

HUDSON'S BAY RAILWAY

Among the many millions of dollars voted by Parliament for Railway subsidies and bonuses towards the close of the session just ended, appear the very modest sum of \$100,000 for preliminary surveys of a railroad from some point in Saskatchewan or Manitoba to Fort Churchill. The Minister of Railways and Canals announced when this item of the estimates was under discussion, that the surveys would be commenced at once, and that it was the intention of the Government to have the railway built without delay. This announcement on the part of the Government is very satisfactory to the Western farmer as far as it goes, but their failure to give any indication as to whether the road would be built and operated under direct control of the Government or by giving a subsidy to one of the Railway Companies is inclined to create a feeling of uneasiness in the minds of the people as to the ultimate disposal to be made of this outlet for the product of the prairie farms.

The opposition to the building of this road that formerly existed in Eastern Canada is fast disappearing, but there yet remains a very strong sentiment among the people there against the Government building and operating it; and one could not be long around the corridors of the House of Commons during the last session of the House without discovering that among the Eastern members there is a strong sentiment hostile to building and operating the road as a Government enterprise. Their experience with the Inter-Colonial is invariably and persistently held up as a bogey.

A section of the public press has some time ago announced that the Government had entered into an arrangement with the promoters of the Canadian Northern Railway granting them a large cash subsidy for building the road—this statement, however, has since been officially denied. Towards the close of the session the Toronto Globe and the Star, both of which is reputed to have the ear of the present administration, each had an editorial at the same time, which had the ear marks of being inspired, dealing with the alternative methods proposed to build and operate the Railway, and openly advocated the Government building and controlling the road and its terminal as being in the best interest of the people of Canada.

The "Guide" is in a position to know that when the question was under consideration the Western members united in representing to the Government that it would be a suicidal policy to subsidize a Company to build the road, and that it would be nothing short of criminal negligence to allow the terminal elevators there to fall into the hands of private concerns as was allowed to occur at Fort William and Port Arthur.

There is grave danger that our farmers in concentrating their efforts on the more immediate need of freedom from the exactions of the Elevator monopoly may lose sight of the importance of crystallizing Canadian public sentiment in favor of maintaining the Hudson Bay route from corporation control. Situated as we are, in the centre of a Continent depending on our livelihood on the product of the soil which has to run the gauntlet of competition with the products of other Countries on the world's market, with all the avenues of transportation which is available, run for gain and on the principle of what the "traffic will stand," the importance of keeping this proposed route for exporting our product free from the domination of corporation greed and run on the principle of what it "cost" to carry the traffic, cannot be over-estimated.

We candidly believe that every Federal member from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, both Conservative and Liberal, holds the same view as we do to the neces-

sity of the immediate construction of the railroad to Hudson Bay, and the principle on which it should be operated, and that they have used their influence with a degree of success at the last session of Parliament in persuading the Government and the Eastern members in taking the same view. While we do not regard it as at all probable that any candidate seeking Parliamentary honors in any of the three prairie Provinces at the approaching election will fail to support our views, we think it would be wise on the part of the electorate of the West, in order to give the question due prominence, and help to crystallize Canadian public sentiment, to take the necessary steps to have every candidate give a public pledge to support the principle of the Dominion Government constructing the road as a Government enterprise and operate it in the public interest free from all appearance of corporation control.

Note—Since the above was in press, survey parties have been sent out with the intention of reporting to the Government in time for Parliament to deal with the report at its next sitting.

TAKING THE FARMER'S VIEW

It is refreshing to those who have submitted to being called cranks and visionaries for advancing such views, to have a newspaper of such outstanding influence as the "Toronto Globe" write editorially such as the following articles clipped from recent issues.

We have known not a few men who freely accept the dictum of the "Globe" on national and political questions, shake their heads at the "Socialistic tendency of the Grain Growers' Association," (as they term it), when they promulgate such doctrines as "When the people build the railroads they should own them." To all such we commend the following quotation from 12th, August issue.

"Our public men are now experienced and have now passed the age of privately owned railways built at public expense. It may be wise still to have the chief highways of the country in private hands, but there can be no justification for having such highways built at the expense of the public. If the people build the road they should own it and enjoy not only such direct benefits as come from its operation, but the indirect benefit of commercial freedom through the fair treatment of all shippers."

Another:—"It is safe to conclude that railways, like all other industries and enterprises will continue to need subsidies as long as the people are willing to hand them out."

ON TO HUDSON'S BAY

By pushing surveys for a railway to Hudson's Bay the Dominion Government is showing commendable energy in this special line of northern development. The surveys will be in themselves a considerable investment of public money, but it will be an investment certain in time to yield abundant returns. We have been accustomed to celebrate the turning of the first sod in the construction of a railway and to regard that as the beginning of building operations, but the preliminary surveys are really parts of the work of construction. The Dominion Government is actually entering upon the building of the line, and this is the best assurance that the results of the public expenditure will not be bestowed upon any private corporation. In undertaking these surveys the Dominion Government is making a start in the right way, for it is necessary that the trade certain to develop from and by way of this inland sea must not be hampered by private control of the means of transportation. The surveys when completed will be a valuable asset to the Government not only as a necessary part of the work of