

M'KENZIE AND MANN MAY BUILD THE VALLEY ROAD

Would Form Part of Their Transcontinental System - The Need of the Road and the Magnificent Country Which It Would Serve - Premier Pugsley Proposes a Guarantee of Bonds for the Construction of Line by the Company.

Premier Pugsley completed his brief speech in the House on Thursday afternoon. The Premier was then physically better prepared than on two other occasions on which he had addressed the House and consequently his effort was a more successful one. Hon. Mr. Pugsley said:

Just before I concluded my speech yesterday I was referring to the amount of work on roads and bridges which had to be attended to by the Board of Works. I must here correct an error in the statement I then made. I said we had forty-six steel bridges. I should have stated that we had fifty-eight, all built on stone abutments and of a permanent character. I should also have referred to the wooden bridges of a permanent character which we have built in recent years. Since 1901, when we began to build covered wooden bridges, we have constructed some hundred and twenty, ranging in span from 27 feet long to 150 feet long, while many of the bridges embrace a number of such spans. Many of the structures are on concrete masonry substructures, and where this is not the case they are on up-to-date stone-filled cedar crib work. In the opinion of the provincial engineers, these structures are as permanent as steel where they are suitable to certain localities.

Railways as Assets.

Some people are criticizing the government for placing the New Brunswick Coal and Railway among the assets of the province, and saying that the Intercolonial, which is owned by the Government of Canada, is not among the assets of the Dominion. But I find that the province of Nova Scotia, which has lent certain railways large amounts of money and taken a mortgage on the railway as security, counts among its assets the amounts of the mortgage. In the statement of the assets of Nova Scotia I find the first mortgage on the main line of the Halifax and Southwestern Railway for \$2,000,000, the first mortgage on the Central Railway for \$1,000,000, the first mortgage on the Lunenburg and St. John's Railway for \$1,000,000, making a total of \$4,000,000. The government of Nova Scotia loans the railways money in this way because a straight government bond brings a higher price than a guaranteed bond.

The government of Nova Scotia has found that it is desirable to have first class railways, so in addition to subsidizing it has loaned

\$11,000,000 to Certain Roads.

I have seen comments in some of our newspapers favorable to this action on the part of Nova Scotia, and it almost makes me tired to hear persons who belong to the Liberal party criticizing us for doing what they applaud when it is done by the government in Nova Scotia. I see these same parties also applauding the government of Ontario for giving \$20,000,000 to a railway going north, while they condemn us for assisting the Intercolonial Railway. Referring to the Intercolonial Railway, I think it ought to be a matter that should afford the greatest satisfaction to my predecessor, the late premier, that when he left this government our liabilities amounted to very little more than \$3,000,000, and with that small amount of debt we had assets in our forest lands worth at least \$20,000,000. The must be proud to reflect that as a result of the efforts he had obtained for the province an addition to its income which if capitalized at 4 per cent. would entirely wipe out this net debt of the province. It ought to be a matter of gratification that though we have had large public works to attend to during his term as Premier, he left an interest at Ottawa drawing 5 per cent. the same amount unimpaired.

That was There When He Accepted the Office.

Before I got through I will be able to contrast this government with its predecessor and show how much better we have done for the Province than the gentlemen who were in power before us. The financial crisis of the Opposition will find fault with us because there is an overdraft in the account of the Board of Works. Let me ask him to put his finger on a single public work that ought not to have been constructed. Let him point out a wharf or bridge that we should not have built. The Chief Commissioner need not have had an overdraft account if he had starved the public services. He need not have had an overdraft; but that policy would not have been approved by the people of this province. I look to-day with great pleasure on the condition of New Brunswick, and also of its people. They have enjoyed a large measure of prosperity, and this has extended to all classes, to the farmer, the lumberman and the fisherman.

Coal Mining.

I am glad to know that coal mining is being carried on with profit in the counties of Queens, Simsbury and Kent, and that in the latter counties the amount derived from royalties on coal is five times as much as the interest on the guaranteed bonds for building railways there. I am glad to know that the result of mining explorations in Gloucester and in the county of St. John are likely to be

satisfactory. In all directions we see growth and prosperity.

Dry Dock Looms Large Again.

I might refer to the development of the winter port trade of St. John, in which we have largely assisted. We have also given encouragement to a dry dock there, and I am happy in the belief that before long Mr. Robertson will be able to make a public announcement that work on that dry dock will soon begin. A strong company has been formed under our auspices for the development of the enormous waterpower of the Grand Falls. The necessary financial arrangements have been made, and as soon as the plans are approved at Ottawa the work will begin. I am not without hope that we shall see the trains of the transcontinental railway operated by electricity generated by the water power of Grand Falls. I know that the managers of that company look favorably on the idea and when we consider the danger from fire by steam locomotives in a forest country, the advantages of the use of electricity are obvious. I might also refer with pride and hope to the development of the northern part of the province which will result from the construction of the Intercolonial Railway, opening up what is virtually a new province, rich in natural resources.

The Transcontinental Railway.

While we regret that the Transcontinental Railway is not to come down the valley of the St. John river, it will nevertheless open up a large section of valuable territory. There are on the route of that line, within 20 miles of it, 17,000 acres of land belonging to the province, and on the line of the Intercolonial within a similar distance from the railway, there are 1,000,000 acres of Crown lands. I propose to set aside the land for one mile on each side of the railway, so that it will be kept for the people and not alienated, so that whatever profit there is from this line when purchased for stations and sidings will go into the public treasury. I have said that I was disappointed at the river route not being chosen, but as one of the public men of this country I have kept myself out of the party which must be considered among the greatest and most successful railway builders in the world. I refer to Macdonald & Macdonald, who ten years ago acquired one hundred miles of railway and have gone on since extending and building other railways, until they now own a total of over 3,000 miles of railway in Canada.

and they have never yet opened a mile of railway that has not paid. This firm has a railway from Port Arthur and Lake Superior to Winnipeg, from Winnipeg to Prince Albert and to Edmonton, and they are extending their lines rapidly to the Pacific. They own a railway from Vancouver to Halifax and also a line to Victoria Beach on the Bay of Fundy. Their system is to be extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific and they must pass through New Brunswick. The government has not yet decided whether the line should go through the Central route was chosen by the Grand Trunk Pacific if they would not consider the construction of a line running down the St. John river valley to St. John, where they could connect by steam with their line at Victoria Beach. A few days ago, when the Central route was chosen, I communicated with them again, and am happy to say that I have now a communication from them to the effect that if reasonable terms can be agreed upon they will send their engineer to make a report on the line, and if it is favorable will undertake the early construction of the road. The government has not yet decided on this matter. They desire to move slowly, but we are considering the subject very carefully, and we will be very sure before we do anything.

We Submit the Proposed Terms to the House.

With regard to this railway there can be no two opinions. There are seventy thousand people residing in the St. John River Valley on a distance of 132 miles, and most of these people have no railway communication. Take that portion of the St. John River Valley between the towns of Woodstock and Fredericton. It is well settled throughout its entire length, and by some of the most progressive and intelligent people of the province. Along the whole length of river between Fredericton and Woodstock, there exists, but one stretch of woods of perhaps five miles in extent. Some of the finest farming land of New Brunswick is to be found along this part of the valley, which is without railway facilities of any kind. The farmers are up to date in their methods and equipped with improved machinery for the greater part, but have no ready access to the markets. The land is adapted to the raising of the finest potatoes, but the long haul to any shipping point has prevented the farmers from raising them in any great quantities.

Water Powers Undeveloped.

There are water powers at Medford on the Eel river, at Shogomoc and Pokok on the west side, and others on the east side of the St. John river, which are undeveloped because of the complete isolation of this section of the province. A large part of the farming land is equal to the very best in the province. Important villages are to be found at such points as Med-

ford, Pokok, Hawkshaw and Southampton, which are capable of expansion into important centres under different circumstances. As it is now, the farms are well cultivated, and the people enjoying a fair measure of prosperity. There is no wilderness in this valley country. There is still considerable timber land unexploited back from the river, and some very good granite in Southampton. The only thing which prevents the valley region between Fredericton and Woodstock from being one of the very finest parts of the province is

The Lack of Communication.

with the outside world. There is also in this region abundance of good pasture, and sheep raising is capable of being developed into a profitable industry. There are rich stretches of interval at Lower Woodstock, Medford and Southampton, and a fine level section of farm land below Hawkshaw called the Barony. Dairying is now carried on to a considerable extent as a home industry. Creameries or skimming stations are not common on account of the fact that hand separators are to be found in nearly every farmhouse. Cheese factories exist at Prince William and Southampton. The output of these is excellent in quality and considerable in quantity.

The nearest markets are in Fredericton and Woodstock, which are reached either by a long haul with teams or by the slow and unsatisfactory method of towboats. Farming is thus carried on under the heaviest possible disadvantages and with the possibility of ruin.

Scarcity of the St. John River.

There is no fairer piece of territory in the world than that on the St. John river which lies between the south of the Nepesic and Fredericton. Between Westfield and Oak Point there is a piece of country which has been secured or has been intended to be the seat of the villas and private residences of wealthy people in St. John, because it possesses the attractions of a seaside resort and all the beauties of an inland river. The time will come when with a railway opening it up many persons residing in the city will make it their homes for great or part of the year. Above Oak Point we come to a country even more attractive and admirably suited for agriculture with beautiful intervals which stretch for miles along the river and form themselves into islands, which are a source of wealth to those who possess them.

Spoon Island Granite.

On the west side of the river is the little Spoon Island - this is one of the finest granite quarries in the world, which has been worked for nearly twenty years and has become more valuable if in connection with a railway. The land from Hampstead to Gasquetown and from Gasquetown to Oromocto is one of the finest farming districts that can be found anywhere, but it has suffered in consequence of the lack of railway communication. Anyone who has sailed up the St. John river above Hampstead must have noticed the magnificent farms and the beautiful intervals for farmers that the country affords. This favored land has three times its present population if opened for settlement. It is at Gasquetown, Sheffield and Manganville that the first English settlers on the St. John came in 1763, and here their descendants are to be found in large numbers, but the population does not increase because in the winter they are shut up from the rest of the world.

The Stimulus of Railway Communication.

We can easily imagine what this land would become with the stimulus of good railway communication. The same is true of the territory between Oromocto and Fredericton. It is fair and fertile, nor are there any obstructions to its development.

(Continued on page 3.)

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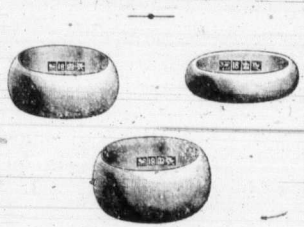
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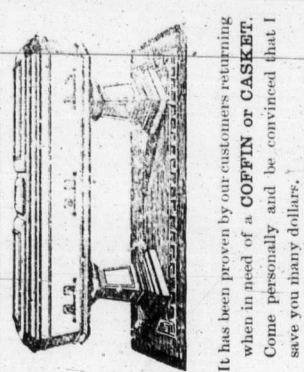


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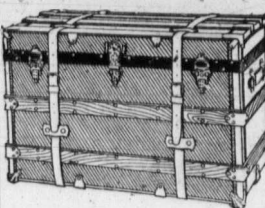
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