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VICTORIA, TUESDAY, SEPT. 26, 1883.

THE PREMIER SPEAKS.

Hon. Theodore Davie, Premier and Attorney General, has been over on the Mainland. He went into the Kootenay, thence to Cariboo, and, at the latter end of last week, was at Chilliwack, where, on the occasion of the agricultural exhibition, he was the guest of the society at a public banquet, where he responded to the toast of "British Columbia." One can readily understand why he should repeat, in regard to the Chilliwack country, that it was "the garden of the province," remarking that if its example were emulated, a stop would soon be put to the sending away of such enormous sums of money for the purchase of agricultural and horticultural products. He said—and, from what we learn, he in no way was guilty of exaggeration—that the province is not barren nor is it short of good land, there being in Cariboo alone thousands of acres lying ready for the plough. He observed that all that was wanted was a market for what the soil produces.

As we all of us know, there is no lack of markets, the difficulty being to connect the point of supply with that of demand. Mr. Davie, early in his speech, intimated that the advancement and prosperity of a country is largely due to the Government. While fully agreeing with this, sight must not be lost of the fact that the members in opposition to that Government are largely responsible in that direction, for an ignorant and non-progressive body that makes it its business to unduly criticize and obstruct Ministerial measures can do a great deal towards tying the hands of those who, for the time, are charged with the conduct of affairs. As has been said, in this province particularly, one of the needs of the country is an extended and well railway system, an essential feeder to which, as a matter of course, are proper highways to connect the interior farms with those railways.

The different Governments of the province, as well as private enterprise, have done considerable work in this direction, and annually, as settlers come in, these are being improved and extended. It is true, however, as some have contended, that while these highways have been made alongside some people's farms, the wants of others have not been provided for, political reasons having had something to do with some cases of neglect in this particular. These alleged instances of political favoritism from time to time have formed the subject of discussions in the Legislature, the tongue of

scandal being made to wag pretty glibly with respect to them. As to railways, however, the Premier said, when at Chilliwack, that irrespective of any party whatever in the Legislature, there has been a unanimous desire on the part of all sides in every way of political opinion to assist railways. It will, no doubt, be admitted that this unanimity has prevented the line being drawn even when common sense and the antecedents of their promoters dictated such a course.

The Premier enumerated some of the enterprises that the Government were aiding, or were about to aid, resuming that the object of the Government was to aid in the operating of all railway enterprises which are likely to be of a profitable character, and which can be done without impairing the finances or the credit of the country. There was a certain amount of vagueness in Mr. Davie's remarks, but for this he promised to make up on some future occasion. But, having gone as far as he did it was only reasonable to have expected that he might have gone a little further, the address which had been presented to him during the day and which he made the text of his after dinner speech, having in its reference to railways been sufficiently comprehensive. For instance, he referred to certain enterprises of the C. P. R., and others with whose promoters that company was in thorough accord, while not a word did he say as to the important enterprise whose charter had been extended for another year and from which the province has been led to expect so much. Railways the province must have; but the lessons of the past as to the parties with whom the country was dealing and the feasibility of the prospects they are promoting must not be forgotten. We heartily endorse a vigorous and wise railway policy as the great hope of British Columbia.

To revert to the subject of agriculture with which the First Minister dealt at some length it is calculated to astonish one's weak nerves to have again placed in cold print the fact that some \$2,500,000 is annually going out of this country for what ought to be produced in it. Agriculture certainly needs encouragement, but are we going to work in the way best calculated to stimulate it? The Premier was congratulated by the people of Chilliwack on the increased attention that the Government was beginning to give to agriculture. This remark "beginning to give" is somewhat of a reflection upon preceding Governments and upon that of which Mr. Davie himself was a member.

As we pointed out some months ago, even after the administration had taken steps to prevent the alienation of valuable public lands by mere speculators the notices in the Provincial Gazette attested the immense tracts of the best and most available property of which the administration was daily dispossessing itself in the interests of land grabbers who perhaps more regularly, but none the less disgracefully than did the Oklahoma boomers, swooped down upon and were allowed to take possession of the lands on which they had set their eyes. There are most certainly thousands of acres of land lying ready for the plough, but they are far, far away, and what is near at hand is

the bulk of it held for speculation. Mr. Davie intimated Cariboo as a part of the province in which land is plentiful, but that is a long way off. Moreover, it was said that already there are many large farms there and the farmers produce very large crops, and the difficulty is that while in some years they have a market more than sufficient for the whole of the wheat they raise, in other years their products simply lie in the barn, and they can't get rid of them. It is manifest, therefore, that the policy in the meantime must be roads and railways, for without them it is impossible to develop either our mineral or agricultural resources.

C. P. R. EXTENSION.

Superintendent Whyte, of the Canadian Pacific Railway, recently announced the completion of the "Soo" road, to receive traffic for transportations over this road. Though the "Soo" extension is not primarily a local road, it will have some local value in opening up a new district in south-eastern Assiniboia, which as yet is practically without population. The road has been built to give the Canadian Pacific short and direct route between central western states points and the Pacific coast. The Canadian road had handled considerable traffic to and from Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and other points south, and the Pacific coast. This traffic came via the Great Northern to Winnipeg, and thence westward to the coast via the Canadian Pacific. With the extension of the Great Northern to the coast, it became necessary for the Canadian Pacific to secure some other means of reaching cities south of Winnipeg, in order to hold the coast traffic. This, in the opinion of the *Winnipeg Commercial*, has been done by the extension of the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie railway northwestward from Minneapolis, across the states of Minnesota and North Dakota to the Canadian boundary, and thence continuing in a northwesterly direction through southern Assiniboia a junction with the main line of the Canadian Pacific. The road enters Canadian territory at a point which has been named Sterling, a few miles south of the new coal mining town of Estevan, and connects with Canadian Pacific Railway main line at Pasqua, west of Regina. It will give the Canadian Pacific a much shorter route between the Pacific coast and Minneapolis, St. Paul, etc., than the route formerly used via Winnipeg. As the "Soo" line extends eastward from St. Paul and Minneapolis to Sault Ste. Marie, connecting there with the Algoma branch of the Canadian Pacific, it practically means that the Canadian Pacific is given an alternate route between the east and the west, south of Lake Superior, in addition to the route north of this lake.

COMMERCIAL BANK.

The contest over the appointment of a permanent liquidator of the Commercial Bank of Manitoba has been decided by Judge Killam. Mr. Ferguson, formerly of the Merchant's Bank, and who has acted as provisional liquidator, received the appointment of permanent, chief liquidator,