

North Bay to Thornloe. The Premier gave the deputation to understand that action would be taken this session.

Mr. John Loughrin, the member for Nipissing, introduced the deputation, and there were present Messrs. John Armstrong and Angus McKelvey, Thornloe; W. B. McMurrich, Hugh Blain, H. P. Eckardt, J. Herbert Mason, Mayor Howland, John Shaw, G. F. Marter, M.P.P., Dr. Pyne, M.P. P., J. C. Bailey, C.E., Robert Davies, Alex. Nairn, D. Gunn, D. A. Jones, J. F. McLaughlin, W. T. Jennings, L. V. McBrady, and others, of Toronto.

Mr. Loughrin, in introducing the deputation, reminded the Premier that his announced policy was one of developing the newer districts, and unless he granted aid to a railway up there he would not be living up to his promises.

Mr. Armstrong, the Crown Lands Agent at Thornloe, said the settlers were doing very well, and were content, only they were afraid that if they did not get a railway they would produce more than they could consume, and there would be no outlet. There was no frost to injure the crops, and tender garden stuff ripened. In reply to Hon. Mr. Davis, Mr. Armstrong said the prospects for settlers this year were better than ever. Wheat from that district formed part of the Canadian exhibit which took the grand prize at the Paris Exposition.

Mr. McKelvey said the Government had already surveyed 31 townships of good agricultural land in that neighborhood. They might have surveyed five times as many more and still been on the sunny side of the 49th parallel. They would get railway communication in the near future. The Province of Quebec and the C. P. R. were now taking steps to extend the C. P. R. on the Quebec side.

Cost of the Road.

Mr. Bailey, who traversed the country thoroughly as an engineer, said it would cost from \$17,000 to \$20,000 per mile to build the railway from North Bay. He had found nickel, copper, lead and silver on the line of railway, and every island in Lake Temagami was full of minerals.

Mr. W. B. McMurrich, President of the Nipissing & James Bay Railway Company, said the time for action had now come, and he hoped the axes would be heard before the charter expired on July 1.

Mayor Howland said he thought the time was past when Governments were expected to practically build railways and then give them away. He thought if a private company did not see fit to build these lines, the Government should step in their place and become the owners of the line.

After Mr. Marter had spoken briefly, Mr. Hugh Blain and Mr. H. P. Eckardt, as merchants of this city, spoke of the trade which Toronto now gets and will get from the north.

Mr. John Shaw said that as he understood aid was asked for the Nipissing & James Bay Railway, as the representative of the Toronto & Hudson Bay Railway, who also held a charter, he asked that the latter be considered.

"Have you any money?" the Premier asked.

"Well, we have good backing, anyway, and, I think, can go on with the railway." Mr. Shaw replied. He asked that if money be granted it be to whichever railway began construction first.

The Premier's Reply.

The Premier, in reply to the deputation, said the Government were very much interested in that country. There were thirteen million acres of good land there, 3,000,000,000 feet of pine and an unlimited quantity of spruce. The Government wanted settlers there as quickly as possible. Referring to the Mayor's remark regarding Government ownership, Mr. Ross said the Government had secured concessions for settlers when they made grants to the Rainy River and the Algoma Central Railways. "We have not yet matured our scheme," he said in conclusion, "but I think you can depend upon early action with a view to getting into that country and opening it up for Ontario. You will find something probably before the session rises indicating what we intend to do."