

The Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario's Electric Railway Projects.

The Ontario Premier, Hon. E. C. Drury, received a delegation of representatives of municipalities interested in hydro electric power and railway projects in Toronto, Dec. 12, and in reply to their representations, is reported to have said, among other things: "There is absolutely no friction between Sir Adam Beck and myself. It might not be wise at present to appoint him permanently as chairman of the commission. An arrangement will be made to suit Sir Adam."

The development has been the work of one man and we want it to be so that when that one man is taken from us the great work can go on. In regard to the proposed hydro radial railways, the situation has changed recently. The G.T.R. is about to become part of the Canadian National Railways. Some of the projected electric railways would parallel G.T.R. branches. I want to be assured that there will be no duplication.

The United Farmers of Ontario adopted the following resolution at their meeting in Toronto, Dec. 18:—"We view with alarm the proposed policy of hydro radials, involving expenditure of millions of dollars and intending in many instances the duplication of present railways, and be it resolved that the legislature be requested to move slowly in this matter."

In connection with the building of the projected Toronto-Hamilton Electric Ry., under the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario's plans, a press report of Dec. 13, states that work will be started early this year, and that it is expected all problems in connection with the entrance of this and the Hamilton-Galt-Guelph-Elmira line into Hamilton will be solved by the end of January. It is reported that connection will be made with the G.T.R., either across a bridge or fill at Carroll's Point, or back on the G.T.R. level at the west of the ravine, where a bridge would not be necessary.

The municipalities interested in the proposal to build a line from Hamilton to Galt, Elmira and Guelph, will vote on Jan. 1 on the bylaws to provide their several allotments of the total cost of \$6,530,659. Meetings have been held at various centers at which Sir Adam Beck spoke in favor of the bylaws. Considerable opposition to the bylaw developed in Kitchener. Upon the initiative of the Kitchener Light Commissioners, who operate the Kitchener and Waterloo Electric Ry. The objections were: (1) The serious shortage in Niagara power at present, and the likelihood of more serious shortage before the Chippawa development is completed. With the continuous increase in applications for power from all over the Niagara system, it has been estimated that the total load available at the new Chippawa plant will be required for domestic, commercial and manufacturing purposes, without the additional loads required for the proposed hydro radial railways. (2) The amount of \$1,053,080, which is required to be guaranteed by Kitchener is altogether too large in view of the fact that Premier Drury has gone on record as saying that no duplication of existing lines will be sanctioned by the Ontario Legislature. At present there is the G.T.R. line from Elmira to Galt, which the proposed hydro radial would parallel, and Kitchener's estimate as above is based on building a new line. Should the present G.T.R. Elmira-Galt line be turned over to the Hydro Power Commission for electrification, the amount, which Kitchener should be asked for should be very considerably less. (3) The Kitchener Light Commissioners also objected to certain paragraphs in the agreement. The proposed extension of hydro radial railways includes operating their cars over the Kitchener and Waterloo St. Ry. tracks from the city limits to the northwesterly part of Waterloo. Paragraph C of the agreement gives the H.E.P.C.O. power to acquire the K. and W.S.R. Under clause E, the City of Kitchener is required to furnish free right of way for the H.E.P.C.O. railway and power lines. T. J. Hannigan, Secretary, Ontario Hydro Electric Radial Railway Association, met the Kitchener Light Commissioners, Dec. 20, and discussed with them points in the agreement to which they had taken objection. It is reported that an understanding was arrived at on the several matters, and that the H.E.P.C.O. will embody in a letter to the Kitchener Light Commissioners an interpretation of the sections of the agreement to which objection is taken, on acceptable lines.

The agreement between the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario, the City of Toronto and a number of municipalities east of the city for the purchase of the Toronto Eastern Ry. from the Canadian National Rys. and its completion at a total estimated cost of \$8,360,794, had been approved by bylaws voted on by the ratepayers of the towns of Whitby, Oshawa and Bowmanville, and the townships of Scarborough, Pickering, West Whitby and East Whitby, prior to Nov. 30. Darlington Tp. ratepayers passed a similar bylaw Dec. 18 by 186 to 24 votes. Toronto ratepayers will vote Jan. 1 on a bylaw to raise \$4,328,665, as its quota of the cost of entrance and terminals and York Tp. ratepayers will vote on Jan. 17 on a bylaw to raise \$381,587 for Toronto's share of the work.

Proposals for Buying Ontario Electric Railways.

Dominion Power and Transmission Co.—A press report of Dec. 22 states with respect to negotiations which have been in progress for some time between the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario and the Dominion Power and Transmission Co., that the price at which the company's common stock is proposed to be acquired is par. The common stock outstanding is reported to be \$7,714,500. There is also outstanding \$3,681,000 of preferred stock and \$8,000,000 of bonds. The company's electric railway properties are: Hamilton St. Ry.; Hamilton and Dundas Electric Ry.; Hamilton Radial Electric Ry.; Hamilton, Grimsby and Beamsville Electric Ry., and Brantford and Hamilton Ry.

Guelph Radial Ry.—In connection with the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario's offer to take over the Guelph Radial Ry., free of all encumbrance, as at July 1, 1920, for \$150,000, Sir Adam Beck, spoke at a meeting of Guelph ratepayers, Dec. 4. He stated that the idea is to take over the rail-

way and incorporate it with the proposed Hamilton-Galt-Elmira and Guelph line, the bylaws for which are to be voted on on Jan. 1. Guelph City Council, at a meeting Dec. 8, decided to have the ratepayers vote on a bylaw to raise \$150,000 for the purpose of putting the G.T.R. with the H.E.P.C.O.'s railways.

London St. Ry.—The report of the Hydro Electric Power Commission of engineers as to the value of the London St. Ry.'s, was considered by the London City Council, Dec. 6. The estimated value of the property was stated as \$1,356,000, and it was estimated that the city could not pay what the property was worth, and operate it as cheaply as the company is able to do. The council decided not to ask the ratepayers to vote on a purchase bylaw on Jan. 1. A press report states that the company is willing to sell for \$1,208,000.

Port Arthur Civic Ry.-Fort William Electric Ry.—We are advised that at the request of the Port Arthur and Fort William City Councils, the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario will make a valuation of these two electric railways. Some of the commission's engineers have visited the two cities and collected some of the information necessary, but, we are advised that further details will be required before a report can be completed.

Sarnia St. Ry.—The Sarnia City Council passed a resolution, Dec. 14, asking the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario to make a report upon the Sarnia St. Ry. with a view to its acquisition by the city, and we are advised that the commission will have the investigation made. We are further advised that the company had not been approached up to Dec. 20, and no statement can be made as to whether it would sell.

Proposal to Change the Rule of the Road in British Columbia.

According to a report from Vancouver, legislation will be introduced by the government at British Columbia Legislature's forthcoming session to change the rule of the road from the left to the right hand. The report adds that the Vancouver Board of Trade has passed a resolution asking the government in making the change to provide that the cost attendant upon the change be borne by the people of British Columbia by taxation. George Kidd, General Manager, British Columbia Electric Ry., attended the meeting and explained that the company would not oppose the change, provided that the cost of making it was provided for by the legislature. The estimated cost of altering street cars, switches and overhead equipment, is about \$500,000. It was arranged that a delegation from the board of trade should interview the government upon the matter.

A Victoria report states that W. G. Murrin, Assistant General Manager, and T. Goward, Victoria Local Manager, B. C. E.R., met the Prime Minister and other members of the cabinet, Dec. 15, and discussed the matter. The report says it was estimated that the cost of making the necessary changes would be \$700,000 (instead of \$500,000 as stated at Vancouver), and that it would take a year to do the work. It was arranged for the B.C. Public Works Department's Chief Engineer and the company's engineer to meet and discuss details in order that a report on the whole matter may be prepared.