THE CONTRACTS PASSED.

The contracts with the Northern Pacific Railway Company and the Canadian Northern Railway Company were passed in the Manitoba legislature this week. The acts confirming these contracts received their second reading on Monday. On Tuesday the one relating to the Northern Pacific was given its third reading, and on Wednesday the third reading was given to the act confirming the Canadian Northern contract.

The passage of acts by the legislature in ordinary cases finally disposes of the matter. Of course all acts must receive the approval of the lieutenant-governor before they become law. In this case it has been hinted at in some quarters that the assent of the lieutenant-governor may be withheld, but that is such a remote contingency as scarcely to warrant consideration. Instances where the crown has interposed to frustrate legislation have happily been exceedingly rare in Canada. The lieutenant-governor might declare that the legislation was not in accordance with the desires of the people; but that would be to place the opinion of the appointed representative of the crown against and above the action of the direct representatives of the people. The interference of the crown in any case is therefore a remote possibility. Provincial acts are also subject to disallowance by the federal authorities.

In the case of these particular acts, however, it requires something more than the assent of the lieutenant-governor to give them full effect. Owing to the jurisdiction of the federal government in railway matters, it is understood that it will be necessary to secure federal legislation confirming the acts of the Manitoba government in this matter. We were told in the legislature that "unless Dominion legislation is secured the contracts cannot be carried into effect and no liability can be incurred by the province." These acts are, therefore, in a sense different from ordinary provincial legislation, which only requires the assent of the lieutenant-governor to become law. In this case we may expect that the fight is now only transferred from Winnipeg to Ottawa, and that at the federal capital there will be another full discussion of all the features of the contracts.

It is not necessary to say anything in detail about the contracts, as they have been before the people for a few weeks. Briefly, however, we may say that the contract with the Northern Pacific Railway Company provides for the leasing of that company's lines in Manitoba by the provincial government, with an option of purchase. In the contract with the Canadian Northern Railway Company the government turns over this lease and option of the Northern Pacific lines to the former company. In further consideration of certain financial assistance from Manitoba, the Canadian Northern consents to give the Manitoba government control of rates on its lines in Manitoba, and also control of rates between Manitoba points and the Lake Superior terminals of the company.

CONDEMNED THE CONTRACTS.

After three general meetings and many committee meetings, the Winnipeg board of trade has finally taken action upon the railway question, and the result is a strong condemnation of the contracts. At the last meeting, held on Tuesday evening last, the following resolution was adopted by a large majority, the vote standing exactly three to one in favor of the resolution :—

"Resolved, that this board disapproves of the contracts and the acts affecting the Northern Pacific Railway Co. and the Canadian Northern Railway Co. as drawn and brought before the legislature. And in view of the great importance of the subject, the great liability to be assumed by the province, the number of railway proposals recently made to the government and the uncertainty as to future railway extension, this board is of the opinion that the Acts confirming the contracts should not be passed at this session of the legislature, but that ample time should be given the country to study fully the whole railway situation."

While the action of the board has not had any effect upon the legislature, it will at least set the position of the board right before the people of the province. This resolution is positively the first and only pronouncement by the board upon the contracts. Other resolutions and recommendations had been discussed at previous meetings of the board, but none of these were adopted. The statements made even in a public way that the board had endorsed the contract, are therefore entirely wrong. A committee recommendation, mildly endorsing the contracts after certain changes should be made in them, was made to the board, but this recommendation was not acceptable to the board, and was not acted upon.

THE TUBERCULIN TEST.

The Dominion minister of agriculture gave out the information on Monday that the government could not see its way to doing away with the compulsory use of the tuberculin test in admitting foreign bred cattle to Canada, a change which has been demanded lately by many of the cattle men of the country on the ground that the test is not reliable and that many healthy animals are injuriously affected by its use. Opinion seems to be divided sharply among medical men and veterinarians as to the merits of tuberculin as an agent for the detection of tuberculosis in animals and there are some prominent men who hold that it is a very uncertain test and may often prove deceiving. Others again are strong advocates of its use. Until the doctors are able to agree there is not much use in the lay element attempting to discuss this important matter. It will be a disappointment to those interested in the cattle industry if it is found that the test is unreliable and that the sacrifices which have been made in the past as a result of its findings should prove to have been unnecessary. On the other hand if it is not a reliable test the sooner the fact is made clear and its compulsory use discontinued the better. The discovery and introduction of the tuberculin test has at least had the effect of calling attention to the prevalence of tuberculosis in cattle and has made the public more careful in regard to the milk and meat which is offered for its use. If this particular method of locating the disease should be proven to be faulty or of no value at all some other will no doubt very soon supercede it as examination for this particular disease is now regarded as a necessity.

Mineral Production of British Columbia.

From the returns of the mineral production of the province of British Columbia for the year 1900, submitted to the local legislature by the provincial minister of mines on March 5th, it is gathered that there was during the year an increase in the value of the output of the lode mines of the province of $3,310,428 and a decrease in that of placer gold of $66,176, leaving a net increase on metallic minerals for the year of $3,244,252. There was also an increase of $1,013,238 in the value of coal and coke. No returns are yet available of the value of other non-metallic minerals so these cannot now be taken into account. The foregoing figures, exhibit practically last year's net increase, which was $4,257,490, as shown in detail in the following table :

	1899.	1900.
Placer gold	$ 1,344,900	$ 1,278,724
Lode gold	2,857,573	3,461,067
Silver..	1,063,708	2,295,099
Copper..	1,351,453	1,615,289
Lead	878,870	2,690,577
Coal and coke	4,053,657	5,066,889
	$12,150,155	$16,407,645

	Increase.	Decrease.
Placer gold..	$	$66,176
Lode gold	603,494	
Silver	631,391	
Copper	263,836	
Lead	1,811,707	
Coal and coke	1,013,238	
	$4,323,666	$66,176

The total mineral production of the province for all years up to and including the year 1900, is as under :

Gold, placer..	$ 62,584,443
Gold, lode..	12,820,536
Silver	13,635,708
Lead	6,543,338
Copper	5,437,871
Coal and coke	49,420,700
Other minerals (aproximately)	2,000,000
Other minerals (approximate amount)..	2,000,000
	$152,438,626

The number of tons of metallic ore mined in the province in 1899 was 287,343 and in 1900 554,796, the increase for last year having been 267,453 tons. The respective increases for 1900 over 1898 were: In quantity of metallic ore mined 338,852 tons, and in value of metallic minerals, coal and coke, $5,652,284, the latter being an increase of more than 50 per cent.

The figures for the whole of Canada for the year 1900 are not yet available but those for 1899, given in the following table, will serve to show the very important position the part of the Dominion lying west of the Rocky Mountains occupies in regard to Canada's total production in 1899 as compared with that situate east of the Rockies. It will be seen that the total value of metallic minerals, coal and coke, produced in British Columbia and the Yukon was $28,150,155 as against $10,073,642 for the remainder of the Dominion.

	British Columbia.	Yukon District.
Gold	$ 4,202,473	$16,000,000
Silver	1,663,708	
Copper	1,351,453	
Lead	878,870	
Coal	3,882,396	
Coke	171,255	
Total .	$12,150,155	$16,000,000

	All other Provinces.	Total for Dominion.
Gold	$ 847,257	$21,049,730
Silver	170,663	1,834,371
Copper	1,303,866	2,655,319
Lead	98,380	977,250
Iron	218,372	218,372
Nickel	2,067,840	2,067,840
Platinum..	835	835
Coal ..	5,157,682	9,040,038
Coke	178,767	350,022
Total	$10,073,642	$38,223,797

As the output of coal in British Columbia is rapidly increasing and attention is now being directed to its iron deposits it appears as though it will not be long before the mineral production of the province will be greater, not only in the total, as at present, but as well in all the individual minerals (excepting nickel and platinum) than that of the larger area of the Dominion lying east of the Rocky Mountains.

Railway and Traffic Matters.

The C. P. R. Imperial Limited express will be instituted this year on June 10, a date somewhat earlier than that of last season. The fast service will last until October 13. It will arrive in the city from the east about 6.30 a. m. and depart on its journey west at 7.15 a. m. The west train will arrive at 21.30 and will leave at 22 o'clock. It is likely that the time of last season, 100 hours from coast to coast, will be cut a few hours as a result of the fine roadbed through the west, it having been fixed up some to admit of faster running.

One of the applications for railway charters which is to come before the Dominion House of Commons during its present session is to incorporate a road to be known as the Crow's Nest Southern and which will, if charter is granted, run from Michel, a station on the C. P. R. Crow's Nest section, 23 miles this side of Fernie, to the international boundary where it will connect with the Great Northern Railway system. Over this application there is expected to be a hot fight in committee as the C. P. R. is opposing the arrangement on the ground that it is calculated to adversely affect Canadian interests.

The Canadian Northern Railway Company gives notice that it will apply to have added to its bill before parliament of Canada at its present session the necessary provisions confirming a contract dated 11th February, 1901, made between the company and the government of Manitoba, relating to the lease of certain railways in Manitoba now being operated by the Northern Pacific Railway Company and providing for the carrying of such contract and relating to the guarantee by the said government of certain bonds of the company, and to other matters, and providing for the acquisition of said railways for the consideration in said lease mentioned.

FREIGHT RATES.

Heavy grain has been taken from Duluth through to Quebec at 5½c per bushel, says the Montreal Trade Bulletin, and quotations range from 5¼ to 5½c, the same being the quoted rates from Duluth and Fort William to Montreal by lake and rail, as well as by all water. About 2,500,000 bushels have been engaged for Montreal and Quebec, mostly for Montreal.

An easier feeling has prevailed in the ocean grain freight market, and rates show a decline of 1½d to 3d, with the exception of those two or three ports. The demand has been quiet and only a moderate business is reported. All the space to Leith has been engaged for May, and engagements were made to Antwerp today at 2s, but agents now are asking 2s 3d. We quote asking rates as follows: Liverpool, 1s 6d; London, 2s; Glasgow, 1s 9d; Bristol, 2s 1½d; Dublin, 2s 4½d; Leith, 2s 6d June; Aberdeen, 3s May; Belfast, 2s 4½d; Cardiff, 2s; Antwerp, 2s 3d; and Hamburg, 2s 3d.—Montreal Gazette.

Manitoba Farm Homes—Buildings of W. A. Doyle, Beulah.