



Portage La Prairie—Grand Trunk Pacific Yards. "Four Hundred Miles of Steel Rails."

Progress of Grand Trunk Pacific

By CY. WARMAN

THE builders of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway are finishing their first full year's work. The trail is practically blazed from ocean to ocean and already they are receiving and sending out mail at Prince Rupert, on the Pacific, which was a voiceless wilderness yesterday and which will be a hustling, booming city to-morrow.

Doubtless the promoters of this tremendous enterprise had faith in the West, and the Government that backed the builders believed that there was immediate need of another trans-continental line; but no one guessed that the close of 1906 would find the development of the West out-running all the railways. The more we build the more we need to build, for the development West of Winnipeg has barely begun.

As the West was the cause of all this railway construction boom, the West is commanding the attention of the powers that direct the pathfinder and the grade-maker.

The Grand Trunk Pacific management are bending every effort to rail the new fields that lie between Winnipeg and Edmonton at the earliest possible moment, for here, in the great Saskatchewan valley, half way between the "Chicago" and the "Denver" of the Dominion, is the storm centre of a development that would be called a boom were it not for the fact that it has been of steady growth for a number of years. Moreover, it covers a large corner of a continent instead of being confined to a limited territory as booms usually are.

LOCATING IN THE ROCKIES.

Of course they are working west from Edmonton, and east from Prince Rupert, but the task of locating a line of railway, such as the Grand Trunk Pacific propose to build, through half a thousand miles of wilderness that was practically unknown when the preliminary pathfinders set their faces toward the three passes that were supposed to lie somewhere near the headwaters of the Peace River, is proving a hazardous and difficult job.

Every river, gorge and canon was sounded, every possible and many impossible passes examined before the final selection was made, before the President and the

General Manager marked "O.K." on the profile, before the chief engineer penned his official "Put her there," and the Yellow Head became the pass to the Pacific.

Meanwhile the government construction commission are hurrying up the work of constructing the section of the main line that will begin at Winnipeg and continue east to connect with the Superior branch of the company's line, now well along. When the government section to the Wheat City is completed, this will give the Granary another "spout" to the lakes.

If the men who are to be held responsible for the finished line were satisfied to build as the early trans-continental lines were built in the United States, the last spike could be driven years earlier than it will be driven. If they had less faith in the future of Canada, if they could foresee a slump in the near future, they could build cheaply, have less of fixed charges to pay and earn something on the money expended, even in "lean years," but they are building against a future in which they have abounding faith. If fortune favours them, if the good old earth continues to sweat "gold" at the rate of 19 bushels to the acre as it has done for the past 19 years, they will be counted wise in their generation.

But, by the same token, if they were to build cheaply, following the contour of the country, rising and falling with the swell and swale of the billowing fields, and finish a line utterly inadequate and physically unfit for the



The G. T. P.—Steam Grader at Work.