

to them no more than New Brunswick is to Old Canada. They will think that they have a peculiar title to their own lands, and will jealously scrutinize every use of them, or of the money raised by selling them, for objects in which they have no special concern, particularly if, at the same time, they find themselves in want of the railways and other means of communication, without which expanses of prairie, be they never so fertile, are worth no more than so many millions of acres in Sahara. In Manitoba symptoms of political life and of a consciousness of Provincial interests are just beginning to appear. If the pressure of the tariff is felt by her population, as felt it is likely to be, and indeed with regard to coal already is, her assumption of an independent attitude will be hastened, and a strain will so much the earlier be put on any compact made at her expense, which she may not deem to her advantage.

Our own conviction on the general question need hardly be repeated. We should deprecate the committal of the country to the construction of those portions of the line which, as matters now stand, must be deemed unprofitable, that is to say, the Mountain section and that to the north of Lake Superior. We should deal with the whole subject on a commercial footing, being persuaded, that what is best for the country commercially is also best for her politically, and that her greatest danger is the accumulation of debt, which may ultimately deprive her of the control of her own destinies. We should have said—“The North-west Territory is a rich heritage which has fallen to Canada. Let us first thoroughly open up the territory itself and realize the wealth which it contains, by providing it through its whole extent with railways and by inviting population. If, when this is done, a surplus fund of land still remains, let it be applied to the completing of an inter-oceanic line within the Canadian border, if that seems desirable; if not, to the reduction of the national debt.” There are those who believe that the antagonism between Canada and her neighbours, on which the project of a political and military line is founded, will continue and even increase: there are others to whom it seems