THE PREMIER ON RAILWAY BILLS

Hon. Richard McBride Gives Lucid Exposition of the Provisions of the Measures Brought Down

ALL PROMISES ARE MORE THAN REDEEMED

Competition in Railway Haulage Secured to the Province for All Time—The Life of Trade

The speech to which the most interest has attached during the present session was delivered in the Legislature Tuesday afternoon by the premier, Hon. Richard McBride, upon the second reading of the railway bills.

Mr. McBride spoke at considerable length, reviewing the bills and their provisions in detail. He referred to the great value which competition in railway carriage would work for the province and then proceeded to his review of the memorandum of agreement which the present legislation ratifies. He showed, amidst repeated cheers from members of the Legislature, how the government had secured this element of competition in railway haulage for all time; how the control of rates was entirely in the hands of the government with the lever which this gave them with regard to other transcontinental roads.

The satisfaction which the government felt in being able to ensure the completion of the island section of the line with the ferry connection was dealt with. That the government had fulfilled the promises which he, the premier, had made prior to the late election he demonstrated abundantly.

At the conclusion of his remarks the Conservative members of the house rose and cheered furiously for several minutes. At the evening session a huge bunch of roses decorated the desk of the first minister, who was absent at an official dinner at Government House, the minister of finance leading the government during his absence. The adjournment of the debate, to be resumed today, was moved by Mr. Jardine.

The first part of the afternoon session and the entire time of the evening sitting was occupied in committee on supply. Considerable progress was made.

The honorable premier, in rising to move the second reading of the bill to ratify the agreement entered into by the government with the Canadian Northern Railway Co. for construction through British Columbia, was received with enthusiastic and long-continued applause. Said he:

Mr. Speaker: It is with feelings of very great pleasure indeed that I rise to move the second reading of this very important measure. Perhaps never before in the history of this province of British Columbia has such important and far-reaching legislation been introduced for deliberation by this assembly. For the past seven sessions we have been accustomed to hearing, year after year, from gentlemen of the opposition, inquiries as to what the government is doing, and when it may be expected to take some action with respect to the constructions of the railways so much needed for the development of this country. I recall only a few sessions ago when the government was very severely taunted by the then leader of the opposition that the occupants of these treasury benches, although we had promised the house and the country a constructive railway policy, had so far failed in our endeavor—that they had been ineffectual. Well, sir, we were not prepared at that time to present the railway policy that we had promised to the country, and our explanations that were given to the house were all that could then be given. Let me recapitulate the position. We had said, and we stood firmly by that position, that not until we had some sort of a business-like construction scheme that would make for the connection of the railways proposed to be built throughout British Columbia with a transcontinental railway system, and which could be carried out under terms that would not overburden the country nor entail an obligation upon the credit of the province such as British Columbia might not be equal to bear, would we be content. In the last seven years I may say, and the statement is by no means an exaggeration, this government has refused, not one, but hundreds of propositions looking to railway construction in British Columbia. And why? Because the lines which it was proposed that we should assist would not make for connection with a transcontinental system, or in the second place because the assistance asked for was far beyond the reasonable ability of this province to give to the interested companies. It was not, indeed, until 1909 that we were able to conclude an agreement with a responsible and well known railway company, which would assure the connection of our British Columbia railway with a transcontinental system, which would provide for the completion of the required road within a fixed and definite period, and with assistance toward the construction of that road, which it was easily and readily within the power of this province to give—the Canadian Northern Railway Company. (Applause.)

Complete in Four Years

The line of that company is to extend from the Yellowhead Pass to Vancouver; from Vancouver on to Victoria by car ferry, and from Victoria to Barkley Sound. Construction of this line is to be undertaken by the Canadian Northern Railway Co., and to be completed by the 1st of July, 1914. (Applause.)

What is the present position of affairs in British Columbia in so far as the railway situation is concerned? Take a glance at the map, and a very hasty review of the geographical conditions of the province will disclose the very remarkable circumstance that while we have here a province with a total area of something like 374,000 square miles, there are at present in operation but 1,700 miles of railway. To show that this limited mileage is very far from adequate, if we propose that railways shall serve as they should serve us as factors in the promotion of the natural growth of the country, let us compare the situation here with what prevails in other provinces of infinitely smaller area and less variety of resources. Take the province of Manitoba with its 64,000 square miles of territory, and we find there in operation 3,400 miles of railway, and coupled with this fact we must remember that Manitoba is far from being a difficult country to move in, or in which to construct railroads. The people of that province have not to cope with the almost impossible physical obstacles that prevail here in British Columbia, with our great mountains, our deep and wide rivers, and our tremendous ravines. Prairie roads are not difficult to build, and I may say they are cheap indeed in comparison with the roads that must be built to serve the requirements of this province. When we consider how easy it is to move about in a province so situated as Manitoba, surely by way of comparison we can begin to understand how in this province with its 374,000 square miles of territory and with a configuration unique in the confederation of Canada, yet still possessing only 17,000 miles of railway in all, the province of British Columbia has been laboring under an immense handicap from the transportation point of view. And this comparison at once discloses the fact that this province in order to overcome the handicap of natural conditions must have railways to overcome that handicap. The physical conditions of the province and the absence of railways afford in themselves a complete explanation why we have not, perhaps, gone along with that rapidity in progress which has marked the recent history of not alone Manitoba and Saskatchewan, but Alberta as well.

Ontario's Example

A study of the railway situation in the province of Ontario shows that in the section of that province lying south of the Canadian Pacific line and containing 120,000 square miles of territory, there are over 8,000 miles of railway in operation. I might go further in emphasizing the disadvantages under which British Columbia labors, showing that in each and every one of the other provinces, although their physical conditions are by no means so difficult, they have found railway mileage proportionately greatly in excess of ours to be absolutely necessary for their progressive development.

It may be asked how it is that while we in this western land have so much to say of the great potential wealth of our country, our rich mines, our great resources of timber, our fisheries, how we will explain away the fact that with all this great natural endowment, we have not advanced much more rapidly than has been the case? How with all the publicity which has been given British Columbia and its resources, there has yet been such a small amount of railway construction accomplished. The answer is not difficult to find. We in this country have only had the one Canadian transcontinental connection with the rest of the Dominion, and for that reason there has not been the same incentive to and opportunity for such progressive and systematic railway construction which all look for and all are so anxious to see. Until the Canadian Northern railway entered the province of Manitoba, despite the fact that there was connection with the American roads to the south, there was but little activity shown in the opening up of the province by railways, or in the reaping of those advantages which came as a consequence of desirable competition. But so soon as the Canadian Northern came in, with the connection by way of the Great Lakes, the results were quickly apparent to the business men, the farmers, and all sections of the population of Manitoba. The Canadian Pacific railway soon came to be a very busy corporation, and the mileage of the Canadian Northern was very quickly duplicated by the additional undertakings of the C. P. R., and in addition, following on the operation of the Canadian Northern, and the continued expansion of the Canadian Pacific, the Grand Trunk Pacific also was brought into being—another Canadian transcontinental highway launched by the federal house, so that today we have this great transcontinental road also nearly ready to open its service from Winnipeg to Edmonton over its newly constructed road. (Applause.)

Since the invasion of Manitoba by the Canadian Northern railroad, American lines also became active and large additions have been made to the Great Northern in that province. Manitoba was a rich land in natural resources but her development was slow till the territory of the Canadian Pacific Railwal there was invaded by a second Canadian through road, the Canadian Northern Railway. As a result of that competition, the Canadian Pacific Railway have been building, the Grand Trunk Pacific have been building, and the Canadian Northern Railway, have been building. We may well conclude that with the invasion of British Columbia by the Canadian Northern Railway, we shall see more railway building in the next few years than the most extravagant prophet now dreams of.

A Business Company

On a survey of the whole situation we found we could deal with a Canadian company, originated in Canada, controlled by Canadians, a company that had made good in eastern Canada, that had already been assisted by the Dominion Government and by every province from the Rockies to the Atlantic ocean, and that came to us with their endorsement—a company that had been a main factor in the wonderful development of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan. When we found such a company knocking at our doors, and prepared to do business with British Columbia, we did not hesitate to begin negotiations in order the give to British Columbia the same chance for development and progress that has been given to the prairie provinces.

There were friends of the Government, who, when the time had arrived for action, when the moment had come that it was essential that something should be done, were somewhat nervous as to such a departure from the ordinary business of the Government as it had been carried on from the spring of 1903. I could instance many good friends, many strong supporters of the Conservative party, who faltered in their support when they found we had decided to take up this proposal and see if we could not give to British Columbia her own. No one felt more than myself the loss of colleagues, and the coolness of friends because of this necessity, as we judged it. We were determined, however, to do our duty to the people and to the province of British Columbia; we were determined to do what the necessities of the time and the situation exacted and demanded. In spite of these losses, these differences of opinion, sometimes bitter, this criticism often harsh, we went ahead with our railway policy and we went to the people on this issue, giving them ample time for the fullest discussion. We were successful in receiving the almost unanimous endorsement of the electorate of British Columbia. The Attorney-General has recently said that it was not the railway policy that carried the Government: it was the Government that had carried the railway policy. But I may say that the railway policy helped. It is because of the railway policy that the Government was carried shoulders high.

The record of the Government no doubt contributed to make the electorate feel that the carrying out of the policy was in safe hands. They knew that for seven years we had been carrying on the affairs of this province in a satisfactory manner and that the experience we had had during that time in dealing with railway companies had shown that we were competent to protect the interests of the community at large. There was not one instance that could be adduced that would go to show for one moment that the Government were not fully equal to any situation likely to arise.

At the time of the election the contract now submitted was not fully completed, but the essential elements had been agreed upon and these were submitted to the people, with some further information as to the intentions of the Government. Columns of criticism, some of it very elaborate, were given to the public. I am quite sure we may never expect to hear one word of commendation from the Liberals for anything we may do; so there was absolutely no surprise to this party in the criticisms to which we were then subjected. It occurs to me, however, that when a Government of this province for the first time in its history, undertook to give to the people a competing transcontinental line—the first provincial parliament to form a contract of that sort—they might have offered some assistance, in the interests of the people. If they had done so they might be a little nearer accomplishing their desire to cross over to the Government benches.

But, sir, from one end of the country to the other the denunciation hurled at this undertaking got so unfair and so bitter that in the end the Liberals succeeded in driving away many of their supporters, who looked at the proposals of the Government in a businesslike way.

Mandate of People

We said to the people: You have trusted us in the past and we tried to make good all our promises and herewith we appeal to you on a policy that will involve the credit of the province to an amount approximating $30,000,000, but we do not make this appeal to you without giving you a general outline of the proposed bargain.

The people took us at our word and believed that we would live up to our pledges, and so it is that I am able to come before this House today to present the bill for the ratification of the agreement that was entered into between the Government and the officials of the Canadian Northern railway but a short time ago.

Let us look at this agreement; but before going into its details I wish to call the attention of the House to certain promises which were made by the Government prior to the election. These promises were published in an issue of the Victoria Colonist the day before the election—an issue of the paper that seemed to make a great impression on an honorable member opposite. From his long association with the ideals of the Liberal party it may be that he could hardly realize that a public man could make such promises and live up to them. (Applause.)

On the train which brought me from a campaign conducted in the constituencies of Alberni and Newcastle—a campaign that I regret to say turned out unfortunately for those constituencies—I met my good friend Mr. Matson, of the Colonist newspaper. He was anxious to do all he could to assist in placing the railway policy of the Government before the electors—and that was not a very grievous offence. I authorized Mr. Matson to publish in the Colonist the following memoranda:

The Premier's Pledge

1.—To build 600 miles of railway in British Columbia as outlined in a preliminary contract with D. D. Mann, of the Canadian Northern Railway Company. At least 100 miles of such railway construction to be from Victoria to Barkley Sound.

2.—To secure a first class freight and passenger ferry service from a point on the Mainland, at or near English Bluff, to connect with the Island of Vancouver, thence by rail to Victoria, to continue the same to Barkley Sound. Said ferry to be equal to any on this continent.

3.—Construction of the Barkley Sound section to commence simultaneously with construction upon the Mainland of the Canadian Northern system in British Columbia.

4.—The whole to be undertaken and completed in four years; to be begun three months after ratification of the completed contract by the provincial legislature.

5.—To secure from the Canadian Northern Railway a deposit of $500,000 for the faithful performance of the contract, this sum to be forfeited to the province if they fail to carry out the terms of the agreement.

6.—To secure from the Canadian Northern Railway Company a first mortgage upon their whole system in British Columbia.

7.—To secure from the Canadian Northern Railway a covenant protecting the province from any loss whatever by virtue of its guarantee.

8.—The province of British Columbit to control freight and passenger rates upon the same plan as adopted by Manitoba in its guarantee of Canadian Northern bonds.

9.—To secure from the Canadian Northern Railway Company an obligatory contract requiring them to maintain a regular continuous and daily first class passenger and freight schedule between Victoria and its continental system, so that upon completion of their lines in British Columbia, Victoria will be one of the terminii of a transcontinental railway system.

10.—The money realized from the sale of Canadian Northern bonds is to be handed over to the provincial Government and will not be paid out till work of construction has been completed satisfactorily to the Government engineer and his certificate is furnished the contractor. This is to ensure the public against any possible chance of an expenditure of money for which they do not receive full value.

11.—Road to be constructed by the white workers of Canada. Asiatics absolutely excluded from all public works in British Columbia. The company must covenant to pay the standard rate of wages on all works.

12.—All material used in connection with the construction of the Canadian Northern to be purchased in British Columbia in every instance where it is possible to do so. Minimum mileage to be constructed each year on Island and Mainland will be specified in final agreement.

Failing to carry out these promises, I shall offer my resignation to the Lieutenant-Governor.

RICHARD McBRIDE.

Those pledges I made, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of this Conservative government. They were not only published in the Colonist newspaper but they were repeated by me on the hustings of this province from the Rockies to the city of Victoria, and almost continuously during the five weeks preceding the day of election.

Fulfilment of Pledge.

I claim that this government has not only lived up to the very letter of those pledges but that from the conditions of this contract it has done more than that for the people of British Columbia.

In the negotiations carried on with the railway officials by the members of the executive council—and I may remark that in this we had the valuable assistance of the deputy attorney general, Mr. MacLean—it was the aim of the government to try and make the terms and conditions of the bargain such as could easily be read and understood—as easily understood as the nature of the bargain would permit, and I do not believe there is an elector in the province who cannot with but little effort understand the terms of the agreement.

It is but right that I should explain to this House that by reason of certain constitutional objections that have in the past been urged by the federal authorities against legislation passed by the legislature of British Columbia we were unable to include in this contract provision for the non-employment of Asiatics on the construction of this railway.

No Asiatic Labor.

We have agreed for an undertaking similar to that secured from the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway company, and which has been so effective in that case. In other words, rather than hazard the constitutionality of this Act, we followed the line laid down in connection with the Grand Trunk Pacific contract, and have a specific agreement from Mackenzie & Mann, the Canadian Northern company, that this road will be built entirely by white workers. (Applause.)

Mr. Hawthornthwaite—Is that portion of the agreement before the House?

Hon. Mr. McBride—Yes; it is a portion in this respect, that while not a part of this schedule, it is a part of their contract to build this railway in British Columbia, and failure to fulfil that undertaking would be absolutely detrimental to this agreement. Let me remark that in this regard the need have no fear that every foot of this road will be built by white workers. You know that the Canadian Northern have built and have in operation west of Lake Superior between 4,000 and 5,000 miles of railways, every foot of which was built by white labor and by white labor alone. (Applause.) The Canadian Northern has in its employ over 5,000 workers, and I am told on good authority that among all these employees there is not a single Chinaman, not a single Japanese. Let me assure the House that with regard to this provision respecting white labor, the government promises to be just as careful of the interests of the country as it has been in connection with the Grand Trunk Pacific agreement. The honorable gentlemen know how we were twitted by the opposition with the course we had adopted in exacting from that corporation an agreement under seal with regard to labor, but they have been unable to show, though up to date the company has spent millions on labor in this province, where a yellow man has been employed by them. (Applause.) And why? Because of this agreement with the government of British Columbia. It is but a few months ago that Sir Charles Rivers Wilson and Mr. Hays appealed to me as leader of the government to release them from some of the conditions of this agreement with a view of introducing Asiatic labor in the north, but which, as speaking for the government, I refused to relax, and so far the Grand Trunk Pacific company has been unsuccessful in its attempt to secure yellow labor in the construction of its road. Just as careful as we have been with the Grand Trunk Pacific company shall we be with the Canadian Northern company. It is all moonshine to advance the argument that it is so difficult to secure labor in this country that lines cannot be built with white labor. We have an example of that in the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul in the lines of Hill and Harriman, where very difficult works of railway construction have been carried out by white labor. And in the southern portions of this province, I have it on the authority of the member for Grand Forks, every foot of the V. V. & E. line has been built with white labor. If it is competent for these lines to carry on their work with white labor; if it has been possible for the Great Northern within the confines of British Columbia to carry on construction with white labor, surely it is not impossible for the Canadian Northern Railway company to carry on their construction with white labor also, with men of our own flesh and blood, men of our own race, of whom I hope we shall soon have plenty in British Columbia, and that partly through the instrumentality of the Canadian Northern railroad system. (Applause.)

To Control Rates.

So much for that part of the bargain. Now we shall proceed to examine questions of detail, but first you will observe that provision has been made for the work to be carried on by the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway company, a company to be incorporated by this Legislature, and to be in every sense of the word a provincial corporation. The reason for this is obvious. In order that this government should have the complete control it promised over rates and regulations, it was absolutely essential to incorporate a provincial company. Hence this provision for the Canadian Northern Pacific company to be incorporated by this Parliament and operated under the authority of the Legislature of British Columbia. But you will observe that the agreement is so drawn as to give the people of British Columbia side by side with this corporation the advantages of the Canadian Northern corporation, a Dominion company, which controls one of the transcontinental roads of the Dominion of Canada.

The first section we need discuss at any length is with regard to the route of the roads. It provides that the road shall be built from the Yellowhead pass, down the Thompson valley and on to Vancouver. With regard to the Victoria & Barkley Sound line, provision is made for a road running from the New Westminster bridge to Englishman's Bluff.

From that point a ferry service is to be established in order to connect with the island section of the Canadian Northern Pacific. That ferry service must make its terminal in a place near the city of Victoria, and from that terminal to Barkley Sound there is projected railway construction of one hundred miles of the Canadian Northern Pacific. There can be no complaint from our friends the Liberals and in that last stage of the campaign from the member for Nanaimo. But everything the government promised would appear from late reports to have come about. We told the people that they were guaranteeing the road and it was expected that if this road was to be successfully operated it must have a grade second to none on the continent. The specifications and profiles exhibited to the government demonstrated that they were securing from the prairies to the Pacific a gradient of less than four tenths of one per cent., or, in other words, an easier grade than that on the Grand Trunk Pacific, which has been the proud boast not only of Mr. Hays and his associates but of the Dominion government as well.

A Business Route

From this route we were able to show that we were securing a business route, one that would secure the competition the people were seeking for and one that would lend itself well to the construction of branches, to serve other sections not at present served by the construction of the main line. We were to go over the Hope mountains, that Mr. Hill had built a considerable mileage and was now waiting for final plans when he would construct without the cost of a single penny to the country. Where are the results? No sooner is it decided that the Canadian Northern Pacific is to be built than instructions to the contractor to hurry along are given and today preparations are under way in the Fraser valley and east of the Cascades as well that will make for the completion of the V. V. & E., and the Hope Mountain route in a very short time indeed.

Another result. We promised that activities would come about that would mean added wealth to the province and an important one, is that as soon as the election was over and the adoption by the people of B. C. of this agreement with the Canadian Northern than the Kettle River valley, a substantial corporation which is about to receive some aid from the province of B. C. at this time has secured from the Dominion government a permit, a franchise to extend the line to Nicola, down through the Hope mountains to a point near Ruby Creek, there to connect with the C. P. R.

So one may safely and fairly assume from the determination of the people of this country to have the Canadian Northern Pacific, this competing line, to have this road that will protect the interests of B. C. and give these existing roads the competition they have a right to expect—from these circumstances one may fairly assume has come the latest word from the Great Northern that they are to hurry the construction of the V. V. & E., and the latest word from the Kettle Valley that they are to hurry on to a coast connection. So the conclusion is easy that it is the railway policy of the government which has brought about this activity. We will have connection between the coast and the interior not by one road, as today, the C. P. R., but by three, at any rate in the lower section of the country, in addition to the C. P. R.

A Land of Promise

Now, sir, with regard to the route itself, we have all listened in days gone by in the House as well as on the hustings to accounts given by residents as well as by travellers through the North Thompson of the wonderful things in the way of lands, mines and timber to be found in that section of B. C. between Kamloops and the Yellow Head pass. This is not news to the people of the province. From early government reports and surveys carried on incidental to the C. P. R. project in that part of B. C. it was conclusively proved that not only in the North Thompson country but in golden Cariboo, represented so ably and efficiently by the gentlemen who we see here today there was such a land of promise as would readily justify railway construction as incidental to their development. We know the disputes and difficulties that arose over the final adoption of the route for the C. P. R. but while we had as a matter of record to acknowledge things to be true at the same time we must acknowledge that all the early discoveries and investigations into this part of the province amply prove this to be indeed a very rich and wealthy section of our glorious province, and a portion that will repay adequately development by ample railway transportation so soon and when that can be provided for.

Need of Competition.

In addition to the very valuable country of the north and south Thompson, we have that section between Kamloops and the coast, which is still capable of enormous development. Who is there with any intimate knowledge of the rich benchlands of the North Thompson, the valley of the Fraser and the fruit producing areas of the vicinity of Kamloops that will ask for proof of any statement that these important sections of the country are not by any means developed to their capacity? Where is the city of Kamloops today containing a population of two or three thousand, perhaps my friend opposite will say five thousand people, we should easily have with a full development of the great farming areas tributary to that centre, a Kamloops of fully ten thousand people. The wonderful benchlands of the Thompson river and the valley of the Fraser—the lands of the dry belt as well as the lands outside that special section—are only in the infancy of their development. It is amazing to find from the investigation of those technically proficient to speak with authority, that their conclusions as to the wealth of the soil in this region of British Columbia are in the very highest degree favorable. But still we have today the Kamloops of two or three or perhaps four thousand people; and we still have the Spences bridge—the Lytton—the Ashcroft of twenty years ago. It is true of late, by reason of the general westward movement and the development to some extent of our fruit lands, some little progress has been made, but nothing in proportion to the relative growth that the natural conditions and potentialities of these regions in question amply justify. The explanation is simple. These sections have not advanced—they could not advance—because there has been afforded them no competition—because the people have had no alternative competitor for their business which would have provided them with the means of selecting the vehicle that would take their various commodities and products to the natural markets, and also would enable them to market the products of their industry at a fair transportation price.

The route selected will traverse this Thompson river valley and will quickly produce development on a larger scale, while giving competitive rates, and undoubtedly will produce also in the near future both population and wealth. Much the same condition and much the same arguments apply with respect to the country lower down the coast, where the surveys already accomplished by the Canadian Northern have already led to a great deal of activity. And this brings us to Vancouver Island, and the line to Barkley Sound.

The Island Section.

There has been a good deal of criticism and skepticism expressed with regard to this section of the road. In the first place there was no section of the people, a very small section I am glad to say, who freely predicted that our negotiations for the incorporation of the Island portion of line with the mainland section would never amount to anything, because they said, the character and the configuration of the west coast would prove almost prohibitive to any scheme of railroad building in that quarter. I am particularly glad to be able to dissipate that, and for all the criticism to which I have just referred. With regard to the construction of this island section let me say that the proprietors of the road were from the beginning desirous of having an interest in the island—they were anxious to have some participation in the development of this glorious Island of Vancouver. And they were not by any means uninformed as to the conditions prevailing here, and already possessing some knowledge of Vancouver Island they were quite ready to embrace the Vancouver Island section without any variation of the terms proposed for the construction of the other portions of the system. They were aware of the configuration of our Island coastline, and of the difficulties that have been referred to with very considerable tendencies toward exaggeration. They were aware also that the different sections to be opened up are rich in wonderful timber and in great mineral wealth.

In addition to the work the line would accomplish for the island, the line would prove very profitable for the C. N. R. The company must have observed that so late as 1910 Vancouver island was rich, large and wealthy, situated in a unique position on the Pacific coast of the Dominion, had only some seventy odd miles of railway. In all these years, with all we know of the wealth of Vancouver island, there is still this almost infinitesimal railway mileage. Perhaps it is not surprising that in view of this that some persons should look with suspicion upon what they are told of the resources here awaiting development.

Mackenzie and Mann with their knowledge of the wealth of the island were eager to close this part of the contract. They did not hesitate to make the island railway part and parcel of the C. N. R. We must not lose sight of the great importance to the whole line of the ferry service to be installed. It must be gratifying not only to the island, but to the whole province that the government has been able to secure such exceptional and splendid provision with regard to a ferry to the mainland. The C. P. R. has discovered that it is easily possible to provide such a ferry notwithstanding many prophecies that have been made. Many persons must have been disappointed when the contract was brought down, and they found that the government had done what these prophets had said could not be done. Many persons had hoped that the government would fail in securing adequate connection with the mainland, but the government had been successful.

The Ferry Service

When the time arrived for the inauguration of the ferry service it would be found to beequally creditable to the company and to the country, and would meet the most exacting tastes and requirements. We have heard it said by those who professed to have made a study of the whole question that the government might secure the building of the road from the Yellowhead to Vancouver, but could never expect to secure construction of the line upon Vancouver island. We are very glad to dissappoint these prophets.

I hope and believe that the C. N. R. will not only build to Barkley Sound, but will go on and extend the road to the north end of Vancouver island. This rich and promising section of the province will then become one of the most valuable and remunerative sections of the entire system.

It is not only on Vancouver island that this contract will lead to further construction than that now specified. The route of the C. N. R. train line is so laid out as to lend itself to the construction of lines into the Kootenay, the Okanagan and the Nicola. We have framed the contract with a view to such further development. When the company has shown what it can do and will do, and has made satisfactory progress the government will be open to make arrangements giving to these districts the competition we are now securing to the districts along the main line.

What will follow? As the history of Manitoba illustrates, an activity on the part of other railways like that which has been witnessed there, an activity in railway construction that will bring wonderful development to British Columbia, and that will amply repay every one of these transcontinental railways.

What material progress and prosperity is brought within sight of the people of this province through this power of adjustment of tariffs, this control of railway rates.

Last there should be the least criticism that we have not made this as effective as possible in every way, the railway agrees that it is not to apply to be declared a road for the general advantage of Canada. And secondly the company agrees that it will not appeal to the railway commission against any rates fixed by the government, and that if any one else does so it will tell the commission that the rates are satisfactory to it. This contract is a complete answer to the critics who said that we could never get control of rates. I hope I shall not be disappointed in hearing from the opposition some word of commendation of the government, which has been successful in getting a bargain without precedent in the history of Canada one that will do more than any bargain heretofore made by any province in the Dominion.

Let Them All Come.

Because this government has brought in an agreement to extend the Canadian Northern railway through British Columbia it does not follow that this government has a word to say against the C. P. R. or the Grand Trunk Pacific—we say let them all come. We believe that through the introduction of the Canadian Northern railway into this province—with the control of freight and passenger rates in the hands of the government—that there will be such an adjustment of railway freight and passenger rates throughout the province generally that it will place travel within the reach and financial ability of the whole Canadian people.

In passing from this phase of the explanation I am offering today I wish to refer to the fact that when the election campaign was about half over some of the good people of the thriving city of Prince Rupert wired me for what information I might have as to a possible extension of the Canadian Northern railway to their prosperous

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If we please you tell others; if we don't tell us.

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All are strictly tailored in the latest materials including serges and diagonals in grays, tans, greens, blues, blacks, lawns and black and white checks.

The Newest Golfers

Our latest arrival in Golfers shows exactly the most improved styles in this ever popular warm coat. They are quite a little longer than heretofore, being in the ¾ length. We are showing them in plain knit and fancy waive style. They are practically an Auto Golf Coat and come in blacks, whites and navys.

New Spring Skirts

Pleated skirts for walking are being very extensively worn this spring. Many very charming and exclusive designs are being shown by us. Some have the pleats running up to the waist band, others as far only as the knee (the kilted effect), while many show the side cluster pleats. Amongst our showing of "the latest in skirts" is a beautiful line of black voile skirts, nicely trimmed in taffeta silk, and fancy embroidery.