

WHY DID THIS EXPANSION NOT BEGIN BEFORE 1902.

When did this expansion begin? Why did it begin then?

Prior to 1902, there was the same fertile soil, the same undeveloped wealth. The C.P.R. main line had crossed the prairie for 16 years. Northern Pacific branch lines had been in Manitoba for 12 years. The Laurier Government, we may remind our Liberal friends, had been in office for six years, and a Liberal Government had been in office in Manitoba from 1888 to 1900. Yet during the ten years previous to 1902 railway construction in Manitoba was almost at a standstill.

Why did the era of railway construction not begin before 1902? What radical change in the situation took place then?

WHAT CHANGED THE SITUATION?

In 1901, the Manitoba Government made its celebrated contract with the C. N. R. The company agreed to buy the Northern Pacific lines in that Province, and to complete a main line of its own from the prairies of Manitoba to a port on the Great Lakes. The government agreed to guarantee the bonds of the company. (Statutes of Manitoba, 1901, cap. 39 schedule A, 5, 6.)

The new railway which had to be built to complete this main line lay entirely in the province of Ontario. The contract did not call for the building of one mile of railway in Manitoba in return for the bond guarantee. (S. of M., 1901, Cap. 39). But what was the effect upon railway construction in that province?

The C. N. R. have since then built some 2,000 miles of new railway in that province, and have now a greater mileage there than the C.P.R. How did the Manitoba contract bring this result about?

The C. N. R. wanted branch lines to serve as "feeders" to their main line. Every ton of through freight delivered to the main line from branch lines, meant so much more revenue from the main line.