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Ontario's Government Owned Railway and the North Land

Promoted Twenty-five Years Ago to Settle Great Clay Belt, the T. & N. O. has Opened Up Precious Metals Regions and Has Become an Outstanding Railway. Its Recent Extensions.

Reference was made in The Advance last week to the annual Financial Survey number of The Toronto Globe. One of the outstanding articles in that excellent issue was the one of Mr. Geo. W. Lee, chairman of the T. & N. O. Railway Commission. Mr. Lee wrote on the subject nearest to his heart,—the T. & N. O.,—and so he wrote with great interest. Because the T. & N. O. means so much to this North, and is doing so much for this North, Mr. Lee's article will be of special interest to readers of The Advance. Here it is in full:—

The preamble of the bill for the construction of the railway in 1902 forecast that exploration in the district between Lake Nipissing and northwest from Lake Temiskaming would result in the probable discovery of "ore and minerals which would add greatly to the wealth of the Province."

Seldom has a forecast been so wonderfully fulfilled, because, though it was known that minor discoveries of silver had been made in South Lorrain, and iron and copper showings were plentiful around Temagami, the Cobalt, Porcupine and Kirkland Lake precious metals areas were yet to be found and exploited.

Originally projected and built as a colonization road, the T. & N. O. Railway has within the space of a few short years developed into one of the outstanding railways of the Dominion, and though of comparatively small mileage—approximately

600—has impressed its individuality and success upon the general business conditions of the Province to which it owes its inception, and is ever progressing and expanding toward greater endeavour and achievement.

Serving a wonderful section of Ontario—generally acknowledged to be the richest in potential mineral, agricultural, forest and water-power wealth in the Dominion—the railway has been instrumental in opening up and developing the great riches of the several mineral belts of Cobalt, South Lorrain, Porcupine and Kirkland Lake, et al., and will soon prove an important factor in the upbuilding and consequent expansion of the gold-copper fields of Rouyn, Quebec. It has also opened up and made available the vast "clay belt" region for agriculture and settlement, with the accompanying hydro-electric power for mines and mills, and to drive the wheels of industry in a thousand ventures.

The flourishing cities, towns and villages along the main line and branch lines of the railway speak for the permanence and reliability of its undertakings. The development of precious metal areas has been phenomenal in magnitude, and the present and future possibilities are to be thought of in terms of hundreds of millions of dollars of new wealth for the prosperity and expansion of the nation's business.

With gold discoveries recorded in one hundred and ten (110) townships along the route of the T. & N. O. Railway, the mining industry appears to be assured of an unlimited field of operation for decades to come as nowhere on this continent is there such wide disposition of the precious metals.

Government geologists have called attention to the great importance of Northern Ontario's pre-Cambrian formation which extends to the Hudson Bay, occupying hundreds of thousands of square miles, for future prospecting, the greatest known single exposure of this ancient rock formation in the world. Very little is known at present of the general geology and ore deposits, but it is agreed that the age and formation of the rocks revealed are very similar to those known and worked in the mineral belts of Porcupine and Kirkland Lake, et al. However, sufficient knowledge is available to make it reasonably certain that, if geological work and prospecting are intelligently and persistently followed, results broadly similar to those already obtained will be met with.

The extension of the T. & N. O. main line to James Bay now actively under construction to approximately 100 miles north of Cochrane, will eventually open up this vast region to the prospector, et al., and make available the known china clay deposits, gypsum, etc., and in time develop the vast pulpwood areas and accompanying water powers for the upbuilding and progress of Northern Ontario and the Province generally.

The great importance of Ontario's mining undertakings—more particularly those of silver and gold—is now fully realized by Great Britain and the United States, whose capital is seeking investment in Northern Ontario to an ever-increasing degree.

This is more readily understood when it is realized that within a comparatively few years the dividends paid by the precious-metals interests in the territory served by the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway are shown as follows:

Silver camps during 1926, \$1,765,012.50; total dividends, \$101,640,339.35.

Gold camps during 1926, Porcupine, \$8,510,268.00; total dividends, \$55,665,566.16; Kirkland Lake, \$2,368,464.40; total dividends, \$5,830,839.40.

Totals during 1926, \$12,643,744.90; total dividends, \$163,136,744.91.

The probabilities are that dividends payable during 1927 will approximate \$12,000,000.

To illustrate the vast importance of Northern Ontario's mining interests it may be noted that the Sudbury district in 1926 produced nickel, copper and platinum to the value of approximately \$20,000,000, with a total production of \$317,000,000 since discovery, and paid \$91,356,261 in dividends during that period.

Canadian interest in Northern Ontario's mining development has increased immeasurably in the last two or three years. Several of the Canadian chartered banks are now featuring Northern mining development in their newspaper advertising. Prominent Canadian industrial executives now sit on the boards and occupy presidential chairs of a number of our mining companies.

Investment banking houses of most conservative policies now include mining securities in recommendation to clients, and frequently discuss them in bulletins.

In the United States also greater interest has awakened, and it is estimated that from 25 to 35 per cent. of the capital invested in Northern Ontario is American money.

In the production of gold, Ontario now ranks third in magnitude among the nations of the world. One of its mines, the Hollinger, ranks with the greatest mines of South Africa, both in amount of gold produced and tonnage treated.

The total production of Hollinger bullion to the end of 1926 amounted to \$114,173,038.

What Northern Ontario's mining industry has meant to the rest of the Province is difficult to estimate.

At least the sum of \$60,000,000 annually is spent in equipment, coal, lumber, machinery and necessities of life, and it is estimated that during the past twenty-five years at least \$1,000,000,000 has come out of Northern Ontario, most of which probably remained in the Province.

The Government of Ontario, through the deep interest displayed by the Premier and Minister of Mines, is lending its influence and energies to making known these undisputed facts regarding the rich mineral heritage of the people, and this is reflected in the continual expansion and service of the T. & N. O. Railway.

The extension of the T. & N. O. Railway, through its subsidiary, the Nipissing Central Railway, from Swastika on the main line to Rouyn, Quebec, a distance of approximately sixty (60) miles, is now completed and links up this new mining area with Ontario and Quebec, et al.

This district is now rapidly approaching the production stage, and, generally speaking, the camp appears to be of much greater importance than at any other period in its history, because of the stage of development of the older properties and the advent of hundreds of new companies organized for exploration and prospecting. New discoveries of minerals are of almost daily occurrence, and a spirit of optimism prevails that speaks for success in many ventures.

The extension of the road promises to be of inestimable value to the many properties adjacent to the line and to the area as a whole, and many new properties have commenced work since the means of transportation became available.

The growth of the Rouyn camp has become particularly noticeable during the past year, and the Town of Rouyn has practically doubled within that period. It now has an estimated population in excess of 4,000 people, and is steadily growing, and this applies generally to the Townsite of Noranda, which is now growing fast as the Noranda mills and properties are reaching completion and operation.

Very few mining districts have had the record of so many new discoveries reported as has Rouyn within the past year.

The new discoveries extend through several townships, and on many properties the work accomplished has now reached the point where big developments can be anticipated within a short time.

Expectations for the future growth of the district are generally expressed by those who are in close touch with conditions, and the advent of the T. & N. O. Railway has played a conspicuous part in this expressed optimism.

Rouyn is now as readily accessible as Porcupine or Kirkland Lake, and the journey that recently took the better part of two days from Southern Ontario can now be accomplished within 24 hours by a up-to-date service that connects with all main line trains—north or south—at Swastika Junction, besides the service that takes care of the local requirements in both

directions.

In regard to the agricultural possibilities of Northern Ontario, the great "clay belt" affords one of the greatest expanses of fertile territory in the Dominion. It extends westerly between the Province of Ontario and Quebec for approximately three hundred and fifty miles (350) and contains millions of acres for present and future development.

The soil is chiefly a rich clay or clay loam throughout, and sand and gravel deposits are of rare occurrence, the rock outcrop being generally confined to the banks of lakes, rivers, and minor waterways. Mixed farming, dairying, etc., are in full evidence along the line of the T. & N. O. Railway, and are steadily increasing as the lands are brought under cultivation, and all crops that are produced in Southern Ontario can be grown to even better advantage in the North.

Of great importance—from the viewpoint of industrial development and railway traffic—are the great areas of timber and pulpwood.

Immense modern pulp, paper and lumber industries—second to none on the continent—are established at strategic points, whose mills and plants afford continuous employment for thousands of workers. Every lake, river and stream carries its burden of forest wealth during the summer months. It is a significant fact that Northern Ontario is largely contributory to Canada's status as the principal producer of newsprint, surpassing that of the United States, and likely to record a production of one-third of the world's requirements in the near future.

Power in Northern Ontario, due to lack of coal and cost of transportation from the nearest producing areas, would be only obtainable at practically prohibitive prices, were it not for the fact that modern engineering has solved the problem of transmitting power long distances electrically at a cost that is relatively cheap.

That part of the North in which are situated the gold and silver mines is now amply supplied with hydro-electric power, and of the quantities available one no longer hears complaints. The quality of the service is steadily improving, and satisfaction with this condition is being more widely expressed by operators. The

mining industry knows that its demand for increasing loads will be promptly met as the requirements arise, and this knowledge makes for confidence.

Outside the radius of the present systems, and awaiting the need and the day, approximately 1,000,000 horsepower is available.

The territory served by the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway has other features of interest and attraction outside of its potential wealth and rapidly expanding industries. It is unsurpassed in its appeal to the tourist, vacationist and sportsman. The country abounds in moose, deer, partridge, ruffed grouse and black and brown bear are common on every hand. The rivers and lakes teem with game fish of every description, from the savage muskellunge to black bass, silver trout and brook trout. The Temagami Forest Reserve, through part of which the roads run, is truly a sportsman's paradise—50 miles by 60 miles in extent—and herein lies the gem of the Northern lakes, "Temagami," with its numberless tributaries and bays.

This lake contains 1,600 islands, of which 1260 are surveyed and marked on Government maps, and is bordered by 3000 miles of beautifully wooded shoreline. Though one arrives and departs by fast, solid-vestibled, standard steel trains, yet one mile from the Temagami station one is in the midst of the unbroken forest primeval, surrounded by slopes of pine, balsam and fir; rolling hillside, clad in interminable verdure, untouched by the hand of man; and this condition will continue for ensuing generations, by reason of the fact that it is never to be given over to exploitation, but is always to remain the beauty spot of the Northland.

Much of the hard and risky pioneering work in Northern Ontario has been done. Oncoming generations will see great cities arise where today are villages and virgin forest. The North's vast potential riches will make the nation wealthy.

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