

THE STAR, ST. JOHN N. B., SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1907.

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## PREMIER ANNOUNCES DEFINITE SCHEME FOR ST. JOHN VALLEY RAILWAY

Will introduce Bill to Guarantee First Mortgage Bonds for McKenzie and Mann to the Amount of \$15,000 Per Mile—Engineers Will Survey Route at Once.

FREDERICTON, March 22.—On the consideration of the bill in the house today authorizing the granting of aid to certain railways the Hon. Mr. Pugsley said that the bill had been before the house since the first day of the session. He had purposely brought it on early in order that the honorable members might have full opportunity of becoming acquainted with the provisions contained in it and have plenty of time for considering the subject. When they were first asked to grant aid to the International they undertook to guarantee the company's bonds to the extent of \$1,000 a mile for the first 50 miles.

Since that time the cost of railroad construction has increased to such an extent by reason of the rise in wages and cost of material that the cost of construction at present is not less than \$5,000 a mile.

Mr. Schreiber, an engineer of vast experience, has certified that the cost of the line will be \$27,339 a mile. This legislature has never refused to authorize less than \$10,000 a mile, and by reason of the increased cost of construction, \$5,000 is not an unreasonable sum to guarantee. Moreover, when the government agreed to assist the railroad it would be most unwise now not to further the construction of such a line, opening as it did a marvelous stretch of country over a distance of 110 miles. Still we felt we could not properly give further assistance unless the road was made in the most satisfactory and up to date methods.

We felt that the company's application to guarantee \$5,000 a mile was not unreasonable, but as the legislature had already agreed to a subsidy of \$25,000 a mile for the whole

distances and felt that the time had come to do away with further subsidies. Any further assistance would have to be by way of guaranteeing bonds and not by way of subsidy.

With respect to the other proposition that I mentioned that the railway between Woodstock and St. John I intend to move that a section be added to the bill that the province be allowed to guarantee first mortgage bonds on that road at four per cent, not exceeding \$15,000 a mile, as suggested by the financial critic of the opposition.

MacKenzie and Mann said they could not come to any definite conclusion until the route for the G. T. P. was finally settled.

As soon as this route was announced I again took the matter up and opened negotiations with them to get them to make this railway, they replied to me confidentially and I wrote them again asking for a reply which I could make public, and in reply to that they repeated formally what they had only suggested, that they would send their engineering staff over the ground and if satisfactory arrangements could be made with the government for financial assistance, they would undertake to make the road.

This is a definite proposition which MacKenzie and Mann made to the province and the question the province has to consider will be whether they will accept this proposal or not.

Personally I think it would be only wise to do so. They are amongst the most satisfactory firm of railway builders in Canada. It may be asked that if MacKenzie and Mann are such a wealthy and well known firm why should it be necessary to offer to guarantee their bonds?

The reason is that by doing so we

make their position stronger by the guarantee of government and this adds to their credit and so makes it easier for them to carry out their undertakings.

They can get money more readily and at lower interest if backed by our guarantee than on their own name only. I do not know what the cost of this railway will be, but I do not think it will be less than from \$22,000 to \$30,000 a mile.

Whether Messrs. MacKenzie and Mann will use this proposed line as part of their transcontinental system I can only conjecture, but I do know that the distance from Quebec to St. John over this route would be a saving of nearly 300 miles over the I. C. R. I would consider that it would be to the advantage of Messrs. MacKenzie and Mann to do so. However, we have now a definite proposition from them which we offer this province.

Mr. Clarke asked the attorney general if on proper assurances being given us to the bona fide of the Canada Atlantic Terminal Railway he would be prepared to advise the guaranteeing



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by the government of the bonds of that railway on the same terms as they were willing to guarantee Messrs. MacKenzie and Mann's bonds.

Hon. Mr. Pugsley—I can only tell the honorable gentleman in a matter of this sort we propose to pursue a very conservative policy and the security must be gilt edged.

If he comes forward asking us to guarantee the bonds of a firm equally experienced as MacKenzie and Mann we would be inclined to guarantee their bonds, but we would have no dealings with small firms.

Hon. Mr. Hill did not like the idea coupling these two entirely distinct railways in one bill. He thought it would be much better to formulate a new bill dealing with the proposed St. John River railway and leave the bill under consideration to stand as it was.

Hon. Mr. Pugsley said that the bill was entitled "A bill to grant aid to certain railways," and he saw no reason why they should be treated separately.

They will be dealt with in different sections and this was frequently done in making subsidies and other grants to railways. After further discussion progress was reported.

### COFFIN WOOD MINES.

There exists no object which the average Chinaman exhibits more regard for than the narrow box which is destined to contain all that is mortal of him. He is never happy until it is in his possession. It occupies a conspicuous position in his house, and the richer he is the more he expends on its acquisition and adornment.

The coffins most esteemed by the Celestials are manufactured from a peculiar resinous wood, possessing quite extraordinary preservative properties and found only in one small district in Tonquin, buried in the earth, no living specimens of the tree now being in existence.

The natives search for it quite as assiduously as elsewhere gold and precious stones are run after, and, indeed, the deposits, for such they are, are to all intents and purposes mines of wood, the origin of which has never been satisfactorily explained.

Local legends have it that in a far distant past, the members of these trees existed in the dense forests with which the whole region was covered and that as a result of some tremendous cataclysm they were uprooted and precipitated into the ravines.

Whether this account is true or not the buried trees are today sources of queer and considerable wealth to the lucky person who finds them. For a coffin made of this special wood a Chinaman does not confer \$250 or \$300 at all too high a price to pay.

## GOOD TRAIN SERVICE FOR SUBURBANITES

ROTHESAY, N. B., March 22.—The welcome news was told here yesterday that Monday, April 1st, would see the 11st accommodation train on the inter-colonial. This means a noon-day train service from St. John to Shediac, and before the day of suburban travel it was considered as simply bearing out its name "accommodation."

The railway year ends March 31st and the Minister of Railways did not hold out much hope to the Rothsay and other delegates who waited upon him at the time of the Liberal convention in regard to improving the train service that much, if anything, would be done before April 1st, and the suburbanites are glad that a change is coming.

Up to Wednesday night College Hill was adorned with a huge wind mill some eighty feet high. The gale, however, was too much for it and in spite of the strong stay, it bucked and fell. For some time since the introduction of water in the village the wind mill's influence has been gone.

The examination at Rothsay College for Boys for the Easter term ending are being held now and vacation days are very near.

Miss Isabel Earle returned to Hampton yesterday.

J. S. Armstrong was a passenger to Fredericton by last evening's train.

The taxation rate in Rothsay may be increased slightly this year, perhaps a cent or two on the hundred dollars. This is accounted for in part by a lessening of the total assessment. There are a large number of companies incorporated in Rothsay and among them are included the Battle Line of steamers. One or two of these will disappear from the list this year and some others are out of business. While there is some building going on there is not enough to offset such losses as these. Each of the Battle lines were assessed at \$5,000. It is also said that the death of Charles Taylor lessens the assessment for the same amount.

Hugh McCormick of "The Willows," but now of "Sussex," has taken a substantial interest in the new ferryboat company. "The Willows" will be open as usual in the summer time and easy communication between Rothsay and Red's Point will be a great gain for Mr. McCormick's hotel.

CARDIFF, March 21.—The Rev. Hugh Pritchard, of Langaff Anglice, will celebrate his 100th birthday today. He is a magistrate for the county.

## UNITED BAPTISTS QUARTERLY MEETING.

NEWCASTLE, Mar. 20.—The quarterly meeting of the United Baptist No. 10 District, which embraces the counties of Restigouche, Gloucester, Northumberland and Kent, will convene at Whitteville, Northumberland Co., on March 26 and 27. The following programme has been arranged, subject to change.

MARCH 26.  
Afternoon—Prayer meeting conducted by Rev. G. H. Beaman, of Harcourt.  
7:30 p. m.—Address of welcome by Rev. I. N. Thorne, of Whitteville, followed by sermon by Rev. C. P. Wilson, of Doaktown.  
8:30—Evangelistic service conducted by Rev. F. T. Snell, of Newcastle.

MARCH 27.  
10 a. m.—Prayer meeting and conference.  
3 p. m.—Short business session followed by an address, "Christian Socialism," by Henry Harvey Stuart, of Newcastle. If time permits a discussion on Socialism will follow.  
7 p. m.—Prayer meeting conducted by Rev. C. P. Wilson.  
7:30—Sermon by Rev. Dr. McIntyre, of St. John.  
8:30—Evangelistic service by Rev. Mr. Beaman.

### EIGHT HOUR LAW.

(Success.)  
A Chicago teacher gave a boy pupil a question in compound proportion for home work one evening, which problem happened to include the circumstances of "men working ten hours a day to complete a certain job."

The next morning the unsuspecting teacher in looking over his pack of exercises, found one pupil's problem unattempted and the following note attached to the page.

"Dear Sir, I refuse to let my son James do his sum you gave him last night, as it looks to me like a slur on the 8-hour system every man not more than 8 hours he is welcome to do but not more. Yrs truly, Samuel Blocksky."

### HORSE-EATING IN PARIS.

PARIS, March 21.—Forty thousand horses were eaten in Paris last year, representing about 11,000 tons. In 1893 scarcely 5,000 tons of horse meat were consumed.

Rev. Mr. Alton spoke to a large audience in the Germain street Baptist church last night on "Regeneration." At the close of the service quite a number expressed a desire to lead a Christian life. The services are growing in interest.

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