

dollars' worth of grain is pushing for transportation to where it will put money into circulation. We say, and without fear of contradiction, that nothing would do so much to relieve the present monetary stringency in financial circles, as the speedy realization upon the millions of bushels of grain now blocked in the hands of the Manitoba farmers, by a railway monopoly enforced in the interests of one soulless corporation. We should think that business men in the east would see now the iniquity of the monopoly enforced here, and how at the present time it stands in the way of relief from a state of affairs in the east, which if not soon relieved from some source, may bring about a financial crisis any day. Let them carefully ponder over the matter and ask if through their representatives at Ottawa they are going to enforce another year of such an obstruction to the welfare of Canada at large, and crushing pressure upon this young province.

#### LAND TRANSFER.

Nearly five years ago an association was formed in this province called the "Manitoba Land Law Amendment Association," and its aim was to secure the introduction of the Torrens system of land transfer in this province. The association was composed entirely of business men, did not have a single "honorables" on its executive, and had not a man in its membership of known political aspirations. It was simply an organization of practical men, who wished to bring the buying and selling of real estate down to the sensible level, on which the purchase and sale of other commodities were conducted in business circles. Without any political prestige to back them the members of the association looked forward to years of struggle to educate the public and our politicians up to the passing of such a piece of legislation, and so far as the public were concerned their calculations were probably correct. With the politicians the matter turned out differently, for the interests of the party and not the public good have guided the actions of Manitoba Governments for many years back, and it so happened that a shuffle in the membership of the Norquay Government about three years ago left the Premier and his colleagues with a troublesome ex-minister for whom they had to find a comfortable and remunerative position, and they were so situated that one had to be created for him. In this

extremity they found the Torrens land law agitation to be a perfect God-send. Its workings demanded the establishment of a central registry office, and the appointment of a registrar general, and above all it was a measure of reform to which the opposition in the House could not object. An act was quickly framed, introduced into the house and made law, and then the burdensome ex-minister received the appointment as registrar general, the duties of which he was well qualified to fill, and the Government felt relieved.

For once in the history of our province it seemed as if the public interest and political exigencies demanded the same action, and such was the case had the action been carried out with the public interests kept in view as the aim of the act, and all other interests as minor considerations. But from a Government like Mr. Norquay's which was noted for its selfishness and duplicity no such straightforward course could be expected, and the provisions of the act passed made it in many respects a burden upon land transfers, instead of facilitating them. In New South Wales for instance, where the Torrens system has been many years in force the registration fee in a transfer of real estate is one tenth of one per cent. of the assessed value of what is transferred. This covers the cost of the transfer and provides a fund ample to cover all losses that might take place through errors in registration, and we understand that in that colony the accumulated surplus from this source has reached huge proportions. But the greed of our Government made them place the registration fees at one fourth of one per cent. of the assessed value, or two and a half times as much as the fees charged in New South Wales, where the system has worked so successfully. This piece of legislative greed effectually neutralized all the advantages the act might have, and would have guaranteed in land transfer business, and stamped it a piece of legalized extortion. But what better could be expected from a measure made law to serve the ends of political trickery.

As might be expected complaints are numerous against the present land transfer law. Some, which are against its being carried on in a central office for the whole province, are without foundation, and are doubtless circulated by or in the interests of, local registrars, under the old system who see their fees gradually dying away. But complaints made against the expense of transfers under the new system are well founded, and we hope they will receive the attention from

our legislators to which they are entitled. Evidently a spirit of true reform is setting in in Manitoba, and in connection with land transfer law there is scope for its workings.

#### THE HARRISON GOVERNMENT.

Every indication points to the defeat of the Harrison Government, and it may be safely stated that this is already practically accomplished. Its life has been short indeed, and now that it must die, it cannot be said to be dying for its own misdeeds, for as yet the new Premier has had no chance of showing to the House or the public his powers of administration. Before meeting the House his first appeal to the people for the re-election of his Provincial Secretary has met with a decided negative, so that he is ignominiously snubbed at the outset. The voice of two constituencies have already been heard saying in the most positive manner, "we will not have this man to rule over us," and it is plain that public feeling throughout the province will as a rule echo this verdict.

The fact that the Harrison cabinet, with the exception of Mr. Burke, are practically the "last mortal remains" of the late Norquay Government has no doubt had something to do with this want of confidence on the part of the people of the Province, but it is by no means responsible for it all. Among the number who have called loudly for Harrison's defeat, are many who have all along been rigid conservatives, and are but recently ranged on the side of provincial rights, without abandoning their conservatism on other points. To such the policy outlined in Thursday's speech from the throne should be acceptable in every respect. Indeed most of this class, although not officially informed on the matter, are convinced that Dr. Harrison and his present colleagues are in a very small degree, if at all, responsible for the worst faults of the late Norquay Government and yet they refuse to have faith in the Doctor and his colleagues at this juncture. When pressed for reasons it is found, that it is want of faith in his ability rather than his intentions, which has alienated support of this kind. There can be no doubt but Mr. Norquay held power for years, while practically baffling the desires of a large majority of the electors of the Province, simply because he possessed that ability which most people think that Dr. Harrison lacks.

We hope to hear immediately of some one being called upon to form a Government who is in a position to do so, and we hope the man called will have the sense to gather around him a cabinet, comprising the business ability necessary to successfully grapple with the affairs of the Province, in their present tangled state, and one free from the political barnacles and imbeciles who have so long muddled provincial affairs, even if he has to go outside the membership of the present House to secure the right men.