

dow of the car. Here and there are belts of wood, chiefly elm, and these must be treasures of their owners. At the different stations, little hamlets, the premonition of future towns and cities, have been planted. I am opposite one of them as I write, and am reminded of how rapidly some of the arts of civilization penetrate the wilderness. There are half a dozen stores, nearly every building in fact being a store, and one restaurant as it appears; but what attracted attention was the fact that in the centre of the room—or building, for there was but one room—was a billiard table, at which a couple of young men were having a game. If they never take to worse amusement, as a recreation, than a game of billiards, they may be considered as tolerably safe. We see large expanses with the wheat cut, and in sheaf, and at one point the steam thrasher is at work. The wheat crop in the State it is said is not panning out as well as it promised to do. The *St. Paul Pioneer* of Saturday refers to the fact, and states that there is considerable disappointment among the farmers at the result. Such information as I could get from those in a position to give it was in the same sense, the general testimony being that the average of the state will not be much over ten bushels to the acre.

Even that average gives an enormous aggregate, and the question of transportation becomes the burning question of the Northwest as producers, and of the East as carriers and shippers. I hear of another scheme which is said to be backed by strong influence in which Montreal and Quebec have a very decided interest. It is said that a party leaves St. Paul this week to go over the ground. It is a proposal to build a railway from St. Paul to Sault Ste. Marie, crossing at that point, and then proceeding to connect with the Canadian Pacific Railway north of Lake Nipissing. If any of my readers will take the time to look at the map, they will find that the line from St. Paul to Montreal is almost a direct one. The estimate is that a train leaving St. Paul by the proposed route will reach tide water at Montreal in between three and four hundred miles less distance than by the present routes via Chicago and south of the lakes. That difference is certain to settle the question of transport by the northern line, and to ensure its construction. And as St. Paul is now the distributing point for the north-west country, it is not difficult to estimate the numerous advantages certain to result from such a rail-

way. A comparatively short line from Duluth would connect with it, and thus make it the eastern outlet for the Northern Pacific, as well as of the trade of the Canadian Northwest coming over the line from Winnipeg to Pembina.

I hope no patriotic Canadian will become excited over the fact that a large part of this line, when built, will be in United States territory, that it will be built with United States money, and controlled by United States enterprise and energy. I remember that the idea embodied in this scheme is substantially the same as that which Sir Hugh Allan propounded in his Peterboro speech. It is true that in his case he did not make St. Paul an objective point. His proposal was to carry the line north of Lake Huron, to cross at the Sault, and thence to connect with the Northern Pacific at Duluth. But it had the same result in view, that of making the Northwest, both American and Canadian, tributary to Canadian shipping interests. He was denounced as a traitor for the suggestion. The *Globe* and its satellites pointed out how detrimental in Manitoba would be impeded by Yankee immigration hummers attacking the immigrants on the American part of the road and inducing them to settle in the United States. A road exclusively on Canadian territory was declared to be the only thing worthy of Canadian support. That has been in office during five of those years, and what have they done? They left office with a link of a hundred and eighty miles of line from Thunder Bay to Selkirk inlet, with the Pembina branch uncomplete, simply in the interests of the Donald A. Smith and Kitson clique of anti-Canadian manipulators. We ought to have had by this time a Canadian summer route to carry immigrants into our Northwest territories, and we would have had it but that the interests of the clique required postponement, and the late Government could not resist the appeal. But the question of getting the grain of the Northwest out is an entirely different question from that of getting immigration in, and it is in the interest of the former that I hope to see the scheme I have referred to carried out. Upon the success of such enterprises in the West, and upon the success of the Harbour Commissioners and the Government combined in lessening the expenses of the port of Montreal in the East, must depend the future of your city as a great shipping point for the produce of America.

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