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Fredericton, N. B.—An insistent demand has been made that a thorough investigation of the possibilities of harnessing the tides at the head of the Bay of Fundy, as a power development proposition, be made. It is believed that with the help of the railways the project could be carried out successfully, and some investigation work has been undertaken.

Fredericton, N. B.—The transfer of the lands held by the Dominion Government to the Nova Scotia Construction Co., contractors for the Gagetown-Westfield section, the Government had retained \$50,000 pending a settlement by the Construction Co., with its sub-contractors and the sub-contractors of such sub-contractors. There were no matters of dispute between the Railway Company and the contractors or sub-contractors but in order to protect the province against any claims which might arise, it was thought best to retain the amount mentioned and it would be paid over to the Construction Company from time to time as settlements were made with sub-contractors.

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YORK STREET

BILL TO PROVIDE POWER DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERED

Progressive Measure Encountered No Opposition in the House

Yesterday—A Plain Statement on Valley Railway Matters

by the Premier—The Federal Government Urged to Build

Missing Link in the County of York.

Assembly Chamber.

April 19, 1920.

The House met at 3 o'clock. HON. MR. ROBINSON asked leave to withdraw the motion for the suspension of rule 77 of which he had given notice of on Friday last.

The House went into Committee, with Mr. Sweeney in the Chair, and took up consideration of a Bill respecting the St. John and Quebec Railway and another to grant further aid to the said railway.

The Valley Railway.

HON. MR. FOSTER said that when the bills were before the committee he had promised to make a statement in which he would furnish some information in regard to the present status of the road. He said that the railway had been practically completed between Centreville and Westfield although there was some work in connection with the plates still to be performed. Some rights of way claims were yet to be settled but no difficult questions as regards titles were involved. The title of all lands taken for the right of way was posted in His Majesty's name so there would be no difficulty in that connection in case the Dominion Government agreed to take over the road.

A settlement had been made with the Nova Scotia Construction Co., contractors for the Gagetown-Westfield section. The Government had retained \$50,000 pending a settlement by the Construction Co., with its sub-contractors and the sub-contractors of such sub-contractors. There were no matters of dispute between the Railway Company and the contractors or sub-contractors but in order to protect the province against any claims which might arise, it was thought best to retain the amount mentioned and it would be paid over to the Construction Company from time to time as settlements were made with sub-contractors.

In the summer of 1918 an agreement was made between the Railway Company by which it was set forth that if the contract was not finished in November of that year the Railway Co., would forfeit \$300 per day for each day elapsing between the end of November and the completion of the contract. The contract was completed to the satisfaction of the chief engineer on September 1st, 1919. The question as to whether the penalty should be exacted then arose and after inquiring carefully into all the circumstances the Government was satisfied that under conditions of the labor market the company had made as much progress as could have been expected. Conscription was in force, labor was scarce and material of all kinds difficult to obtain. It was learned that although provisions for payment of a penalty were inserted in all contracts, it was seldom exacted except in cases where contractors willfully neglected the work. The same practice had obtained in the Province over twenty years. The directors of the railway represented to the Government that their object in making the agreement had been to execute the work, and that the contractors had afterwards done everything possible to meet their views. The Government and directors decided not to exact to full penalty but considered it only fair that the Railway Company should be reimbursed for overhead expenses and monies actually paid out during the period in question and fixed upon \$17,504.76, as the proper amount for the contractors to pay. A settlement was accordingly made on that basis. There were conflicting claims and vital disputes between the

Railway Company and the Contractors and the policy of give and take was resorted to in their adjustment. Sub-contractors on the line between Gagetown and Westfield, especially those who had not finished before the sharp advance in prices, had lost money on their contracts, and it was provided in the settlement that no part of the \$17,504.76 should be charged against the sub-contractor.

C. P. R. Running Rights.

It was expected that the Canadian National Railways would take over the road for operation when completed on September 1st, 1919. For more than a year previous the directors of the Company had been urging on the management on the Canadian National Railways the great necessity of making provision for running rights between St. John and Westfield. Assurance had been given by the officials of the Canadian National Railways that such arrangements had been made and that there would be no difficulty or delay. When the road was completed, however, it was found that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company would not allow the Valley Railway to run over their tracks until an agreement in writing had been made. The Statute provided that if the St. John & Quebec Railway Company did not make an arrangement for running rights that the Canadian National Railways could do so in which case the Valley Railway could take no share of the receipts from the line between Westfield and St. John, nor would it be obliged to pay the rental and other charges in respect to that section. The Canadian National Railways people had due notice that the Province would not assume the burden of paying the Canadian Pacific Railway for running rights. It was felt that the interest on the money borrowed for the purpose of constructing the railway entailed a sufficient burden for the people of New Brunswick and it would not be wise to assume an additional obligation a rental which apparently would have amounted to \$100,000 per year. They thought that the Dominion, which had done so much to relieve other Provinces in railway matters, could very easily take up the responsibility of providing for the connecting link between Westfield and St. John. The Government and the directors had been active in seeing to it that an agreement between the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific Railway was consummated, and after considerable delay the Valley Railway trains were allowed to run into St. John. The delay was regrettable and the Government felt that it was attributable to the officials of the Canadian National Railways and not to the directors or Provincial Government. Neither the Government nor the Railway Company had agreed to be bound by any arrangement with respect to running rights nor had the Canadian National Railways been authorized to act on behalf of the Government in connection therewith. The Government did not expect to receive any portion of the receipts for the section between St. John and Westfield.

He would submit to the House the following statement of revenue which had been obtained by the Province from the Canadian National Railways, as the 40 per cent of the gross receipts since operation had begun:

Earnings from—

1st April, 1915 to Sept. 1917 \$71,726.24

Sept. 30 1917 to May 31, 1918 27,809.45

May 31, 1918 to Oct. 31, 1918 14,080.68

Oct. 31, 1918 to Mar. 31, 1919 31,505.08

Mar. 31 1919 to Sept. 30, 1919 24,873.03

\$109,994.53

HON. MR. FOSTER continuing, said a word might be necessary as to the terms upon which the railway was being operated. The Dominion Government in addition to giving a subsidy of \$6,400 per mile, agreed with the Province and Railway Company that as soon as the road was completed in sections it would operate same, furnish its own rolling stock, pay all maintenance and operating charges and turn over to the St. John & Quebec Railway Company \$40 out of every \$100. The St. John & Quebec Railway Company was required to construct from time to time any additional stations, sidings, tracks, or other betterment which would be regarded as capital expenditure on English Railways. As the business of the line increased capital expenditure would be necessary and the question would arise as to what is capital expense or operation expense and maintenance. The Dominion Government had agreed to lease the road on the terms mentioned for 99 years.

The original plan, as contemplated by the citizens of St. John and of the whole province, involved the building of a railroad from Grand Falls to St. John. Connection was to have been made at Grand Falls with the Transcontinental System and it was thought that such a railway would ultimately earn the bond interest. It was with that view that the people supported the undertaking. A Federal subsidy for the whole road was secured, but for some reason the Flemming Government in 1913 allowed that portion of it applicable between Andover and Grand Falls to lapse, and it had not been revoked. When the legislation was introduced authorizing a guar-

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Mother! you must say "California Syrup of Figs."

tee of first mortgage bonds of the company the length of the railway was fixed at 170 miles which would have carried it from St. John to Centreville, had it been built into St. John, and now carried it from Westfield to Centreville and twelve miles beyond. Bonds had been issued in respect to the mileage mentioned. Delegations had urged the Government to make the extension from Centreville to Grand Falls. The Government would like to have the line extended because it would not only be keeping faith with the people according to the original understanding, but would assist a very fertile and important section of the country. Could the Province afford the outlay? They had already funded the principal and interest during the construction but that could not go on indefinitely. The interest charge would amount to \$1000 a day and it would be a problem to provide for it. Prices of labor and materials had advanced so rapidly that the Government hesitated to incur the enormous expense that would be involved. If it were to be part of a Transcontinental system it would be more attractive, but the C. N. R. had arranged to bring its freight from the West down over its own line by McGivney to Fredericton, and they could scarcely expect it to be re-routed over the Valley Railway and pay the Province 40 per cent of the receipts when it had a line of its own to Fredericton.

It was understood that the Dominion (Continued on page 3.)

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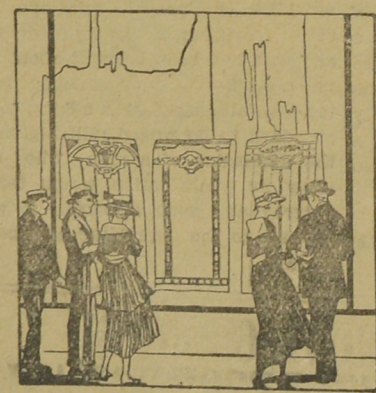


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