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Our Ottawa Letter.
The discussion of the railway subsidies which have been the chief item of interest in the Commons this week, has developed some curious differences of opinion among the members. The resolutions under which the subsidies were introduced outlined the railway policy, which was a radical departure from the old system employed in granting bonuses. Instead of handing over so many hundred thousand dollars without stipulation or condition of any kind, the Government attaches to all the aid now to be granted conditions that will give the country, through the Government, practical control of these lines, thus securing to the people many of the advantages of state ownership with burdening the country with hundreds of millions of dollars of debt.
Among these conditions there is provision for the granting of running powers to competing lines, while the tariff of rates must be approved by the Governor-in-Council. Besides which the railway is denied the power to amalgamate or in any way unite operations with a competing line except by permission of the Government.

NOT THE OLD POLICY.
Conditions similar to this were first introduced into the agreement with the Canadian Pacific under which they were given power to build the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, and even in this early stage of its existence the country is reaping the benefit of the change, for in one item alone the freight on east bound grain it is estimated that the farmers of the west will save \$600,000. Another item inserted by the Government into the conditions governing the granting of these subsidies is the requirement that out of moneys received by the railways for the transportation of mail, and other Government business, they shall rebate an amount equal to 3 per cent. per annum upon the total amount of the subsidy granted.
Opposition journals have become so thoroughly drilled into the habit of objecting and taking exception to anything and everything proposed by the Government, that they all with one accord started to pull the entire scheme to pieces, howling hysterically in discordant chorus against the awful recklessness and total depravity of the proposals. "The country was bleeding the country to death," moaned the Montreal Star; "extravagance and jobbery are going hand in hand," declares the Montreal Gazette; "Sifton & Co. are bleeding this country white," exclaims the Toronto Mail-Empire, and so on.

SIR CHARLES APPROVES.
It was rather disconcerting to have the venerable leader of the Opposition endorsing the policy of the Government, which he did most unequivocally from his place in the House on Wednesday morning, before leaving for England. He took exception to the contention that there was jobbery and corruption behind the proposal, but on the other hand declared that one of the wisest to which public money could be put was in the construction of railways to open up the great resources of the country in a way nothing else could do. Of course the worthy baronet had, as a matter of policy, to accompany his approval with a claim that the Government was simply following out the Conservative policy, and if the honorable gentleman can make himself believe this, no one will begrudge him that satisfaction. The country at large, however, and particularly the farmer who has been crying out for so many years for relief, will be able to appreciate the difference. Out of the entire list of subsidies Sir Charles did not take exception to a single vote, which in one or two cases, the Ontario and Rainy River for instance, he was particularly emphatic in his expression of approval. Opposition papers will have a busy time squaring themselves with the position of their leader. It was inconsiderate of him not to give them a tip in time to prevent them from getting themselves into such a tangle.

SIR JAMES EDGAR'S DEATH.
For the first time in the history of the Canadian Parliament the House of Commons has been called upon to mourn the loss of its presiding officer, and to choose a successor. Sir James Edgar had been in anything but good health for many months, and the unusual strain of the session at length compelled him to quit work and place himself unreservedly in the doctor's hands. The desired result was not to be achieved, however, and for the sixteenth time since the present Parliament was inaugurated, August 19th, 1893, death claimed a victim from the ranks of the Commons. The deceased gentleman's political career has been lengthy and more than unusually active. In the old days of Opposition he was always looked upon as an aggressive though fair fighter, and since he was raised to the position of First

Commoner his dignified bearing, impartial judgment and judicial interpretation of the rules of the House, won for him the esteem of all parties.
The Government's choice of a successor has been received with unqualified approbation on every hand. Hon. Thomas Bain is the first farmer to become Speaker of the House of Commons, but in all the ranks of the legislators on either side of the House none could have been found in every respect more thoroughly qualified.

SEED GRAIN INDEBTEDNESS.
The question of seed grain indebtedness has long been a troublesome one with the farmers of the west. The liens held by the Government in this connection have been felt by the farmers to be an annoying, and in many cases a serious incubus upon their property, particularly when the security had been given, not for seed for their own use, but upon bonds for the benefit of a neighbor. An aggravation of the situation frequently occurred when newcomers sought to purchase abandoned homesteads and found that they had not only to pay for improvements, but to satisfy a Government lien for seed grain as well. Mr. Davis, the energetic member for Saskatchewan, has been actively interesting himself this session to secure a change in the regulations and in spite of the rush of business which attends the closing days of the session, he has secured from the Minister of the Interior the promise of a bill dealing with the matter.

A Roseate Outlook.
The action of the Federal Government in putting the sum of \$800,000 in the list of subsidies for the Ontario and Rainy River Railway has placed the immediate and rapid construction of that line beyond peradventure, and the result must necessarily be the rapid development of a very large section of some of the most promising mineral territory of the Dominion. The Legislative Tour of last month could not have been better timed, for it has afforded an opportunity to the press to make known the actual conditions existing in that country, conditions which justify the expenditure of public money in its development, so long as the principle prevails of rendering aid of this kind.
The history of the gold mining industry in Algoma is instructive and significant. In 1892 the total output of the precious metal was only \$36,900, while in the next two years it was considerably less, but in 1895 it rose to over \$50,000, in 1896 to \$122,000, and last year to \$275,000, while this year the total is expected to reach the very creditable figure of \$800,000. The mills at present running, aggregate 260 stamps averaging two and a half tons a day each, or over 200,000 tons per annum, so that the actual output recorded is considerably less than the value of the ore mined, the difference remaining in the dumps awaiting the process of reduction. It is further estimated that the mines give employment to 1,650 men, whose wages amount to probably a million dollars per annum. The lack of transportation facilities has hitherto seriously handicapped the miner in the work of taking in machinery, but with the construction of the railway the needed facilities will be available and many claims that have hitherto been unprofitable will be rapidly opened up and become dividend paying.

In addition to the gold mines which in the near future should be numbered by hundreds, there are iron deposits, second to none in the world in extent and value, particularly in the Atik-Okan district; there are silver deposits that have been thoroughly tested and are once more, in the improved condition of the market, paying handsomely, besides which copper and other valuable deposits of lesser extent are being unearthed in various parts of the section.
It has been already pointed out in these articles that while the mineral resources of Western Algoma are so extensive and valuable they do not include the whole of its riches. There are many thousands of acres of excellent farming country, the possibilities of which have been thoroughly demonstrated by the hardy pioneer settlers, who in the face of tremendous discouragements—the result of lack of transportation facilities—have turned the solitary wilderness into a fruitful field. It is through this country, the possibilities of which are only now beginning to be realized that the Ontario and Rainy River Railway will run, giving the miner the means of taking in his machinery, the farmer the facilities for carrying his products to the mining camp, and the producer of manufactured and natural supplies on the outside easy access to a new and rapidly increasing market.

The Central Algoma Railway running north from Sault Ste Marie towards the Michipicoten River and the main line of the C. P. R., another of the enterprise to receive state assistance, will open up a territory rich in

mineral and lumber, and give the fast growing industries of the Sault ready access to the base of supplies for their raw material. The other great desideratum—the motive power to carry on these industries—is unlimited, for the water power found everywhere throughout the entire section is inexhaustible and can be developed with comparatively small cost. Such is the outlook at this moment for New Ontario, and in no part of our Broad Dominion is the prospect brighter.

Maple
The following ladies of this place started on a trip to the Thousand Islands on Tuesday morning: Mrs. L. Richardson, Miss Franks, Miss Morrison, Miss Rumble, Miss Lines and Miss Craddock. They were driven out to catch the early electric car at Richmond Hill, and went by steamer Cambria at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

Several of our sports took in the races at Woodbridge on Monday, but are not very enthusiastic over the events of the day. Now they are sorry they had not waited for the fall fair.

Mr. J. T. Saigeon drove to Alliston on Tuesday with his aunt, Mrs. Rayson, who had been spending several weeks among friends and relatives here.

Mrs. Ralph Kelly and two children of Milton, North Dakota, spent a few days with old friends and returned on Monday to visit her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dilworth, in Toronto.

Mrs. J. Lovell and son Rupert of Toronto, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Leeds Richardson.
Miss Morrison has been spending part of her vacation at Tullamore and Nashville.

Mr. J. Sturgeon Stewart, wife and son of Toronto, spent Sunday at the parsonage.
Mr. T. McCormack is away on his holidays.

Sherwood
Rev. C. A. Campbell of Maple, conducted a prayer-meeting at Mr. G. Phillips' Thursday evening.
Miss R. Young of Whitevale, spent her holidays at the parental home here.
Mrs. J. Young has returned from a two weeks' visit with her daughter, Mrs. (Rev.) P. Campbell, of Whitevale.

Messrs. J. Gardner and J. Powers of Maple, are assisting Mr. S. Ireland to thresh this season.
Master Charlie Gibbs of Maple, visited his aunt, Mrs. Miller, on Friday.

Mr. E. Line met with what might have been a serious accident on Saturday. While fixing the knives of his reaper his hand became caught by one of the knives. In order to free it Mr. Line had to draw his hand partly across the knife, almost severing the small finger. Mr. Line has been very unfortunate with his hand, having lost part of the thumb and two fingers some time ago.

Our village blacksmith, Mr. Ford, has returned, after spending a few days abroad.

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