

the same in the North West as it has been in every place where we have had land companies. The immigrants will first settle upon the lands of the Government, upon the homestead and the pre-emption lands; but after a certain while, when they commence to be crowded, both from outside and within, they will squat upon the lands of the Company, and then one of two results must follow—either they will be ejected by the agent of the Company, or they will be compelled to submit to the extortionate terms that will be forced upon them by the Company. We know well that the majority of the settlers will be poor, that the majority of them will have no other means, no other capital, than their able bodies, and we know well, by experience in the past, what exertions it requires for such settlers to pay up the instalments on their farms, when they have to supply the requirements of their families and to furnish their farms. Moreover, by-and-bye, municipal Governments will have to be organized in that territory, roads will have to be laid out and opened, and yet this Company cannot be taxed for these roads, which will be a constant source of litigation and bitterness in the country. Against all this, what have we? What is the safeguard, what is the guarantee that we have against the possible, I should rather say the certain, evils of the proposed system? We have, as a guarantee, only the good will of the Company itself. It has been asserted, on the other side, that the present members of the Company are men of the highest character, and certainly every one may assent to this; but if the men who now constitute the Company are men of the highest character, who knows who will be the members of the Company ten years hence, five years hence, or even six months hence? Who can say that six months from today, this Company will not have gone to New York, and, for a money consideration, bartered its interests to foreign capitalists, giving them the privilege of locating the line themselves, and of still further oppressing the settlers on the Company's lands, in order to recoup themselves for the consideration they have given to the Company? But, Mr. Chairman, whoever may be the members of this Company, we know that they are of the human race, and it is a well known fact, and one illustrated by the whole history of mankind, that men in every station of life, where they are not checked by positive laws and regulations, will abuse their position to the detriment of others, if they can gain any advantage by it. And we have an example of the way in which this Company will treat the settlers by the manner in which they have treated the Government. They have driven a hard bargain with the Government. They have obtained the most onerous terms from the Government; and if they have extorted these onerous terms from the Government, what is it for? Is it for the pleasure of gaining a moral victory over the Government, and making no use of it, or is it not to make the best use they can out of these onerous terms, to make the land they obtain worth to them all they can make out of it? On the whole, therefore, the position of the settler in the North-West, will be, under this contract, the position of a Tantalus, before a well dressed table, at which he cannot satisfy his appetite. The settlers cannot settle on the lands which are close to them, without submitting to the terms of the Company.

Mr. PLUMB. They will settle on the Government lands, alongside.

Mr. LAURIER. But I presume the hon. gentleman does not suppose the population of this country should be confined only to the Government lands. Look at this matter in any way, and it is this: that you create a most monstrous monopoly. We, from the Province of Quebec, know what a monopoly is, and I call the attention of my colleagues from that Province to our experience under that monopoly. In that province we had a bitter experience of the seigniorial rights, and we had to try hard before we could get them

abolished. There was a monopoly of the right to establish mills held by the seigneurs, and we wanted the right extended to the people at large. I am free to say that if that privilege had been refused us by legislation, it might have caused a rebellion. I think every Province of the Dominion has had its land company. There has been one in Ontario, one in New Brunswick, one in Quebec, and one in Prince Edward Island; and I am quite certain I can appeal to the experience of every hon. member of this House from these Provinces to say that the results of these monopolies have been everywhere and at all times the same, namely, to retard settlement and press heavily upon the energies of the settlers; that they have everywhere been a curse and a bane. This has been the case with regard to land companies which have not one-tenth of the powers which have been granted to the Syndicate by the present contract. It is said, and I have been reminded by the hon. member for Niagara (Mr. Plumb), that there are blocks of land reserved between those which have been granted to the Company. We have reports to the effect that we have 250,000,000 acres more land in that country, though we have not such accurate information as yet as will enable us to be absolutely certain upon that matter. However, I am quite ready to believe that we have 200,000,000 acres space in that country; but when we deduct from that the land covered with lakes, streams and marshes, the mountains and hills, the barren lands, and those which are unfit for settlement on account of climatic conditions, lands which are only fit for grazing purposes, and we further deduct the portion which belongs to the Hudson's Bay Company and those reserved for school purposes, what will remain for our settlers over and above the 25,000,000 acres allotted to this Company? Looked at from whatever point of view you choose, there is not a single redeeming feature in the gigantic monopoly which has been given to this Company. There is another objectionable feature in this contract—not perhaps objectionable *per se*, but rendered so by the nature and condition of the country at the present time. This contract forces us to go on immediately with the construction of the road along the north shore of Lake Superior. We are all agreed that a Canadian Pacific Railway must be built on Canadian soil. We all agree on the point.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Hear, hear.

Mr. LAURIER. I do not think there are two opinions in regard to that matter.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Your leader differs from you.

Mr. LAURIER. No; he says that we should go on with the building of the road as the requirements of the country may demand. I have never heard expressed here the opinion that the Canadian Pacific Railway should not be built. The only point upon which there is any disagreement is as to the expediency of building the whole road at once, or only as rapidly as the wants of the country may require. I think it must be perfectly manifest that this section on the north shore of Lake Superior is not required at the present time, that its construction might be advantageously postponed until some future period, and that it would be quite sufficient, at present, to build the eastern section as far as Sault Ste. Marie. The fertile plains of the west are separated from the east by an extent of barren territory in the region north of the Lake, while it happens that the route along the southern shore would pass through some of the best lands on the continent—through several of the most important States of the Union. Would it not be better, under those circumstances, to bring the road immediately to Sault Ste. Marie, tap the American system of railways, and secure not merely the trade of our own North-West, but a large share of the traffic from those States. This is so evident, from a geographical point of view, that I will not stay to discuss it. There are two policies