

now held. How long the Dominion Government are prepared to resist such a demand we leave those most interested to judge. It is safe to say that they will not long resist it, and even from the point of keeping faith with the C. P. R. company, they cannot be expected to long extend the time. The monopoly guaranteed was to enable the company to act for the benefit of Canada at large. If however, that company allow the whims of a foreign adventurer, whom they have made their dictator, to raise the voice of a whole province in protest, the Government would be pliable indeed, that would support them in their course of folly. The closer union of the different provinces of Canada was the principal aim of the C. P. R. undertaking, but next to that came the development of this great prairie land. Seemingly the C. P. R. general manager intends that trade development shall not be included in this work. It remains to be seen, if the Dominion Government hold to a similar belief. Before the present year has half rolled over, Sir John A. Macdonald and his colleagues will have an opportunity of supplying information on that point, and it is well that the matter will be thus brought to a test before an election comes around. The action of the Ottawa Government should furnish a guide to undecided electors at the polling places, and we hope they will be guided by the same. We have a lingering belief that this action will be in the right direction, for we cannot believe that any Government of Canada can be perpetually guided by the whims of an imported monte-bank, who for four years has shrowded blunders in bluster and incapability in insolence and impudence, and whose erratic and incomprehensible wriggling and twisting has made the construction of the C. P. R. a national burden far heavier than it might have been, if carried out under the supervision of more sensible men, or men with Canadian patriotism reaching beyond the mere desire to make as much money as possible out of the work.

MANITOBA IMMIGRATION.

Times are getting better is the general expression among business people in this province at present, and there can be no doubt but the trade feeling is one of a satisfactory nature, while the outlook is encouraging. With the same number of people now in business in this province

there is a living for all in the future so far as can be judged, but at the same time there is no prospect of a remunerative field for many more new business ventures. To be plain upon the matter the number of mercantile concerns in the province is already quite large enough compared with the population of other classes, and we have reached a point at which we must have more immigration or our trade progress must come to a standstill, if indeed a movement in an opposite direction does not set in.

In a former article THE COMMERCIAL drew attention to the fact that Manitoba as a province had never spent one dollar in the direction of securing immigrants, and all that had heretofore been done in this respect was accomplished by the Dominion Government, the C.P.R., the Northwest Land Co. and other landed corporations all of which are interested in carrying immigrants away west of the boundaries of our province. Immigration of that kind is of very little value to Manitoba, especially when we have still millions of acres of our finest lands still unsettled and open for settlement. That some effort must be made by Manitoba for the settlement of her own lands is evident, and the address delivered by Mr. J. H. Ashdown at the last meeting of the Winnipeg Board of Trade outlines the manner in which that effort can be put forth, and points to the Local Government as the power which should head such a movement. The meaness and cantankerous action of a few greedy speculators can frustrate any effort an association of land owners may make. City and town councils can only expend their efforts within the limits they preside over, and Boards of Trade and other such self supporting institutions are powerless to grapple with such a work. A Government only can wield the necessary power to carry out equitably and for the benefit of all under it a system of immigration and settlement, and if the Government of Mr. Norquay will only undertake and carry out such a work, it would wipe out all their blunders of the past few years, and give them a renewed lease of power, which would be signed by the votes of the electors all over the prairie. On the other hand the opposition which will adopt such a policy need not be long in opposition to the Government that will be foolish enough to oppose it.

In following out such a policy a Govern-

ment should aim to secure settlers who must live by the products of the soil on which they settle, and if necessary let the speculative land grabber know that his unoccupied and untilled lands are required for such a purpose. Of course the cry of vested rights may be raised and echoed. But our present collection of legislators will not be troubled with conscientious scruples on that point, and if they are, a look over the legislation of last session should quiet their scruples. There is no kind of property in the disposal of which a Government has more right to interfere than lands, and if lands which have passed from public control, are made a barrier to settlement and progress, it might be justifiable as well as expedient that they should again be put under a similar control. Existing rights to the extent of fair values could be easily looked after in so doing, but there is neither justice nor reason in respecting the greed or whims of speculative cranks. Lands are granted by the Crown to be made of value to the public as well as their owner, and ownership should depend upon their being made so.

There is another point in which the disposing of our vacant lands requires special attention, and that is in the selection of the class of settlers or purchasers. In most other matters we are crying for capitalists to take a hand, but in this work they are not what we most want. Our speculative land owners have waited long enough for the monied class to become purchasers, and when they were fortunate enough to secure such lands passed merely from the hands of one speculative obstructionist to another. Some of our land holders are still fastidious in the class they wish to sell to, and prefer the man with a spare thousand pounds or two and ambitious to become a land owner to the poor but industrious immigrant with the knowledge and will to cultivate the soil. We think we have had enough of this patronizing class, and are now convinced that twenty poor but industrious farmers can do more for a country than one wealthy one on whom industry is not compulsory. We want producing farmers even if they are poor and have to receive financial aid for a time. Poverty is no crime in Manitoba, nor even a chronic disease with the industrious, and a Government should aim to make it as a temporary ailment as light as possible upon the agricultural settler.