

### The Construction of the Line.

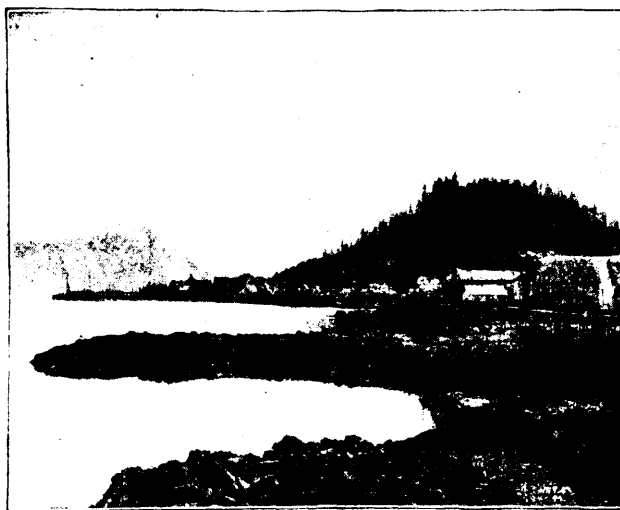
Directly the contract with the Government was signed, Messrs. Mackenzie & Mann made their construction arrangements with characteristic promptness. Mr. Mann at once left for the Pacific coast, establishing his headquarters at Vancouver, & was followed a day or two later by T. H. White, C.E., of St. Thomas, Ont., well known in connection with C.P.R. construction work, particularly that of the Pasqua branch in Assiniboia, J. H. Kennedy, C.E., and E. E. Weldon accompanying him as assistants.

One of Mr. Mann's first moves was to charter R. Dunsmuir & Sons' steamer Joan to transport men & supplies from Vancouver to Wrangel, & to secure a Canadian island north of the entrance of the Portland Canal for a point of transhipment.

Mr. Mann stated to press representatives that the first thing to be done was the construction of a sleigh road through to Teslin Lake. The first party to go north consisted of some 200 or 300 men & 50 or more teams to establish camps at regular intervals of 25 miles. It is the intention to make this road a permanent winter route, & at these camps accommodation will be furnished for travellers and horses similar to that provided at any ordinary stage route hotel. Arrangements were at once made for an exploratory survey of the country, to locate the line & get timber.

According to Mr. Mann, by the time navigation on the Stikine River opens, which will probably be before May 1, a portion of the line will be graded & ready for the rails, & these & the rolling stock, which have been ordered in the East, will be taken up. The force of men will be increased as soon as a larger number can be worked to advantage, & by the time construction work is well started at least 4,000 men will be employed. "As you are aware," said Mr. Mann, "we have to complete the line according to the terms of our contract with the Government by September 1, & shall thus have to do some speedy work. In fact, it will probably be the quickest job in railway construction ever carried out on this continent. We will pay our men good wages and will employ as many local men as possible, but owing to the short

time allowed for the work & the number of hands required we shall have to get men from outside places as well. Taking May 1 as the date of the opening of navigation, we will have 120 days in which to lay between 140 & 150 miles of railway. According to the contract we have to furnish transportation from the mouth of the Stikine River to Dawson City, & shall thus run steamers on both the Stikine and Teslin Lake and Hootalinqua River. These are now being built in the East and will be brought out in sections and put together here. Of course, a large amount of supplies will be needed, & these will be principally bought in Vancouver & Victoria,



WRANGEL AS IT WAS.

in both of which places we shall open offices."

Mackenzie & Mann have purchased from the Great Falls & Canada Ry. 80 miles of narrow-gauge rails, 4 locomotives and a number of cars, to be used in the construction & operation of the new road.

The men constructing the sleigh road to Teslin Lake are under the superintendence of Neil Keith, a well-known western contractor. As soon as the railway line is located 1,000 more men will be sent in to grade, & it is expected 4,000 men will be employed altogether. The contractors expect to put through some 250,000 or 300,000 tons of supplies this year.

"I believe," said Mr. Mackenzie recently, referring to hostile United States legislation, "that everything will be arranged amicably. In any event, Canadians have a right to navigate the Stikine River, & steamboats can ply on it for 5 months of the year. We have three outfits already and the line is being located. Until this work is completed there is no necessity for rushing men north. We begin track-laying operation in April. At least 4,000 men will be employed. It is probable that the Government will eventually extend the projected Teslin Lake road southward to a point on the Canadian seaboard, for instance, to a point on the Alice Arm, or on the Portland Canal."

### Act to Confirm the Contract.

Within a few days after the opening of Parliament last month the Minister of Railways introduced a bill to confirm the contract & to incorporate W. Mackenzie, D. D. Mann & Roderrick J. Mackenzie, & such others as may become shareholders, as The Canadian Yukon Railway Co., with head office in Toronto, or such other place in Canada as the directors may select & with a capital stock of \$10,000,000, in \$100 shares, subject to increase under certain circumstances. When not inconsistent with the provisions of the bill, the Railway Act and amendments to apply to the Co's. railways, but section 57 of that Act is not to apply to Mackenzie, Mann & Mackenzie, or to their executors or administrators. The directors are authorized to create preference stock. Section 89 of the Railway Act, which prohibits companies dealing in the shares & securities of other companies, is not to apply to this Co. Powers are given as to owning & operating steamers, docks, elevators, or to acquire & operate mines, make & supply electric light, heat & power, & construct & operate telegraph & telephone lines. Bonds, etc., not exceeding \$25,000 a mile may be issued & additional issues may be made, secured by mortgage on lands.

The bill gave rise to a long debate, in which the contract was vigorously denounced by all the Conservative speakers with one exception, and an amendment protesting against it was moved. At the time of writing (Mar. 5) the debate is still in progress.

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