

OTTAWA LETTER.

Hon. Geo. Graham presents railway budget;
new minister delivers masterly speech.

Progress made on Grand Trunk Pacific; Work done on
East and west Sections

Largely Increased Dominion Revenues; Augmented re-
ceipts of post office

OTTAWA, March 14. (Special) — Foster the critic has now become Foster the plumpiest. With each succeeding alleged revelation of crookedness there is stripped from the personality of this man a covering which reveals something unknown before. In the geological world it is said that each anticline has its corresponding syncline. So it appears to be with Mr. Foster; with each revelation of alleged wrong comes the counterpart in the record of this politician. Assuming the administration to be guilty as charged by Mr. Foster, then the verdict must stand equally against him.

No longer can he with consistency sanctimoniously raise his hands in the House and accuse men of grafting. No more can the hero of illicit commissions criticize the government and receive consideration. No longer can the man who lent trust funds to himself and made a rake-off on the side pose as the protector of the treasury of Canada. The man who casts the first stone must be without sin. For the future the man who by Royal Commission has been adjudged guilty of various breaches of trust with regard to the management of trust funds, cannot exert that influence in the public life of Canada which might be expected of one whose transactions had been of a character to provoke commendation rather than censure.

MAN'S CHARACTER COUNTS.

The people of Canada are bound to consider the character and record of men upon whose words they are expected to rely when weighing the accusations brought against the government. In ordinary affairs of life one would not attach credence to the evidence of a convicted burglar when forming judgment in a case of theft. The word of a well known prevaricator would not influence a jury on a question of fact—neither would the testimony of a discredited man go far to influence a verdict. How then can the people of Canada be expected to receive genuine confidence in the dictum of Geo. E. Foster?

We must apply the same process of reasoning to a matter that affects the public affairs of Canada as would be applied in the ordinary affairs of life. Side by side must be placed the public record of the man or men who lead the attack. This is not only just but it is reasonable, and will commend itself to the common sense of the people.

PEOPLE CHIEF SUFFERERS.

With the exposure of Mr. Foster came the collapse of the opposition fight. Had the interests of the people been in clean or worthy hands some good might have resulted, assuming the charges to have been based on solid foundations, but whether or not, the accident ended ingloriously, all on account of Foster's past political record. What do the people gain by having their interests in the hands of this man?

The Insurance Commission, it was expected, would accomplish some great good to the country, and it was a paramount function and obvious duty of the opposition to follow the matter up to a practical conclusion. However, when Mr. Foster was exposed as one of the chief delinquents with regard to the improper handling of trust funds, it was to the interest of the opposition to drop the matter, and the only time given to a consideration of the commissioners' report was taken up by Foster in trying to whitewash himself. Thus the enormous expense was wasted, and the benefits sought to be derived from the labors of the commissioners were made abortive. The question is asked again, What do the people gain by having their interests in the hands of this man?

The time to change a government is when they have mis-conducted themselves, proved false to pre-election pledges, and are incapable of administering the affairs of the country. Such charges cannot be made against the Liberal government. A man is known by his works, so is a government. A long period of commercial prosperity proves that the machinery of government is running smoothly. With an honest administration it will be many years before the great Reform party, which rescued the country from the grafters and bootlickers, will be called upon to relinquish office.

RAILWAY BUDGET.

Hon. George Graham, Minister of Railways and Canals, presented to the House his first budget speech as Minister. When one takes into consideration the ramifications of this huge system, including the canals of the country and the endless detail involved, a faint conception only can be had of the task which confronted Mr. Graham. In the short space of a few weeks he has acquired a marvelous knowledge of the workings of his department. His speech from end to end fairly bristled with facts and figures, and he showed a familiarity

with details which was extraordinary. A more logical or consecutive presentation of the condition of a department has rarely been laid before the House. The subject matter was complicated, but Mr. Graham handled his subject lucidly and in a most comprehensive manner.

In the Railway committee, as well as in the House when railway bills were under discussion, the new Minister of Railways has shown himself as a broad-minded, progressive man, and the country is to be congratulated upon having such a worthy successor to Hon. Mr. Emmerson.

Mr. Graham commenced by paying a tribute to the efficiency of the permanent staff, and then passed to the subject of canals. Some of the figures given are very interesting. The expenditure upon canals in Canada has amounted to \$120,000,000. The business of the Soo canal has increased to two-thirds of its capacity, or about 12,000,000 tons. To give an idea of the trade of the St. Lawrence, the lockages on the Cornwall canal last year were 4,417.

GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC.

The following gives some idea of the progress made on the National Transcontinental railway, and is practically the condition of affairs up to December 1, 1907.

Starting from Winnipeg from 0 to 13th mile, no grading, the work is light.

From 13th to 650th mile, grading is completed; culverts and wooden structures are about completed.

From 650th to 796th mile (Edmonton) about 54 miles of grading completed, a large proportion of the culverts are built, and the pile foundations of about 25 per cent of the bridges are driven.

Steel bridges crossing the Assiniboine, South Saskatchewan, Battle river and North Saskatchewan are well in hand and approaching completion.

Track is laid from the 45th mile to the 326th mile, and from the 426th mile to the 468th mile, aggregating 310 miles, in addition to which 47 sidings are laid in.

A union station house at Portage la Prairie is nearly finished, at Nekeomis the station house is finished and at the 141st mile (Rivers) the station is nearly completed.

At the latter point an engine house machine shop and boiler house are advanced to the extent of 90 per cent. At the 277th mile (Melville) engine house and machine shop are in course of erection, about 35 per cent of the work is executed.

Great progress is also made in the building of water tanks, fencing and telegraphic lines. There is no construction of any kind west of Edmonton.

The railroad will be built through the Yellowhead Pass, and it is interesting to know that the grades are less than on the Pine River Pass route. The estimated cost of the Yellowhead Pass route, exclusive of terminals, is \$42,115,500, being less than the estimated cost of the Pine River Pass route by \$4,536,100. This includes that portion of the road from Edmonton to Prince Rupert, a distance of 955 miles.

PROGRESS IN EASTERN SECTION.


Passing from the western section, Mr. Graham then gave some information as to the progress of work on the government section, from Moncton to Winnipeg, 1,807 miles, and he read the following from the Railway Commission:

The location of the line is practically completed, with the exception of about three or four miles at the entrance to the Winnipeg terminals, and a few points where revision may be made of the present location to reduce grades, distances or work. Contracts for construction have already been awarded covering in all, say, 859 miles as follows: 119 miles in New Brunswick; 150 miles east, and 195 miles west of the St. Lawrence river, and 78 miles easterly from the Ontario boundary in the province of Quebec; 72 miles from the Quebec boundary westerly, and 158 miles from the Manitoba boundary easterly in the province of Ontario; 87 miles in the province of Manitoba. Tenders are now being invited, 136 miles in New Brunswick, 52 miles in Quebec, and 175 miles in Ontario.

Mr. Graham made a touching reference to the Quebec bridge calamity, concluding by saying that "whatever differences there may be on the subject, all will agree that the Quebec bridge must be reconstructed, and reconstructed on safe and permanent lines."

RAILWAY COMMISSION.

Speaking of the Railway Commission, Mr. Graham said he was warranted in saying that the Railway Commission has already accomplished a great deal for the people, and he trusted that in future, with the increase of its members and the enlargement of its powers, greater good



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will be accomplished. Mr. Graham gave some statistics showing the great amount of work accomplished and how it had increased since 1904.

INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY.

Alluding to the Intercolonial Railway, Mr. Graham said that at the end of the statistical year, 30th June, 1907, the gross earnings were \$8,599,119, and the gross expenses \$8,202,064, showing a surplus of earnings over expenses of \$397,054 for the year. Speaking of the latter conditions on the road, Mr. Graham said:

"I have come to the conclusion that the presence of labor organizations such as I have mentioned is a benefit to the management of the road rather than a detriment. I think this is an answer to some critics who have suggested that the Intercolonial, being a government road, should not recognize labor unions. While it is a government road it has to be run on these lines like any other road."

The length of the Intercolonial, said Mr. Graham, on 1st April, 1907, was 1,448 miles and the expenditure on capital account was \$62,744,937. This includes all the equipment, making the average cost per mile \$57,112. The length of the Prince Edward Island railway on 1st of April, 1907, was 261 miles, and the expenditure on capital account was \$7,372,099. This includes also the equipment, making the average cost per mile \$27,965. This is a narrow gauge railway and so the cost per mile is less than that of the Intercolonial. The average cost per mile of the railways in the United States is \$57,966, or \$850 per mile more than the Intercolonial.

Concluding a brilliant speech Mr. Graham said: "The Intercolonial railway is a great national asset, in the management and results of which every man in Canada is interested. Every man in Canada has an interest in the part which the Intercolonial railway plays as a regulator in carrying the produce of the East to the West and of the West to the East. If that be an object worthy of the attention of the House, I ask if matters come up affecting the Intercolonial railway, to consider it from a double standpoint—first, from the standpoint of carrying out the pledge which was given to the Maritime Provinces at the time of Confederation, not as a commercial venture, and from the second standpoint, that the Intercolonial railway is a great part of the transportation service of this country, and what we do not get in rates remains in the pockets of the people of Canada."

The speech delivered by Mr. Graham made a deep impression on the House, and stamped the honorable gentleman as a debator of the first class. The portfolio of Railways and Canals is in capable hands.

HEALTHY FINANCIAL CONDITION.

The finances of the country are in a healthy condition. A statement issued by the department of Finance for the eleven months of the current fiscal year, shows a total revenue of

\$87,607,299, being an increase of \$8,629,749, over the corresponding months of 1906-7, and \$49,777,521 greater than in 1896, when the Liberal government assumed office.

The total expenditure on consolidated fund account for the eleven months was \$60,720,353, an increase of \$10,735,686. The total expenditure on capital account was \$25,708,488, the construction of the National of which \$20,183,830 was for public works, railways and canals, including Transcontinental railway.

The surplus of the total revenue over the total expenditure for the eleven months ending February is \$1,118,458. For the month of February the total revenue was \$6,577,020, a decrease of \$740,793 as compared with the corresponding month last year.

INCREASING POST OFFICE REVENUES.

The total post office revenue for eleven months of the fiscal year was

(Continued from page three.)

5642.

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