

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, APRIL 27, 1886.

THE HUDSON'S BAY RAILWAY.

If any reliance can be placed upon the transatlantic news by cable during the past week, there is some hope that the construction of a Hudson's Bay railway will be commenced during the present year. We are not disposed to place too much reliance upon the news thus received, but the possibilities of the future foreshadowed in the dispatch to the *St. Paul Globe*, are so extremely Canadian in their tone, and so in keeping with the system of charter-peddling carried on in connection with the affairs of the Northwest, that cautious people here might question if after all, the opening of the Hudson's Bay route would be an unmixed blessing to this country.

That the opening of a railway from this province to the shores of the Hudson's Bay would be the greatest impetus to north-western progress possible at present, is the fixed belief of almost every well wisher of this country. But when we come to such a conclusion it is only after taking a superficial view of the question, and making no allowance for the legislative eccentricities which might be indulged in at Ottawa, and the peculiar manipulation the great undertaking might be subjected to by charter peddlers, whose greatest anxiety is to make as much as possible out of the whole affair.

The cablegram we have referred to gives a hazy forecast of the kind of difficulties the Hudson's Bay railway project may yet have to pass through. The opposition of the Hudson's Bay Company is taken into consideration, and vague hints of monopolies in connection with the northern outlet, which might prove as much a burden and check upon north-western progress, as the railway monopoly to the south, under which we have been groaning for the past few years.

We have learned from experience that great public undertakings in Canada are not always carried out with the good of the people as the first aim, but are often made to supply the carrion around which political vultures are allowed to fatten, and although a charter for the construction of a Hudson's Bay railway is now in force, and its intentions are very definite, the necessary amendments to make

it come within the grasp of the political barnacle, can soon be supplied at Ottawa. The recent unseemly wrangle between two Dominion M.P.'s about the "Backsheesh" to be levied off the construction of the Northwest Central railway, supplies a clear indication of the arrogance and impudence with which Ottawa politicians assert their privilege of putting their hands into the public purse. It is no doubt humiliating for the Canadian public to admit that matters have reached such a state in our political affairs. But we have reached that state, and until a complete revolution takes place in the political theories of Canadians, we must submit to all the injustice heaped upon us, or try to, and meet the aggression on our interests with weapons as unscrupulous as those used by the aggressors.

There can be no doubt, but in the now existing Hudson's Bay railway charter we have a measure in which the interests of the public of the Northwest are more, and of the political barnacle less looked after, than is usual in connection with the granting of such charters. This we may attribute to the incredulity of eastern politicians when it was granted as to the possibility of the road being constructed during the present generation. The chances of its being constructed are now good, and more than one Ottawa politician now winces under the belief that he has let a good thing slip past him. It would no doubt be a grand chance, to get the charter once more before Parliament for amendments, especially if such amendments included the granting of some monopoly or monopolies to capitalists. Capitalists before Parliament asking for a monopoly, are good fat chickens to pluck, and no class understand the plucking process as well as the barnacles which hover around Ottawa legislation. Thus if the Hudson's Bay railway charter comes again before Parliament, we may expect its projectors, or intending constructors to secure swinging monopolies in their favor, and to pay unlimited "backsheesh" to the political barnacles and parasites who support their claims. Of course north-western resources will have to pay the piper in the long run, and his bill is likely to be a long tailed one.

In the Northwest we are already in doubt as to whether or not the opening of direct rail communication to the Atlantic will counterbalance the evils of the C.P.R. monopoly. It might be that all the bene-

fits the opening of a Hudson's Bay outlet would confer, would be outweighed by the monopolies and other drawbacks which would surround it. If as is indicated in the telegram above referred to, monopoly as to the navigation of the Hudson's Straits, and the seal and walrus fishing of the bay are part of the prices of a Hudson's Bay railway, we might ponder over the question of the eventual value of such a railway.

COLLECTING IN MANITOBA.

Elsewhere in our columns will be found a communication from Messrs. J. D. Gillies & Co., of Minnedosa, one of the first mercantile firms in north-western Manitoba, which shows the foolish steps taken at times even by respectable wholesale houses, to make collections in this province.

Our correspondents deem themselves (and justly so) subjected to treatment, such as would be expected from no respectable wholesale concern, and the most generous view which can be taken of the whole affair is, that there is a difference of opinion between them and the wholesale house in question, and the latter acts with great indiscretion in adopting anything but straight legal means in securing a settlement of the same, if they cannot arrange the matter amicably with their customer.

There is a very mistaken idea prevalent among eastern business men, regarding facilities for making collections by process of law in Manitoba, which we are desirous of correcting. The opinion has spread, in the east, that the Exemption Law passed a year ago, (a villainous measure no doubt), has placed traders in this province in such a position, that collection from them is impossible, everything they possess being exempt from seizure by the law referred to. The facts in the case are, that the law in question, while it gives to our farmers sweeping exemptions, some of which are expedient if not just, and some unwise and unwarrantable; and while it furnishes a shelter under which bursted speculators can cover some of their property from their creditors, it does not exempt a dollar's worth of the merchant's stock, book debts or business resources of any description. In fact, the measure was passed by a Legislature, scarcely a member of which had a dollar's worth of interest in mercantile affairs, but composed in a large measure of men