

first news I heard was, that the lovely frontier country I had just passed over between Paris and Strasbourg, was swarming with hostile armies, French and German, and that where I had seen only peace and contentment, was war, bloodshed, ruin and desolation.

The Future of Canada
(As Seen in 1884)

Every mail brings tidings of new and astonishing strides made in the exploration and development of the Canadian North-West. The Prairie villages of last spring are transformed, as by an enchanted wand, into towns, by the swift advance of population into the erstwhile silent wilds. Fort Garry of two or three years back has become the City of Winnipeg, with its ten thousand souls. The surveyor's footmarks are effaced by the construction of the railway tracks (C.P.R.) at the rate of a mile and a half per day. Men who left Toronto a few months since, with little or no means, are already returning eastward with thousands of dollars in the shape of bank drafts which represent the gains on purchase and resale of prairie farms or town lots. No past experience of Western growth, even in the gold begotten San Francisco or railway-made Chicago, has prepared us for the rapid changes such as those going on before our eyes in the wilderness of Manitoba, in the very centre of the broadest part of the great continent of North America, and a thousand miles from either the Atlantic or the Pacific Oceans. It was the Marquis of Lorne who lately styled Winnipeg the heart-city of Canada, and the phrase seems to have been very happily chosen.

The grain growing lands of the Canadian Northwest, it is now known, are the most prolific and extensive in the world. Her copper, her silver, her iron, her coal mines, yield to none in productive capacity. The lakes and rivers are unsurpassed in extent and value. She has timber, shipping, railroads and men equal to any demand that can reasonably be anticipated.

The broad outlines of the Canadian entity include a boundless territory, a brave and hardy population spread along a frontier of 2500 miles, but possessing within itself all the elements of healthy moral and material progress. Every new rail line, be it remembered, gives a promise of vast supplies of food and of luxuries in exchange for that food. The most recent, and what to us (and to Great Britain) may prove the most momentous is a rail line planned to connect the City of Winnipeg with the waters of Hudson's Bay at Fort Churchill. The estimated five months season of navigation is only one month shorter than that of the St. Lawrence River. A line drawn from the north of Ireland to say Japan deflects very little from the shortest air-line between the two extremes. Whether the St. Lawrence or the Hudson Bay route will ultimately prove the more economical we are not now concerned to discuss. But it requires no seer to foretell that in case of hostile interference with the St. Lawrence Route, Britain's interests will be best subserved by the most northerly route, as will also those of Manitoba and all places west thereof. The inevitable conclusion from all this seems to be that Great Britain and the Canadian Northwest must continue to be inseparably united.