

Truly this was turning out a "powerful" and "profitable" combination for Mr. Foster, but hardly so for the women and children from whose money he was "ing "rake-offs."

ANOTHER CREW ON DECK

The Montague crowd did well, but they were out-dune by the next syndicate that came along. This was composed of Mr. J. H. Pope, ex-M.P., Mr. George W. Fowler, M.P., Mr. W. H. Bennett, M.P., and Mr. A. A. Lefurgey, M.P. These gentlemen wanted to do a turn in western lands, too. They had been touring the country with Mr. Borden, the party leader, had seen the rush for farm lands and concluded that if they could get between the settler and the land they could make him put up handsomely to get them out of the way.

In the fall of 1902, they began negotiations with the C.P.R. for an option on a large block of the Company's lands. Mr. Fowler and Mr. Pope interviewed the President of the Canadian Pacific and also consulted Mr. Daniel Mann, of the Canadian Northern, to learn where that road was to run. How they were received by these dignitaries Mr. Fowler tells Mr. Lefurgey in the following jubilant letter:

OCTOBER 4th, 1902.

Dear Lefurgey:

We have succeeded beyond our wildest hopes. We wired D.M., and he met us at the train, Toronto, and took us to his office, and gave us the route as far as located; of course, under cover of the strictest secrecy, so keep it mum, except in Borden, Bennett and yourself. We expect to have a wealthy Englishman named Lister and Col. Pellatt in the combine with us. We have increased the thing to 200,000 acres. On arriving here we interviewed Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, and have every reason to expect most generous treatment as to terms and prices. He said, we should get the best that was going. We want to arrange a meeting there when the party returns to Montreal. Tell Messrs. Borden and Bennett about the meeting. It will be necessary for, at least, two of us to go this fall and locate, as it could not be done in the spring, and that is one of the things that must be arranged at the meeting.

GEO. W. FOWLER.

Thus early in the game it appeared that the syndicate were hand and glove with the C.P.R., and that Mr. Borden, if not interested in the enterprise, knew about it, and was expected to take a hand in engineering it.

Does any sane man suppose that the railroad magnates were distributing their favours to a group of members of Parliament in this manner, for nothing? What was the service they could render in return? Why should Sir Thomas extend concessions that exalted Mr. Fowler into the seventh heaven of joyous anticipation? Why should the Vice-President of the Canadian Northern receive them with open arms and give them exclusive inside information where the new road was to run? Do railway magnates do these things for nothing? Not in Canada.

What was the return the M.P.'s were to make? Well, the Grand Trunk Pacific project was launched a few months after; the air was already full of rumours of it, and when it was launched, these gentlemen fell upon it with fury. Was their attack on the Grand Trunk Pacific the price they paid for these favours received from Sir Thomas and Mr. Mann? Did they get the favours on condition that they would make the attack? The verdict of reason is that they were bought and paid for by the favours of the two corporations, and that they were merely delivering the goods when they assailed the new comer.