

National Transcontinental Railway Construction.

The Dominion Parliament has passed an act amending sec. 9, chap. 71, of the statutes of 1903, as amended by sec. 1, chap. 39, of the statutes of 1912, constituting the National Transcontinental Railway Commission, providing that the Minister of Railways shall be eligible to be appointed to discharge the duties of such commissioner, and that after the completion of the line and before its being leased to the G.T. Pacific Ry., the Minister shall have power to operate the line in whole or in part, as a Government railway under the provisions of chap. 36, of the Revised Statutes of 1906.

The House of Commons, on June 5, voted \$6,666,666.66 on account of construction of the line, and on June 8, a further sum of \$1,000,000 was voted on construction account. In the course of the discussion on these votes, the acting Minister of Railways stated that the "sags" on the line, about which complaint had been made, were to be found between 200 miles east and 100 miles west of Cochrane, Ont.; there are 32 "sags" in all, and \$200,000, according to the estimate of the Chief Engineer, will be sufficient to remove them all. The two east of Cochrane could yet be removed by the contractors, and those west could be removed either by contract or by the G.T. Pacific Ry. after the line is taken over for operation. The "sags," or momentum gradients, were left in the line in order to accelerate its completion, with the intention of removing them at a later date. It was subsequently announced that the Government intended to remove them, so that the line will have the original gradient all through.

A vote of \$1,000,000 was made towards the construction of a branch line into Montreal. It is the intention of the Government, the Minister of Railways stated, to have surveys made at once, and some construction may be undertaken. The Premier added that the line will be about 300 miles long, and will have to be built through a pretty rough country. A subsidy had been voted for a line from Montreal to the N. T. R., but it had not been possible for the private owners to carry out the plan. As a matter of fact two lines have been projected to give this connection, one the Joliette and Lake Manuan Colonization Ry., and the other the North Ry., which, projected to a point on Hudson Bay, would cross the N.T.R. at Belle River.

It is expected that an early start will be made upon the building of a railway station and a covered platform on the Champlain market site, Quebec. The tenders for this work are under consideration by the Government.

A further sum of \$1,000,000 has been voted by the Dominion Parliament on account of the construction of the Quebec Bridge. (June, pg. 274.)

Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Construction.

J. G. LeGrand, Bridge Engineer, Grand Trunk Pacific Ry. and President, Western Canada Railway Club, in speaking at a meeting of the club in Winnipeg recently, in reference to the construction of the G.T. P.R., said the first sod was turned on Aug. 29, 1906, near Pine Creek, about 12 miles north east of Carberry, Man., by James Howard, foreman of the Macdonald MacMillan Co. The first track was laid in Oct., 1906, west of Portage la Prairie. The first regular train left Winnipeg for Ed-

monton, Sept. 21, 1908. Since Oct., 1906, 1,747.4 miles of main line have practically been built; also 1,283 miles of branch lines. Adding 600 miles for sidings, terminals, tracks for ballast pits, etc., it means that about 3,600 miles have been built in about 2,300 working days, which is an average of over 1½ miles a day. If to this is added the part of the line built by the National Transcontinental Ry. Commission between Moncton and Winnipeg it means that pretty nearly three miles a day have been built during the past seven years.

The Dominion Parliament has guaranteed a further issue of bonds for \$16,000,000, at 4%, redeemable in 1962, in order that the line may be completed. They are secured by a new trust deed in which all the property of the company is mortgaged, subject to the mortgages already created, and such priority of other charges as may hereafter be created, as shall be approved by the Governor in council. It is also provided that no part of the funds obtained from the sale of the bonds shall be used other than for expenditure approved by the Government for three-fourths of the cost of the Mountain Division, inclusive of interest on bonds issued for the completion of that section, and of interest upon advances made under the Loan Act of 1913, and for interest upon the present securities until the expiration of three years after the final completion of the line from Winnipeg to Prince Rupert. The company and the G.T.R. shall join in a release of all rights to any further guarantee, payment or aid of any description in respect of the building of the line. The date final for the completion of the line is extended to Dec. 31, 1915.

M. Donaldson, Vice President and General Manager, after a trip of inspection over the line as far as Prince George, B.C., recently is reported to have stated that there was a gap of 150 miles on which there was a good deal of work to be done before regular trains could be operated over it. The ballasting and station building work is reported completed as far west as Prince George, and the steel bridge across the Fraser River there is practically completed. This replaces the wooden trestle built to enable the line to be laid into the town. Ten steam shovels with large gangs of men are ballasting the line west of Prince George to the point where the gangs working east are engaged in similar operations. It is expected that all the work will be completed by Dec. 31.

It is expected that the company's floating dock at Prince Rupert will be completed by Dec. 31. The ship repairing plant, in connection with the dock, is rapidly approaching completion.

Grand Trunk Pacific Branch Lines.—We are officially advised that the company's engineers have no information as to the intention to construct a new coal handling plant at the mouth of Mission River, Fort William, Ont., as stated in recent press reports.

Grading was reported as being practically completed June 16, on the branch line from Talmage into Weyburn, Sask. Tracklaying was expected to be done by June 30. The terminal site in Weyburn has been laid out, but no buildings have been erected.

It is expected that the line from Regina to Moose Jaw, Sask., will shortly be opened for traffic. From Moose Jaw, the line now extends to Mawer, to which point a train service is in operation. Track has been laid for some distance on the 10 miles of grading completed northwesterly of Mawer. The present end of construction on this line is at the South Saskatchewan River, but it is expected that at a later period this branch will be extended to the

main line, and when this work is completed it will enable trains to be run through from Northgate, on the International boundary, via Regina to two points on the main line—one east and one west.

A daily passenger service was put in operation on the line into Calgary, Alta., June 7, replacing the weekly service heretofore given; and a daily freight service was started June 8. The question of building a track for the transfer of freight with the C.P.R. is under consideration. (June, pg. 274.)

British-Canadian Financial House in Difficulty.

The banking house of Chaplin, Milne and Grenfell, Ltd., London, Eng., suspended payment recently, and its affairs were taken over for liquidation by a committee of bankers, including, it is stated, the Bank of England, the Bank of Montreal, and R. Fleming, who is largely interested in the Lake Superior Corporation. The suspended bank was heavily interested in G.T.R. stocks, and other Canadian securities, particularly in Western Canada lands. Following this suspension, on June 8, the Canadian Agency, Ltd., of which A. M. Grenfell was chairman, also went into liquidation, Sir William Pender being given charge by the courts. It is stated that while the liabilities of the bank are very heavy, they will be met in full as the securities held are valuable, but not readily realizable, and that the suspension of the bank is due almost entirely to its advances to the Canadian Agency. This institution, according to statements made, was endeavoring to secure such an interest in the G.T.R. as would ensure the establishment of a directorate in Canada "not hostile to the London Board"; also the accumulation of Lake Superior Corporation stock "in order to reform its affairs." The L.S.C. owns the Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Ry., the Algoma Eastern Ry., the Algoma Central Terminals Co., electric railways at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario and Michigan, and various industrial companies. The Agency was also dealing in Canadian Northern Ry. securities. Various estimates have been made as to the liabilities to the public, but nothing can be known definitely until the official liquidator has made his investigation. It is expected, however, that the net liability, outside the few shareholders of the Agency, will be smaller than at first estimated.

Block Signalling on the Intercolonial Ry.—On a vote of \$100,000 for the installation of block signalling on the Intercolonial Ry. in the House of Commons, recently, the acting Minister of Railways stated that the system had been established from St. John to Hampton, N.B., 20 miles; Moncton to Painsec Jct., N.B., 7 miles; Windsor Jct. to Halifax, N.S., 1 miles, and Truro to Oxford Jct., N.S., 46.5 miles. In connection with additional installations, he stated that the heaviest part of the work will be finished next year, but he did not know that all the road will necessarily be under the block system.

American General Baggage Agents' Association.—At the annual convention at Detroit, Mich., June 17 to 19, G. Alley, General Baggage Agent, Union Pacific Rd., was elected President, and J. P. Dugan, Baltimore and Ohio Rd., Vice President, for the current year, while J. E. Quick, General Baggage Agent, G.T.R., and G. T. Pacific Ry., was elected Secretary-Treasurer, for the 30th consecutive year. It was decided to hold the 1915 convention at Los Angeles, Cal.