

power in producing inflation. The wholesaler and his drummer feels that it is safe to sell, and the latter pushes the work with all the power he possesses, and often with more energy than discretion. The bank manager's frown has been superseded by a smile, and a line of credit with him is a thing easy to procure. Even the very cautious merchant is often forced against his better judgement into much heavier purchases than his business will warrant, by the recklessness of some competitor, to be equal with whom, he must carry a variety of risky lines he would otherwise never touch. Very often one or two reckless merchants in a town are the means of forcing the bulk of their local competitors into the worst kind of folly in purchasing, and commence a system of fastidious extravagance among their customers, which in time has its evil effect upon the value of book debts. Under such circumstances it is no easy matter for a man to avoid overstocking, and it must be remembered that in nineteen cases out of every twenty overstocking is not the result of one season's overbuying, but is caused by the accumulation of several seasons or even years. The time therefore to guard against this very prevalent evil is not when depression loom up before us, but with the very dawn of prosperity. By avoiding it in very prosperous times a man may be considered a foggy or a fossil by some, and a commercial coward by others. But commercial recklessness and commercial bravery are two different commodities, just as much as physical recklessness and bravery are. It takes trade depression to bring out true commercial bravery, and when depression comes the most reckless is invariably the most cowardly. The man therefore, who wishes to avoid overstocking must be ever on the watch against the mistake during prosperous times, and he can sleep safely and soundly in the belief that his banker, his creditors and others will preserve him from it in times of depression.

There is an old saying about "time enough to shake hands with the devil when you meet him," and there are circumstances in which this saying is safe and good philosophy. But in connection with the subject now under discussion, we say that the only real safety lies in holding on in a track which it is impossible for his Satanic Majesty to be found in.

EASTERN OPPOSITION TO THE HUDSON'S BAY RAILWAY.

That there is still uncompromising opposition to the construction of a railway from Manitoba to the Hudson's Bay in the eastern portion of the Dominion and especially in Ontario and Quebec is to be seen by the tone of the press in these two provinces, and the tone has grown more persistent and emphatic of late, since the chances of an early commencement of the work have begun to improve. Of course the stubborn and crushing opposition to every project of the kind is a thing of the past, now that a charter is in existence backed by a good land grant and other privileges. But the sneer at the impracticability of the route, and every other negative course of obstruction are still kept doing duty as a scare to those, who would have faith in it.

There is certainly great opposition in the east to this Hudson's Bay outlet, and its opponents have selfishness, or rather think they have it for an incentive to this opposition, whereas the course they thus pursue is a most suicidal one so far as the interests of the provinces east of us are concerned.

It is a common belief with many of our eastern people that development and growth in trade importance on the part of the Northwest must mean a corresponding decrease in trade importance in the east, and this "dog in the manger" creed has more secret professors there than are prepared to openly admit it. Yet the belief is as groundless as can be well imagined. The opening of a railway from this province to Fort Nelson would doubtless open a route over which a large share of the Northwestern grain surplus would be exported. But then if this grain surplus keeps on increasing as it has during the past two or three years, the C.P.R. will be unable before the Hudson's Bay road is finished to empty the country of its grain exports, and before a decade passes, we believe both of these routes would have quite a work on their hands to handle all the grain exports of our country. There is therefore, very little fear but the east will, even after the opening of the Hudson's Bay route, still furnish a highway for a large share of our exports. Of course railways may have to carry it to the seaboard at lower figures than they now get for so doing. But that is a matter for eastern railways to look after,

and which does not effect the people of the east, unless unfavorably as it does ourselves.

Then we have another class in the east, who believes that with the opening of a Hudson's Bay Railway, the Northwestern purchases now made in the east, would be made direct from Europe and via the new route. If we had a system of low tariffs which would be about equal to a free trade basis, there might be practical reason in this belief, but with protective tariffs such as we now have, the manufactures of Europe can be excluded as well at Fort Nelson as at Montreal or Quebec. There is therefore no sound argument to support this last and most foolish of all beliefs.

If eastern men would only look at this Hudson's Bay railway question in a straight manner, they would see that its construction would be a matter of great profit to themselves. For many years to come the Northwest must draw the bulk of its supply of manufactured goods from the eastern provinces. It will be twenty, thirty or perhaps forty years before even Manitoba can have the surplus population and cheap labor to engage in general manufactures, unless in goods where nature has given us great advantages in the way of raw material at hand. The more rapidly the work of development goes on, and the more rapidly our population increases the bigger and wider will the field be here for eastern manufacturers, and in fact the greater will be the trade intercourse between the eastern and western portion of the Dominion. Of course that class of commission shavers who live by the tolls they levy upon the exports and imports of the Dominion might suffer a little, as also might the railways by being compelled to reduce freights to the east, in order to compete with the new and shorter route to Europe. Why the general public should shoulder the interests of these latter, we are at a loss to see, especially when their interests and those of the balance of Canada are in opposition. Every check the public can hold upon the railway interests is a valuable power to hold, and by the construction and operation of this Hudson's Bay railway the business public of Canada both in the east and the northwest will secure a power over the entire railway interests of the Dominion, which will compel a much better service to be rendered by them, than would ever be under other circumstances.