

idea to make the mistake of running to the opposite extreme; and we would not be making slanderous accusations if we stated that Sir John A. MacDonald's Government had fallen into this natural mistake. While the bulk of \$100,000,000 in money, lands, works and guarantees has been expended on the construction of a transcontinental railway, less than one-twentieth part of that amount has been expended upon the improvement of our waterways. It might have been policy for the present Government a few years ago, to maintain this contempt for the utility of these waterways, but the time for persisting in such a course is surely at an end now. The construction of the C.P.R. is fast approaching completion, and is now so far advanced, that the idea of using waterways in our transcontinental highway is no longer necessary, the railway having, with the exception of a portion of the road still uncontracted on the north shore of Lake Superior, supplied all that water could have done. Therefore in throwing aside their apathy as to the value of our Northwestern water stretches, Sir John's Government could not now be accused of adopting a single point of the policy of their predecessors in office. But by adopting a liberal policy in this respect they would confer great advantages on the Northwest, and open up channels of traffic which would prove valuable feeders to the C.P.R., and greatly swell the volume of its traffic. Even if they were determined to follow out a policy of making Northwestern progress subservient to eastern interests the improvement of our navigable streams would in no way interfere with the same, but would only widen the field for eastern operations. It is to be hoped that the visit of Sir Hector to the Northwest will not be without profit in this respect. While the Northwest would profit directly by any assistance granted for this work from the Dominion, Sir John's Government would no doubt be gainers. There are in this country thousands of the Premier's former faithful followers, who are now shaken in their fidelity to himself and his party, but who would only be too ready to again drop into line on his side, were this and a few other concessions made to the Northwest, none of which would make any very heavy demands upon the Dominion Treasury. The political glory, which for a time dazzled people, as the C.P.R. went marching

across our prairies westward at a startling speed of construction, is now rapidly becoming dim in the slow progress made through Rocky Mountain passes, and something is necessary now to revive its brightness in this portion of the Dominion. Sir John cannot find a better process of brightening than in a policy of improvement of our Northwestern waterways.

EMERSON'S DEBTS.

The appeal of the people of Emerson through Sir Hector Langevin to the Dominion Government for assistance in the way of relieving that town of some of its present burden of debt, is certainly a request, which if acceded to, would, according to the logic of many people, furnish a very dangerous precedent, and encourage every reckless town corporation or municipality to appeal to Ottawa for the payment of debts, which were the results of their own folly. It is astonishing how ready we are, when others appeal for assistance, to recapitulate all the folly which necessitated the appeal being made, and the struggling town of Emerson has any number of such Job's comforters at present, who are ready to show such sympathy as the friend of humanity extended to the weary knife grinder. To such people in this country the old adage about glass houses and stone throwing has a powerful meaning at present; for there is no use trying to hide the fact, that luck more than good judgement is to be thanked for other towns in the Northwest escaping the troubles of Emerson.

It is usual to look for a precedent in such cases as the appeal from Emerson, and there need be no difficulty in finding plenty of them. We may not find many town or city corporations to refer to, but we can find innumerable instances of other appeals much less justifiable or expedient being acceded to. Even provinces can change such appeals into demands, like Quebec at last session of the Dominion Parliament, and catch the ear of the Ottawa Government. A non-paying railway or some other elephant is a common equivalent for Dominion favors, and Emerson is in a position to offer better value in this respect, than the Dominion has secured in the most of its dickers. Unfortunately Emerson does not possess sufficient Parliamentary representation to be able to back up its claims with a threat of secession from

confederation, or if it had its success would be certain.

We do not agree with the *Free Press* that nothing but Dominion assistance can save Emerson from repudiation. The town is able to pay its debts if it gets a fair opportunity. But a fair opportunity it cannot now get, for it is in much the same position that some of our unfortunate business men were in during the present year, namely, surrounded by a circle of hungry creditors, most of them as unscrupulous as they are hungry, whose jealousy of each other prevents any practical arrangement for the town to pay its debts. If the Dominion did not advance a dollar to the town, its guarantee of the town bonds would be sufficient to give Emerson a chance, and enable it to get money at moderate, instead of crushing rates. With such an advantage there is no fear, but in a very few years, Emerson would be one of the most prosperous towns in Manitoba. It is to be hoped, therefore, that if the Dominion Government cannot assume the debt of Emerson it can, at least, afford some kind of a guarantee that will give the town a chance of paying its debt.

THE WINNIPEG GRAIN INSPECTOR.

The *Sun*, in criticising the action of the Winnipeg Board of Trade in insisting upon a Grain Inspector for this city, thinks the Board too hasty, and suggests delay until Mr. Van Horne's visit to this city took place, and, with refreshing coolness, adds, that it matters not when the inspection takes place, if it be for the interests of the North-western farmer.

We may inform the *Sun* that the Board took no action in this matter, until the general Superintendent of the C.P.R. refused to meet with its committee upon this subject, a fact the *Sun* seems to have forgotten, although reported in its columns. For the benefit of our contemporary's short memory, we shall mention that Mr. Van Horne has already come and gone, and no further overture for amicable arrangement has been ever hinted at by that gentleman.

We beg to correct the statement of the *Sun* to the effect that it is of no consequence whether Manitoba grain is inspected here or at Port Arthur. The Board of Trade of the city of Winnipeg would certainly forget itself very much, if it consented to the grain of this province being inspected in any Ontario town. Manitoba grain must be inspected and graded in Manitoba, even if the Board have to publicly proclaim grades fixed elsewhere unauthorized and fraudulent.