member who does intend to give his opinions to the public upon the matter. We have had, as I have had before stated, a very elaborate speech from the hon. and learned member Mr. Winter, as also from the hon the Speaker. Both these hon gentlemen have followed the same line of arguments and have given expression to the same ideas upon it. The gist of their argument amounts to this that we should take up the subject matter and deal with it ourselves, which practically means in other words, that we should build the Railroad ourselves. I myself thought and still think the Railroad ought to be the property of the Government, as any other of our big ways. But what was said outside? "Oh! we object to the Government building this road; get a company to build it and we are with you." I am desirous (said the hon the Premier) to do something which will have the effect of taking our people out of the condition of slavery to which they are at present virtually reduced. If we cannot get the best terms possible, we must only take the second best; and if we cannot get the second best we must only take the third best. Any means are almost better than remaining in our present unfortunate condition, as far as the laboring population are concerned. We must at all events make a start. But as soon as the start is made, as soon as the company

is formed, and offers to build the Railway, what is the fact? There is an array of arguments advanced, many of them of an imaginary character against this contract or in fact any contract whatever. We are now proposing to give a money subsidy to this company amounting to three and a half per cent. of the amount estimated to be expended upon the building of the line and also land grant. No person, hitherto, has set very great value upon our land, and now, forsooth, when we receive this offer for the construction of the railroad this land before barren becomes suddenly of value. Any person can purchase as much as he pleases for thirty cents an acre. I believe the mineral lands of the colony are of immense value. But they are likely to lay undeveloped unless the civilizing agency of the railroad is utilized. If we look over the map we will find that the whole of the land in Green Bay has been taken up. There is no land to be got there for love or money. It has been taken up by our own people, and by people in Nova Scotia and elsewhere, but it is very likely to remain in its pristine condition. The only mine that has been taken up and worked by a company of foreign capitalists is one that is at present locked up. We want these companies amongst us to develop our resources if we really possess them. We want them to come amongst us, if by doing so they give our people remunerative employment which is denied them at present. If there is nothing in this country to give them a return for their outlay, the sooner we know of it the better, and the sooner we clear out of the country the better. The idea of insisting upon a provision preventing those contractors from parting from those lands if they should cease to work them, is a most unreasonable position to assume towards them. If we make up our minds to give this land at all, we must give it absolutely, and put them in a position to be able to offer certain encouragement to settlers upon it, who will be the means of creating a traffic upon the line of road. As regards our mineral land, it must be remembered that this Syndicate Company have gone into it with a view to make money only. They believe that the country contains large mineral wealth and they willing to expend six millions of dollars on the experiment. All that is now asked for is a grant to the company of 5,000 acres of land for every mile of railroad completed together with a subsidy of \$180,000 a year. What is the fact in reference to this question? My much respected old friend, Mr Bennett, in 1852, obtained from the Executive Council of the day a grant of land for two million acres upon the promontory between Placentia and Fortune Bay. The grant was procured from the Executive upon the ground of alleged extraordinary services rendered to the country. He has held that land up to the present time, and he has not made the slightest effort in the way of opening it up or turning it to account; we are told by the first law officer of the Crown, that it is not competent for him to retain the lands, and yet they are considered of such little value that we have taken no trouble to set aside the grants. And now we are going to have five or six millions of dollars expended upon our lands within the next five years you are going to surround the company's position with such extraordinary restrictions as will interfere with the free disposition of these lands. I think any such conduct upon our part would only tend to prostrate and defeat the very object we must all have in view in this matter. We have heard a great deal about the original pre-emption clause being omitted in this contract. There would be just as much reason for inserting such a clause in this agreement as there has been for inserting it in the telegraph charter. We would be just as likely to exercise the privilege in the one case as the other. In the Charter of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company a similar pre-emption clause occurs. In speaking of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company the (hon Premier) would observe that the Dominion Government concedes to land as we do to the American Syndicate Company, or in other words they concede to them 12,500 acres of land for every mile of railroad constructed. It must also be remembered that the land is to be selected, it may be neither barren nor swamp but is the pick of the

fertile belt that margins the track of the Pacific Railroad. The object of the Canadian Government to give the Company fertile lands suitable for settlement. Their object was to enrich not to ruin the Company knowing well that in the agridzment of the Company was involved the well being of thousands of the population of Canada. We each have no earthly object in pawning off on the Syndicate Company either barren or swamp lands. Our objects should be to induce them to take the most fertile land available and thus make them the agents of the Government for bringing prosperity to thousands of our people now suffering the most precarious conditions. The hon member Mr Winter has not put this question fairly before the House. It was never contemplated in Mr Blackman's original proposition that he should be compelled to accept either barren or swampy land. It is fair to admit this contract in some non-essential particulars is not all that could be desired. None felt the force and truth of this more than the Joint Select Committee thought the course of their labors. The contract he freely admitted was not a perfect one. But what contract is? Contracts are generally like old Acts of Parliament of which it is rarely said that you could run a coach and four through them. But he had no hesitation in saying that the contract was the best that could have been made under existing circumstances, and that the country would place the stamp of its approval upon it. Even now it is not too late to amend particulars in this contract to which some honorable members appear to have taken special exception.

Hon Mr Winter strongly objected to the line of argument or rather ratiery pursued by the hon the Premier.

Hon the Speaker said he had been aware that it was not necessary neither to accept or reject it is contract absolutely, he certainly would have lent his hearty co-operation in effectuating its passage under an altered and amended form he now hears, for the first time from the Premier, though in a somewhat equivocal form of words, that this Railway Contract may be amended. If then there still remains with the House the prerogative of constructing a model contract he the hon the Speaker with cordially lead it his support.

The Chairman of Committee then rose to report progress and asked leave to sit again on to-morrow.

On motion of the Premier the House then adjourned till to-morrow at 11 o'clock a. m.

Thursday, April 28.

The house met at half past three o'clock.

The house then went into Committee of the whole on the Railway.

Mr Watson in the chair.

Mr Carter said that although he was in favor of the railway, he could not assent to the contract as it stood, there being no provision in it for the safety of the interests of the colony.

The hon Mr. Forke and Mr. Rice spoke in favor of report.

Mr Goodridge spoke a considerable time on the provisions of the contract, showing that nearly all the stipulations were in favor of the company and against the interest of the colony. The charges for freight and passengers were higher than those asked for in first class carriages in the United States or England. One of his strongest objections was the giving away of so much land without its being made contingent upon the completion and running of the road, for if this company fail to perform its agreement with us, we will have nothing to induce other capitalists to come amongst us.

Mr Dwyer said that as the matter was one of so much importance he should like to hear some explanation from the Joint Committee in answer to the grave charges which have been made against them. It was not fair that the members opposing this contract should be treated with silent contempt.

Mr Kent.—We have a matter of the most vital importance to deal with from which we should not permit our attention to be diverted. We are not now debating as to whether or not we shall have a Railroad. It is an established fact decided upon by both branches of the Legislature that we shall have a Railroad. Our business now is to consider the Bill presented to this House upon the Report of the Select Joint Committee. It has been said that the members of the Committee