

It is now quite certain that the Canadian Pacific Railway will be completed and in operation from the Atlantic to the Pacific within two years from this fall. With such a result accomplished, what will be the position of Manitoba and the North-West in respect thereto, provided little or nothing is done meanwhile by way of building subsidiary roads. Simply that of being unable to make the line available, except to a few settlements. Nearly four-fifths of the fertile belt would still be without railway communication, and the most productive sections of Manitoba, while almost within hearing of the sound of the Pacific Railway cars, would be excluded from their advantages. Provided the Act is passed this session and the work of construction under it should immediately follow but a few hundred miles of road could be made ready for operation by the close of 1886, and for these reasons I urge immediate action.

4th.—There is a strong probability that the passage of the Act which I propose will be the means of facilitating railway construction in the North-West.

I am not in a position to state positively, but from representations made to me, which I cannot but accept as trustworthy, I regard it as very probable, that immediately following the Act which I propose, a strong company will be formed, representing English, United States and Canadian capital, sufficient to construct, at least five hundred miles of local railways in the North-West during the next four years. With sufficient encouragement to the enterprise on the part of the Government, I have but little doubt that such a result will be accomplished.

5th.—The operation of the roads which I ask Federal legislation to authorize will be a profitable business for the companies which may control them, and a decided advantage to the settlements which will thereby obtain connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway.