

THE PURCHASE OF THE CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY

In the lengthy list of first-rate achievements which stand to the credit of the Borden Administration, not the least notable is the measure by which the Canadian people acquire control of the Canadian Northern Railway System. This legislation, introduced during the last session of the late Parliament, was designed to meet a very serious transportation problem confronting the Dominion. With the origin and character of that problem, or with the men and measures rightly held responsible for it, this article is not intended to deal; that question may safely be left to a happier time when the national mind does not need to be concentrated upon the supreme issue of the war. For present purposes it will be necessary only to say that during the past year it became manifest that the financial position of the Canadian Northern Railway Company was such as to demand imperatively further assistance from the Government if it was to continue to serve the public as a solvent, going concern. In meeting the situation thus confronting it, the Government had to choose one of three alternatives:

- (1) Permit the road to go into a receivership;
- (2) Grant further financial aid;
- (3) Acquire the road and operate it for the public.

A receivership was absolutely out of question. It was out of question because it would have aimed a blow at the national credit