

of rates was also offered by the company. The only thing asked in return is a reduction in taxation from two per cent. to one per cent. on gross earnings in Manitoba. The favorable feature of the Canadian Pacific Railway offer is, that we have a certainty without incurring obligations. On the other hand in connection with the Canadian Northern and Northern Pacific contracts, we are asked to assume an enormous obligation, far beyond the resources of the province, for an uncertainty. The acceptance of the Canadian Pacific offer would not cripple the province in any way and presumably would leave us free to help ourselves in the future, as occasion might arise or circumstances demand. The final closing of the contract with the Canadian Northern will leave the province in such a state of financial exhaustion that we will be entirely prevented for many years to come from considering any proposal involving financial considerations.

This reference to the Canadian Pacific Company's offer is made for the purpose of comparison. Favorable as that offer may appear in a comparative sense, The Commercial could not recommend its acceptance, for the very important reason that it implies the final ratification of the contract with the Northern Pacific, the absorption of the lines of that company in Manitoba by the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the extinguishment of the interests of the great corporation in this province—a consummation certainly not to be desired.

RAILWAY CONTRACT DISCUSSED.

A special meeting of the Winnipeg board of trade was held on Tuesday evening last to discuss the railway contract. Premier Roblin kindly consented to be present, to answer any questions which might be put to him by the members. Mr. Roblin certainly created a favorable impression, in his remarks at the opening, by the liberal and confidential way in which he expressed himself. He said he was anxious to have the matter thoroughly discussed and was wide open to receive every suggestion which would tend to improve the contract or further safeguard the interests of the province. If he found that the legal disabilities which had been brought up were valid, and would prevent the province from controlling the rates, the contract would certainly fail. He gave a distinct pledge on this point that in such a case the contract would not be finally ratified. Mr. Roblin mentioned other offers which had been made to the government by New York parties, and by the Canadian Northern and the Canadian Pacific Railway, but they would consider nothing which did not give them complete control of rates. During the discussion of the financial liability of the province, Mr. Roblin declared that the additional \$2,000 per mile which the Canadian Northern is to be permitted to place upon the portion of its system in Manitoba, is not to be a charge against the province. Mr. Roblin further stated that the company would not be relieved of any deficiency in operating the road until the rate on wheat had been reduced below 10 cents per 100 pounds from Winnipeg and a reduction of 15 per cent. had been made on other existing tariffs. After these reductions had been exceeded, the province would have to make good any deficit in operating the road. These were the two main points brought out at the

meeting, which are not shown by the contract as published.

Of course it must not be understood from this that the province can escape any portion of the liability assumed by the contract. It is simply understood that any deficit appearing previous to the reductions mentioned in freights, is to become a lien upon the road. The province, however, is responsible to the bondholders in the event of the inability of the road to pay, for everything assumed by the contract, notwithstanding that it may be understood that deficits under certain circumstances are to be charged against the road. After the freight reductions are made as stated, the province must pay any deficits, without recourse to any charge back against the railway company.

Mr. Nanton touched the pith of the subject when he stated that the board could not come to an intelligent opinion upon the question until they had absolutely clear and reliable figures before them that the road would be able to meet the obligations which would otherwise fall upon the province. Mr. Roblin claimed to have indisputable figures which would prove beyond a doubt that the enterprise would prove a financial success, but he did not wish then to go into this aspect of the case.

A committee consisting of Messrs. Georgeson, Elliott, Ashdown, Bole, Drewry, G. F. Galt, Alex. Macdonald and Riley was appointed to go into the matter more thoroughly with the government, and report as early as possible to the board.

THE LIQUOR ACT.

The court of King's Bench gave judgment, on Saturday last on the recent enactment of the Manitoba legislature with respect to the liquor traffic. Chief Justice Killam and Justice Bain each gave written pronouncements, and the third judge, Justice Richards concurred with Justice Bain. The latter judgment has not been published, but is said to be very brief and sweeping in deciding against the legality of the Act.

The judgment of the chief justice is a long and exhaustive document, filling more than seven columns in the daily press, but its effective conclusion is, that the Act exceeds the power of the province, and is therefore ultra vires. A careful reading of the judgment indicates that the province has wide powers of restriction, but that the question is so involved that it is difficult to legislate along the line of prohibition without invading the field of Dominion rights. The chief justice practically declines to advise the government how far it can safely go and in this respect leaves the matter as much a matter of speculation and doubt as ever. It was the contention of counsel for the Act that it came under "property and civil rights" and "matters of a local nature in the province," both assigned to the provincial legislatures in the British North America Act. The decision of the court seems to be clear that the suppression of the liquor traffic for the purpose of promoting temperance does not come under "property and civil rights" and in that regard narrows down the discussion. Under "matters of a local nature," Chief Justice Killam seems to be of the opinion that the legislature could enact a very drastic measure, so long as it did not interfere with inter-provincial transactions or national trade.

It is not safe to prophesy as to the next step, but it may be safely assumed

that the License Act will be the law of the province for at least another year. Friends of the Liquor Act will demand an appeal to the Privy Council to secure a final decision from the highest court in the realm, and if that course is taken, the Act will probably be allowed to remain on the statute book, but will be amended to postpone the date of its coming into operation.

RED RIVER NAVIGATION

Next summer may witness a revival of traffic on the Red river. It is reported that a Grand Forks lumber concern has sold 12,000,000 feet of lumber in Winnipeg, to be delivered during the coming season. It is proposed that this lumber shall be brought down the Red river from Grand Forks, steamers and barges being used for the purpose. Application has been made to the customs department and it has been learned that there is nothing in the customs regulations or navigation laws to prevent boats from running down the Red river from the United States into Manitoba. Grand Forks, where the saw mills are located, at which the lumber will be manufactured, is situated on the banks of the Red river, in North Dakota. The river is navigable from Winnipeg to Grand Forks and even beyond to Fargo, though in low water only light draft boats could be used.

This movement to use the Red river may be the beginning again of an important river traffic. In the old days the traffic of the Red River colony was carried on largely by means of the Red river. Even for some time after the colony became the province of Manitoba, the Red was the great highway of traffic for the country. Goods were brought overland from St. Paul, Minnesota, the head of navigation on the Mississippi river, to the head of navigation on the Red river, and thence transported down the latter river to point of destination. Later the encroachment of railways northward and westward, rendered the overland haul by ordinary vehicle from St. Paul unnecessary. When the railway reached Moorhead, Minnesota, on the Red river, access to all points along the river during the season of navigation, became quite easy. Steamers connected with the railway, and quite an important traffic was carried on between Winnipeg and Moorhead, via the river route. The construction of railways further northward and ultimately to Winnipeg destroyed the river trade so far as Manitoba is concerned. About the beginning of the eighties the river traffic began to disappear, before the advent of the iron horse. For years the Red river has not been used for general traffic purposes in Manitoba, though in Minnesota and Dakota some river traffic has continued.

The great drawback to the use of the Red river in Manitoba, has been the obstruction north of Winnipeg known as St. Andrew's rapids. With the completion of the improvements now going on to overcome this obstruction, we may look for quite an important traffic via the river, between Winnipeg and points north on Lake Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan river. It is quite possible that river traffic with points south will be stimulated by the improvements being made north of the city, so that within a few years we may find the Red river again assuming something of its old time importance as an artery of trade and traffic.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It is reported that an assay office will be established at Vancouver for the convenience of Yukon miners, who now have to take their gold to Seattle.

Annual Meeting of Cheese and Butter Makers Union.

The first annual meeting of this new organization was held on Thursday and Friday last in Maw's hall, Winnipeg. President S. M. Barre presided over the deliberations and the proceedings proved to be most interesting throughout. The president's address was in part as follows:

"England buys every year 600 million dollars worth of farm products. As Canadians we ought to feel proud of belonging to a nation forming part of an empire with such an immense purchasing power. It goes to show that we have before us an unlimited market for butter, cheese, fruit, cattle, meat, eggs and poultry, provided we can fill the requirements as to quality. Our Manitoba dairy production will no doubt grow faster the next five than it did during the last fifteen years, therefore our farmers should watch with utmost care all the details of their dairy work. It is now fully understood, that unfortunately our dairy industry has of late years not improved as much as it should, that our cheese has gone back in quality, therefore it becomes the duty of every farmer, of every dairy man to closely look into the reasons why. The undesirable condition of our dairy industry has led a number of dairy men to question the suitability of our present dairy organization, and we were requested to express our views with regard to it, to point out its defects, to explain the workings of such similar organizations in other provinces, and compare their results with our own so as to ascertain where we might be found wanting.

The most advanced dairymen have held for years, and still hold the opinion, that practical instruction in factories and on farms is the most powerful factor in dairy education. With this object in view the most important dairy provinces of Canada, Ontario and Quebec, have organized thorough systems of such practical dairy education. To this is, no doubt, due their success in dairying. This is exactly what Manitoba has so far in a great measure recently overlooked and may also account for our short-comings. Now that we have laid down the true principles of dairy education, we should look into what means are employed for carrying them out in other provinces.

In Quebec, Ontario and other provinces the ruling and executive powers are the dairymen's associations. There are no dairy departments, no dairy superintendents in those provinces. The dairymen's association discuss the nature of the work to be undertaken, select the men required to execute the same, and the expense is met by provincial and in some cases by federal grants of money.

In Ontario there are two dairymen's associations. They had three some time ago. They have three dairy schools and a dozen or more instructors visiting butter and cheese factories. All except the dairy schools are controlled by the dairymen's association. They are now organizing a number of illustration stations or model factories. Some of the dairy schools and experimental work have been controlled by the Dominion dairy commissioner, Ottawa. Such is the present dairy organization in Ontario. It may be liable to improvement but nobody can deny that an immense dairy progress has resulted from it.

In Quebec we find a dairymen's association and the largest and best attended dairy schools in Canada. The attendance has reached 165 students in a year. They also possess what is supposed to be the best plan of factory inspection in Canada. The same plan has also been adopted in some parts of Ontario. It consists of syndicating together a number of factories, about twenty in number, and placing each syndicate in charge of a competent instructor. Every instructor is required to pass an examination before he is allowed to act. Over thirty instructors are employed in this way and such work has brought about a wonderful change in the quality of butter and cheese in that province.

In Manitoba, the organization differs very materially from that which exists in other provinces. We have here two dairy associations, a dairy school, a dairy department, a dairy superintendent, and a number of government helped factories. The old dairymen's association has deprived itself of