

The Daily Mail

Published every afternoon (except Sunday) at No. 613 Queen Street.
HERALD PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO., Proprietors.

Fredericton, N. B., March 17, 1910.

MR. HAZEN AND THE VALLEY RAILWAY

The people of the St. John Valley want a railway and they have wanted it for years. There is no mistaking public sentiment on this question. Last year when Mr. Hazen proposed that if the government of Canada would undertake the operation of the railway, the government of New Brunswick would guarantee the bonds of a company undertaking the construction of such a railway to the extent of \$25,000 a mile. As the Dominion government at the same time renewed the subsidies and enlarged them to \$6,400 for the entire length of the railway there seemed to be a good opportunity of getting the railroad built. Mr. Hazen made a promise to a large delegation that he would put legislation through the house at the last session committing the government to the guarantee. This promise was made two weeks before the house rose, but Mr. Hazen did not introduce the legislation and on the last day of the session explained that more information was necessary before the government would act. This was not a very good reason and Mr. Hazen was not long in making the discovery that the people were not satisfied with his attitude on the question. It was then that he commenced letter writing to square himself with the people and shift the responsibility for the delay to the shoulders of the Dominion government. His efforts have not proved very successful but his industry has been commendable. Mr. Hazen was alone responsible for the delay of last year. He brought down legislation yesterday that will prevent the work going ahead for another year.

After a year of consideration Mr. Hazen has laid before the house not one proposition to guarantee the bonds of a railway for the St. John Valley but two propositions, and then expects the people to believe that he has a sincere desire to construct the railway. Instead of working along the lines of his original proposition during recess, Mr. Hazen has listened to the promoters of all sorts of schemes, and as a result has evolved part three of the act he introduced yesterday. To those who have followed the course of Mr. Hazen on this most important question his double jointed bill will not be a surprise. As long ago as last year he informed the house that if the delegation failed to secure a favorable answer from the Dominion government he did not despair of finding men who would construct the railway, and that he was then in correspondence with such a company. This is not surprising. The surprise is the length Mr. Hazen is prepared to go to side step the proposition he made last year, which is far away, and ahead of the wretched scheme he is now trying to put through the legislature under the cloak of his first offer.

It is almost beyond belief that a gentleman who three years ago stood up in the house and stated that he would not consent to a guarantee of even \$15,000 a mile to a railroad that did not form part of a transcontinental system should now bring in as an alternative proposition, but really as his principal scheme, a bond guarantee of \$25,000 for what can be nothing else than a local road. This proposition is not promoted by any transcontinental system and does not connect with any railroad that crosses the continent. Yet Mr. Hazen devoted the greater part of his speech to the advantages offered by a company constructing the railroad under part three of the bill and neglected to advocate in any way the adoption of his former proposal and contained in the scheme proposed contained in part two of the bill. Mr. Hazen has had much to say concerning the high standard of the road demanded by Hon. Dr. Pugsley. Yet Mr. Hazen knows that Mr. Pugsley always had in view the fact that the Valley railway, if it ever was to be a paying proposition, must at least connect with a transcontinental railway, and if connecting with such a railway, must be built on the same standard as that railway. To build the railway on the standard called for by Mr. Pugsley would mean that trains of

the same weight could be hauled over the New Brunswick section at the same cost as over the remainder of the road. By lowering the standard, as Mr. Hazen has done in part three of the bill, he must know that it will cost more per ton to move freight over the New Brunswick section than over a railroad built as Mr. Pugsley suggests. Still with this knowledge he brings down legislation that will make the Valley railway a very doubtful financial undertaking and one that will certainly imperil the credit of the province.

The anxiety of Mr. Hazen to secure the adoption of his second scheme is so great that he omits from it altogether the provision made in part two that before any contract is entered into the company must first procure a contract with the federal government for a subsidy of \$6,400 a mile. Why this omission?—Was it because he knew that to secure a subsidy would bring about a most vigorous investigation into the cost of the railway as the subsidy is just double what the Dominion government pays and is only awarded after a full enquiry into the accounts for construction. The alterations made in the grading of the road shows very decided favoritism of the company organized under part three; compared with that under part two. The provisions regarding the guarantee are also much more liberal under part three than under part two. A deposit of \$3,000 a mile is required from the company undertaking the construction, but permission is given to construct the road in divisions and on the completion of each division the deposit is released. There is no such provision in part two. The conditions imposed under this section are the same as those in similar acts passed by the New Brunswick legislature before. Mr. Hazen makes new legislation for his own baby.

The greatest surprise, however, was his advocacy of electric power as the motive power of a trunk railway in this country. There is absolutely no comparison between the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railway and the road it is proposed to construct in New Brunswick. That railroad is operated by the third rail system, which is not practical in this climate and which would require the right of way to be securely fenced from end to end. Neither is there any comparison between the Valley railway and the roads in Maine regarding which he produced so many statistics. But when he stated that the falls of the Aroostook would yield power enough to operate the entire road from Andover to Gagetown, he reached the climax of absurdity. These falls are now developing somewhere about 3,000 horse power and Mr. Hazen says that a minimum of 5,000 is going to waste over the dam. This may or may not be correct. He gave as his authority a promoters of electric railways, who would certainly not underestimate the possibilities of Aroostook Falls. Mr. Hazen should have made closer enquiries into the power required. The St. John Railway Co. which operates some 12 miles of railway, none of it more than four miles from the power house, employs somewhere about 1,500 horse power. As the loss in transmission to the most distant point of this service is about one-third of the power developed it will be seen that Mr. Hazen has greatly understated the power that would be required for a railroad 200 miles long. Unless the capacity of the Aroostook water power can be greatly increased, it is not possible even if were desirable, that the railroad should get all its power from this source.

Looked at from every standpoint, Mr. Hazen's second proposal is an exceedingly dangerous one for the province to embark in and will be regarded with the greatest suspicion by everyone in the county. It is not surprising that Governor Tweedie, when the bill was shown to him, demanded that a clause be placed therein that the act must be proclaimed by the governor-in-council before the contract is signed. This is very proper, as it gives the people of the province time for consideration. That Mr. Hazen is not over-particular when the railway will be commenced is clearly set out in the first part of the act, which provides for a survey of the whole route. He has also said that he did not want to railroad this bill through the House. It is to be hoped that he was sincere as no legislation that has been offered in many years requires such careful consideration on the part of the people as Mr. Hazen's Valley Railway bill.

TIGHT LITTLE ISLAND WILL BE VERY DRY

Lumsden Enquiry Causes Discussion in the Commons—Temporary Supply Bill is Passed.

Ottawa, March 16.—The senate will adjourn tomorrow until April 6.

Today the senate approved of Sir Richard Scott's bill to prevent intoxicating liquor being sent into Prince Edward Island.

After formally deserting the Lumsden inquiry, the opposition today woke up and started a little fight over it in the house. Mr. Lennox charged the Liberal members of the committee today with bad faith, claiming that a resolution had been adopted under which the committee was to report from day to day and to print the evidence. He said that the reporting clause of the resolution had been omitted from the records of the committee.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that he did not know the facts of the case, but if there had been a mistake made in the records the only place that it could be corrected was in the committee, of which Messrs. Lennox, Barker and Crothers were still members. He advised them to go back to the committee and have the matter settled there.

Mr. Barker said that the Conservatives had retired from the committee because it was useless for them to remain there.

E. M. MacDonald said that it was evident that the Conservatives were looking for a baby way out of the difficulty into which they had gotten themselves by their foolish action. He declared that there had been no such resolution, as Mr. Lennox referred to, adopted by the committee.

R. L. Borden attacked Chairman Geoffrion of the committee for bad faith, a charge which Mr. Geoffrion emphatically repudiated and Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that Mr. Borden was indulging in false heroics and wanted to know what the house could do. The leader of the opposition might be able to dictate to the Conservative members of the committee, but he could not do so to the Liberal members. He believed that they had acted properly.

A number of opposition members made protesting speeches which carried the incident into the evening, when it died out.

After this a supply bill was passed consisting of one-fourth of all the items which had not yet been passed by the house. This is to keep the service going during the beginning of the coming fiscal year which commences the first of the month. The estimates passed were concurred in, and the supply bill was given a third reading and sent to the senate. There it will be sanctioned tomorrow by Judge Girouard acting for the governor general.

ROSEBERRY TO SEE BIG FIGHT

San Francisco, March 17.—The Earl of Roseberry, former premier of Great Britain, will head a party of British noblemen who will come here to see the Jeffries-Johnson fight, according to an announcement made yesterday. The party, it is said, have already arranged for a special train to carry them from New York to San Francisco as well as for ring-side reservations.

Bijou TO-DAY

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