

Stewart, of Roantheaite, a descendant of royalty we may be sure. Charles Stewart, in search of a new kingdom in the North-West, is on a fool's errand.

The convention was, to say the truth, very much of the screeching order. One speaker modestly claimed that, when the Hudson's Bay Company sold the territory, less the one-twentieth reserved in the fertile belt, these lands belonged to the people who lived in the North-West: some few dozens of persons, mostly half-breeds. For "cheek," this bit of rhodomontade cannot be surpassed. The convention committed itself to the assertion that Manitoba must have the control of all the public lands within its borders, including school lands, and compensation for the lands that have been sold. This claim has no foundation whatever, either in law or equity. The Dominion of Canada purchased the lands from the Hudson's Bay Company, just as the United States purchased Louisiana from France, and Florida from Spain. It went to the expense of paying the cost of extinguishing the Indian title. And then it undertook, at a cost of untold millions, to build a railway to the Pacific Ocean, for the purpose of making these lands habitable. The demand that the lands be handed over to Manitoba cannot even be entertained. When a person lets it be understood that he desires to possess himself, without purchase or other ground of right, of the property of others, that disordered state of mind which the confession attests, when it leads to overt acts, is called by an ugly name. The bluster on this subject may as well cease at once; for nobody, in these parts, has any sympathy with men who openly talk of confiscating the property of others.

It would almost seem from what was said on the subject, that one of the principal objects in calling the convention was to push the promotion of a railway to Hudson's Bay. There is no current topic on which so much loose talk is indulged in as this. When ships have to pass through a sea and two straits choked with ice, it is obvious that the time of the voyage cannot be measured by distance. Far too little is known of this navigation to justify rational men in going to the expense of building a railway to Hudson's Bay. The assertion made by one speaker that Hudson's Bay is open all the year, shows a recklessness of statement which would not pass unchallenged, in any assembly which desired to get at the truth. In winter, no one standing on the shores of Hudson's Bay can see any water; though water, we can readily believe, there is some miles from the coast.

The deputation sent by the Convention to the local government was instructed to say to that body, that it ought to demand the right to charter railways anywhere in Manitoba, free from any interference; that, in other words, it was thus to set aside the constitutional compact and to break the public faith pledged in the charter of the Pacific Railway Company. It was also to ask the control of all the public lands; to ask, through an intermediary, the whole Dominion to hand over its property without compensation. The bare statement of the demand carries a sufficient answer to it. The convention also wanted power given to

municipalities to build elevators, mills and warehouses. Enterprises of this kind are only proper to be dealt with by private or associated capital. The municipalities have nothing to do with such works and could not carry them on successfully. Nevertheless, we think the local government would have made a mistake if it had refused to receive the deputation, as one Winnipeg journal said it had done. Much of what the delegation had to urge could have been easily answered. Public men are under an obligation to listen to complaints urged by the force of numbers, even more than individual complaints; and it often falls to their lot to be obliged to refuse in as gracious a way as possible, passionate demands urged with all the engery of unreason. The Premier, Norquay, approached the railway question with true courage. He said, what no candid person could think of disputing, that the Province had the right to charter railways within its own limits; but that it had no right to charter a railway to connect with the American system. He might as well have said that he had a right to commit manslaughter as that the Province had a legal right to charter a railway to connect with the American frontier.

The monopoly of the Pacific railway may some day have to be broken, and if that happens, the company will have to receive compensation; but there is no present necessity, in the limited business of Manitoba and the North West, for other railways. A Winnipeg journal shows that the passenger rates on the Canada Pacific are not so high as those on the Northern Pacific. We quote the figures:

N. P. Passenger Rates.

St. Paul to Fargo	275 miles	4c. per mile.
Fargo to Mandan	200 "	5c. "
Mandan to Livingston	556 "	6c. "
Livingston to Helena	124 "	7½c. "

1,155

C. P. R. Passenger Rates.

Port Arthur to Brandon	568 miles	3c. per mile.
Brandon to Medicine Hat	527 "	4c. "
Medicine Hat to Summit	300 "	5c. "

1,395

Making the average passenger rate on the C.P.R. for 1,395 miles four cents per mile, while the average rate on the Northern Pacific for only 1,155 miles is nearly 5½ cents. And of the freight rates of the two roads those of the Northern Pacific are the higher:

Freight Rates.

Distance.	C.P.R.	N.P.
10 miles	15c.	17c.
25 miles	24c.	25c.
50 miles	35c.	38c.
100 miles	54c.	61c.
150 miles	69c.	80c.

Railways in new countries, where the expenses are heavy in proportion to the business done, rates and fares must necessarily be comparatively high. We cannot fairly compare those rates with rates charged in the old provinces, where the business is much greater. It is something to know that if rates and fares are high on the Canadian Pacific, they are higher on the Northern Pacific.

Some modification of the duties on agricultural implements ought to be made, though the demand of the convention that they should be removed altogether is not likely to be conceded. The call for a lowering of the duties on articles which enter into daily consumption in Manitoba, is too inde-

finite to be met one way or another. It would be difficult to make sectional concessions.

The real grievances of the Manitobans are few, the imaginary grievances many. The real grievances must be attended to; the imaginary grievances will die of themselves. In this so-called farmers' movement, too many indications of the hand of the professional agitator are visible. Farmers should be chary of allowing themselves to be led by men like "Col." Atwood, an American militia-man with a high-sounding title. The wild scheme of separation from the Dominion, though fathered by another, found its best and worst advocate in him, to whom there can be little doubt the real paternity belongs. A separate confederation, composed of Manitoba, the North-West and British Columbia, would be absolutely at the mercy of the Indians and the Chinese. In a community so feeble and helpless as this, there could be no security for life or property and immigration would cease. "Col." Atwood's game is too obvious to deceive any one; and the convention acted with wisdom when it kicked his separation project out for doors. After this, Col. Atwood's power of mischief will probably not be formidable.

THE PROPOSED INSOLVENT BILL.

The representatives of the Boards of Trade of Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton, have had a conference with the Government at Ottawa on the subject of the measure for the distribution of assets of insolvent traders, for the enactment of which all three Boards concur in asking. The Toronto Board was represented by its president, Hy. W. Darling, and Messrs. R. W. Elliot and H. Blain; Montreal by Messrs. J. P. Cleghorn, H. Shorey and Jno. Kerry; Hamilton by Messrs. Alexander Turner, M. Leggett, and W. F. Findlay. The government was represented by Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir Leonard Tilley and Sir Alexander Campbell. After a full discussion of the subject in its general bearings, the usual promise that the proposed bill would have the best consideration of Government was given, and the deputation withdrew. The promoters of the measure appear to consider the reception accorded them as an augury of success; but that the members of the government present on the occasion should commit themselves or the Government to any definite cause was not to be expected.

The bugbear of jurisdiction came in during the conference, for its full share of consideration. Should the Government be indisposed to grant the relief asked for, it is more than probable that the supposed doubt on this subject will be made to do duty as one of the excuses for non-interference. This makes it all the more imperative that the mist which has been raised in certain quarters on this point should be dispelled. Redress in the matter of distribution of assets of insolvent debtors is urgently needed. There is every reason why the law on the subject should be uniform throughout the whole Dominion; and no clear reason why it should be otherwise. No authority but the Dominion Parliament can pass the law which the country wants. Nor is there, we