

to presume that they attempted its solution on a basis that suggested itself as being the best in the interests of the public. It was recognized as of paramount importance that the remote sections of the Interior, giving extraordinary evidence of great mineral wealth, should be opened up with railroads, and it was consequently decided that in order to offer sufficient inducement for capital to engage in enterprises of this description, it was a necessary step on the part of the Government to act in a liberal spirit in support of such projects. No possible objection can be raised to the general soundness of this view, but the form which government assistance assumed must now—with good reason—be deplored. It is admittedly a very easy matter to criticize events after their occurrence, but one may, nevertheless, profit much from the lesson of past experiences. It is now apparent from the recent rapid developments in Kootenay that the business of railroad transport is destined to become, and already is, exceedingly profitable to its proprietors, and had former provincial administrations stipulated—as we conceive would not have been beside the question—with the subsidized railroad companies at present controlling roads in the country, that in proportion to the aid rendered the Government should receive a proprietary interest in the undertakings, not only would these have afforded a considerable source of revenue, but there would have been less occasion to criticize either the Government's railway policy or the operation of the roads in question.

Matters, however, are now, in the natural order of things, righting themselves, and the bonusing of railroads or any industrial enterprise will ere long be a matter appertaining to ancient history in British Columbia. Government ownership—the great desideratum—is indeed regrettably a long way off, nevertheless competition in addition to government dictation in the matter of uniform and reasonable rate charges, the precedent of which has already been wisely established, with regard to the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, will doubtless have the effect of remedying existing abuses.

The assurance is now given that the C.P.R. will extend its system in West Kootenay by constructing a branch line from Robson to Rossland, and possibly in East Kootenay connecting by rail Fort Steele with the main Crow's Nest road. The reason for this activity can only be attributed to purely business causes. There is no necessity for subsidizing these roads because conditions are such that the remunerative nature of both enterprises is already certain. Although this can hardly be stated as the case with regard to the proposed railroad from Penticton to the Columbia River, for Boundary Creek is in much the same position as was Kootenay eight years ago, yet we believe we are correct in asserting that at least one railway corporation, the Spokane Falls & Northern, will not long hesitate, providing a charter conveying the right to cross the International Boundary can be obtained ere furnishing that promising district with railroad facilities from the south, waiving all questions of subsidy therefor.

THE
PENTICTON
RAILWAY.

Since the above was written, Mr. Corbin, President of the Spokane Falls & Northern and the Nelson & Fort Sheppard railroads, has in point of fact signified his intention of applying to the Government for a charter, purposing,

doubtless, to extend his system into the Boundary Creek district either from Northport or Marcus. However desirable this road would be as creating competition in the matter of freight rates with other projected lines, it is imperative that a Canadian road should be first in operation in the district. It is learnt upon what should be most reliable authority that Mr. Heinze, the chief promoter of the Columbia & Western Railway Company, and Messrs. Mackenzie & Mann, representing the Victoria, Vancouver & Eastern corporation, have arrived at a compromise agreement whereby the heretofore conflicting interests of the respective companies will no longer interfere with the commencement of railroad construction operations from Penticton southwards this spring, or rather, we opine, directly the concessions asked from the Federal Government are apportioned. It is also understood that the C.P.R. have a large force of surveyors in the field and may possibly also compete for the liberal bonus offered by the Provincial Legislature last session. Meanwhile it is a matter of perfect indifference to the people of Boundary Creek who builds the Canadian road so long as it is built without further delay. But while, perhaps, the question is of more immediate importance to the people of Boundary Creek, because without transportation facilities the further development of the extraordinary mineral resources of the camp is practically impossible, the construction of the projected railway from Penticton to the Columbia River concerns deeply the prosperity of the whole of southwestern British Columbia, and more particularly the Coast cities. To go further it concerns indirectly perhaps the whole of Canada, because of the increased prosperity consequent upon the opening up and operation of the mines of what will likely prove to be the greatest copper-gold producing district of the Dominion. If, therefore, the building of this road is not actually commenced before the expiration of the period (July 15th of the present year) determined, according to the terms of the Subsidy Bill passed last session by the Legislature, as the latest date on or before which *bona fide* construction operations must be under way to entitle any of the rival corporations to receive the bonus of \$400,000 for a road one hundred miles in length, we would strongly urge the Federal Government, upon the grounds that the railroad in question would be of "general benefit to Canada" to provide means for constructing a railway to be owned and operated by the State from Penticton to the Columbia River.

As the result doubtless of the visit of
THE YUKON
REGULATIONS. Mr. Sifton, Minister of the Interior, to the Coast in November last, the original regulations with regard to mining in the Yukon have been amended in many very material particulars and in consequence the Minister and his colleagues have been so to speak patted on the back by Canadians from all parts of the Dominion. In fact, with perhaps the clause relating to "subaqueous" leases, there is very little room to criticize the regulations as they now stand, always bearing in mind that the policy of the Government is to so legislate that Canada will reap all the advantages possible from the Yukon gold discoveries. To Victorians it must have been very gratifying to learn that the suggestions emanating from the local press and recommended by the local Board of Trade to Mr. Sifton in the matter of the issuance of licenses