#### JOHN S. FRASER TO THE **ELECTORS OF WEST KENT**

Reform the Laws, and Assess Railway Companies on on the Same Basis as Individuals for

To the average ratepayer it may seem an astonishing thing, yet it is true that no railway company in the Province of Ontario at present bears one-twentieth of its share of municipal taxation.

The general system of taxation as everybody knows is this: The assessor estimates what is the actual cash value of your property. The amount required for municipal and school pur, poses is ascertained. Then an ad valorem rate is levied upon the assessvalue of each ones property.

In arriving in the townships at a person's drainage taxes, a similar principle is applied.

This method has been in use a great many years and has been found to be eminently fair and just in ascertaining the relative proportion of the common expense of the government, and education of the community each one shall pay. So if a farmer clears up his brush lot and fences it his assessment is increased. If he drains and cultivates his land, thus making it more valuable he has to pay more taxes. If then he gets well enough off to build a fine house, has large barns, valuable orchards, his property is enhanced in value, and his taxes are again increased, perhaps to double the amount of his neighbor, who has not been so industrious and enterprising, but has left his 100 acres unimproved.

But as between the individual ratepayer and the railway corporations no

such rule prevails. The assessment act in force in Ontario as interpreted by a number of judges, the latest reported decision being that of Judge Bell in re the Township of Chatham and The Canadian Pacific Railway, 21 Canadian Law Times, 534, requires the assessor to assesss the roadway of a railway at the same rate per acre as the average value of lands in the locality and prohibits him from taking into consideration the cost or value of the grading ditching, fencing or the value of the ties, steel rails, rolling stock, every-

thing in fact except the naked land. Four railways cross our county, running east and west and one running north and south; and there is not one of them that is not worth are bonded for more than that. The number of acres of land to each mile of railroad of those going through the county varies from eight to fourteer acres, according to the width of

The Grand Trunk is the widest, and tales about 14 acres to the mile, but that is double tracked. The Michigan Central uses about 12 acres to the The C. P. R., about 11 acres and the Lake Erie and Detroit River eight aces to the mile. The assessors of the various townships can only assess, do only assesss the railways at

from \$30 to \$45.00 per acre. the township of Raleigh affords a far illustration of the injustice of the system. The distance across this dwnship is about 10 1-2 miles.

The Grand Trunk is assessed for \$550, being 144 9-10 acres. The Canadian Pacific is assessed for \$5150, being 111 88-100 acres. The Michigan Certral is assessed for

\$5000, being 125 13-100 acres.
Thi L, E. & D. R. R. is assessed for \$2730, being 85,70-100 acres. Total assessment, \$20,430.

Now, suppose instead of assessing these companies at the actual value of their respective roads, the law should be amended to that they would be assessed at one-half their value, letting the Grand Trunk assessment remain the same as the others, al-though it is double tracked, we would then each railway assessed at \$7500 per mile, The Grand Trunk's assessment \$78,750

The M. C. R., ..... 78,750

Amount they should be assessed for in Raleigh ...... \$315,000 Amount of resent assess-

. .....\$294,570 Lest anyone should suppose that the judicial interpretation placed on the Assessment Act, by which the engines, cars, rails, ties, etc., of railways, are exempt from assessment, has been so recent that the Legislature has not had an opportunity to consider the full measure of injustice done by the present law, I would remind you that the first case so interpreting the law, was decided by the late Chief Justice Robinson in 1856, and that feature of the law has remained unalter-

At that time there might have been some reason in exempting or partially exempting railways from sharing with the farmers the burden of municipal taxation because then the country was new, sparely settled, there was little manufacturing, the towns and cities small, the passenger and freight traffic insignificant as compared with its present volume and their earnings did not so largely preponderate over their running ex-

But now when we find the C. P. R. taking in one year for its earnings over \$24,000,000, and the smaller roads in proportion, it is time for the peo-ple to ask that justice shall be done

ple to ask that justice shall be done them.

All of these roads have been largely

assisted in their construction by parliamentary and municipal bonuses. The Erie & Huron is a fair instance of a road so essisted. The Government gave it from \$2,000 to \$3,200 per mile. Then the County of Kent gave it \$155,000 and interest, and Blenheim gave it a bonus of \$11,000, Dresden \$18,000, Wallaceburg \$11,000 and Chatham \$30,000. And all this to construct the road only to Wallaceburg.

If the people say now that the railway corporations must share with the individual the necessary burdens of taxation after all the years of ex-emption they have enjoyed and if they are only asked to pay taxes to the extent of one-half the value of their assets-not the whole value as the individual has to pay-they should

not complain.

It must be remembered, too, that railways will always be practically exempt from drainige taxes-the heaviest burdens the farmers in this county have had to bear. It is true the railways are getting the benefit to a great extent of the drainage taxes which our farmers have paid in the increased production of the farms fur ishing freight for transportation but from the very nature of things they will not be assessed

for drainage The railway companies, it is said discriminate against the Ontario farmer in their carrying rates and in a recent article published in the Farming World written by A. F. Mc-Laren, M. P., one of the largest cheese exporters in the Dominion, after fully discussing this subject of discrimination in detail, he says:-

"For the past season (meaning the eason of 1901) the exportable value of our cheese, butter and bacon represents \$40,000,000, an amount considerable in excess of two years ago. In tons this volume would represent 250,-000 tons a year which we have paid out \$1,000,000 for getting it to market (meaning the British market) more than we should on the basis of American transportation rates and our cheese has been handled largely in a condition that has depreciated

In the same article the freight rate on wheat from Buffalo to Liverpool is given at 11 1-2c. per cwt., but from Western Ontario points it is 21c.

its value another half million.

The cattle rate from Toronto to Portland is given at 28c., but from Chicago to Montreal 25c., and from the counties of Bruce, Huron and Grey to Montreal the rate is 33c. per cwt. These statements have not been various newspapers and the article

ditional reason is furnished by the in any event of taxation. The great burden of this exemption of railways from taxation falls upon

the farmers of this Province because they are the largest taxpayers, also heaviest sufferers by these discriminatory rates, also because it is through their land that 19 out of every 20 miles of railway in the Province is built and the disproportion of assessment exists.

In the several States of the United States the Legislatures have not been so dilatory in dealing with this problem as has the Ontario Legislature.

The State of Michigan, assessing rate upon the net earnings of its railways, receives over \$2,350,000 a year. A number of the other States receive as large or larger sums in proportion to their railway mileage than those I have given. In Michigan last year the method of assessment was changed from a percentage of earnings to a percentage of the value of each railway, including its track, ties, engines,

#### "I did not sleep a night for seven long weeks."

That prolonged period of sleeplessness is most expressive of the pain and suffering caused by womanly diseases. It is pleasant to contrast the medical inefficiency which said "I could not be cured" with the property and permanprompt and perman-ent cure effected by the use of Doctor Pierce's Favorite Prescription. This great medicine for women establishes regularity, dries en-feebling drains, heals inflammation and ulinflammation and ulceration and cures female weakness.

"I take great pleasure in recommending Dr. Pierce's medicines to other suffering women, writes Mrs. Mary Adams, of Grassycreek, A she Co., N. C. "I had internal trouble very badly until it resulted in ulcers of the uterns. I was troubled with it so that I did not sleep a night for seven long weeks. The doctors said I could not be cured, but I could not be cured, but I commenced taking Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription and 'Pleasant Pellets.' After taking two bottles I could sleep all night, and after taking six bottles of 'Pavorite Prescription' and two of 'Golden Medical Discovery' and three vials of 'Pleasant Pellets' my case was cured. I had told my husband that I would have to die, as it seemed I could not live. He told me to put faith in Dr. Pierce's medicines, for it had cured others and would cure me. So it did. and I thank God and your medicine for saving my life."

Dr. Pierce's Common Sense Medical Adviser, is sent free on receipt of stamps to pay expense of customs and mailing only. Send 50 one-cent stamps for the book in cloth binding, or only 31 stamps for the paper covered volume. Address Dr. R. V. Pierce, Bufialo, N. Y.

passenger and freight cars, and everything else belonging to it.

Now, having demonstrated what I believe to be an unjust and unfair condition of things as existing between the railways and the individual taxpayer, I wish to state that if elected to represent West Kent I shall do my utmost to have the assessment laws so amended as to compel the railway companies to in future pay their share of taxes and thus relieve the farmers and other taxpayers of a portion of the burden which they

of a portion of the burden which they for years have been carrying for the railways. That the railways shall be assessed for at least one-half the value of their assets instead of less than one-thirtieth, as heretofore, and that the taxes so collected from the railways shall either go to the severa municipalities or to the count taxes should not go to the Provincial treasury. They belong to the muni-cipalities just as fairly as do the tax-

es of individuals and factories.

The present Ontario Government for at least twenty years, have ignored the rights of the people in failing to equalize the basis of taxation as between the railways and the individ-

The Government that has been in power for twenty years is responsible for the continued exemption of railways from taxation.

By my opponents, however, it may be said that the Conservative party in the Legislature has not dealt with this problem, that the reform I suggest has not been declared to be a part of its policy, therefore I am

Well, all I can do is to repeat the statement, I will accomplish this if

I am sufficient of a farmer to realize the full measure of the injustice of the present system.

The Local Legislature, to a great

extent, is in its constitution necessarily similar to a large county council and each member there has an individual liberty of action in bringing are in the interest of the country. He may get turned down once or twice by the leader of the Government or the leader of his party, but if the principle of his bill is sound and he steadily persists he succeeds in get-

Should the position which I shall ake in this matter-and I say it with all deference and respect to the Conservative party in West Kent - seem to go beyond where they conceived I should go when they were kind enough to nominate me as their candidate, I would be quite satisfied for them to call another convention and nominate another candidate in my There is yet adequate time. The Reformers have not nominated their candidate yet.

Should the Conservative party in this constituency be satisfied that the change I advocate is a just one; that it means fair play between the individual tax payer and the wealthy, indenied. They have been repeated by fluential and somewhat grasping corporations, the railway Companies, then quoted in debate on parliament with they will again demonstrate what has approval, we can then safely assume so often been established by the acthey are true, and being true an additional reason is furnished by the "Conservative" and "Reform" do not railways themselves why they should quite accurately characterize the principles of the respective

which they are applied. To take up the cudgels on behalf of the people against the railway companies, may subject me to the united opposition of the companies in this because being the largest producers of county, but I shall trust to the inde-freight for the railways they are the pendent voters, irrespective of party, to assist me to wage their battle. Upon this principle there is no room for a Reformer to differ from a Conservative. Their interests are united. It is of great moment to every voter; it is of the greatest moment to the

> sists the unjust privileges which the railway companies in Ontario have always enjoyed, fails or not. My personal defeat would be an insignificant matter, but the defeat of your project would be of much importance because the victory of the railway companies if they should win would deter others from espousing

farmers whether a candidate who as-

the cause I advocate.

Therefore I ask you all, and you especially who are farmers, to assist me in this undertaking.

There were enough unfettered members in the last Legislature; there are in each parliament and there will be in the next when the facts are fully and fairly brought home to them to carry this measure. Possibly not at the first attempt but certainly be-

fore the four years' life of the Par-JOHN S. FRASER. March 29, 1902.

# DISTRICT DOINGS.

THAMES VILLE

Mar 30 .- Russel Platt, of Chatham, pent Sunday at Dr. Stewart's.

Miss Jackson, of Petrolea, is the guest of Miss Celia Secord. Noble Ripley is spending a few days

Ed. Burns, of Toronto, is in town. Mr. Stewart, of Brampton, is visiting his nephew, Dr. Stewart.

J. P. Ross, of Chatham, is in town

Mrs. (Rev.) Borland, of Collingwood, visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. D. McFarlane Mrs. J. M. Thompson spent Easter

n Detroit Miss Nell Hill, of Delaware, is visiting her sister, Mrs. W. Anderson. Carrier boys are not authorized to collect subscriptions. Our collector calls in each town once a month; if a subscriber wishes to pay his account before the collector calls, he must remit direct to The Planet Office Chat-

The palm of absent-mindedness is probably taken by a learned German whom a Berlin comic paper calls Professor Dusel, of Bonn. One day the professor noticed his wife placing a large bouquet on his desk.

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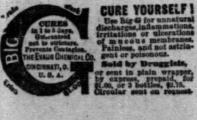
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by 104 feet. House, 8 rooms, lot 60 feet by 285 feet, \$1,000. Farm in Howard, 32 1-2 acres, house, stable and orchard, \$1,000.

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