

# The Commercial

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## RAILWAY COMPETITION.

It would appear that along the Red River valley is not the only region through which the Northern Pacific railway is being extended toward the Manitoba boundary. Reference was lately made to the extension of the Northern Pacific system to St. Vincent, opposite Emerson, Man. Now the *Manitou Mercury* reports a Northern Pacific survey party working just south of the international boundary in the vicinity of Crystal City, Man. It is said that the object of this is to extend the Devil's Lake branch of that road to the boundary in that locality. The activity shown by the Northern Pacific Company in building branch railways through northern Minnesota and Dakota has no doubt been greatly stimulated by the rivalry between that company and the St. Paul & Manitoba Railway Company. The latter company has been "carrying the war into Africa" at a pretty lively rate during the past few years, and its last attempt to parallel the former company's line into Helena, Montana, has aroused the Northern Pacific to renewed efforts. A vigorous invasion by the Northern Pacific Co. of the great wheat districts lately claimed as the exclusive territory of the Manitoba road, has now been inaugurated, and will no doubt be pushed forward until the Northern Pacific system reaches all principal points. The competition thus engendered will be of great benefit to the settlers of the States named, and will not be without its influence upon this province.

As the Canadian Pacific Railway is the ally of the Manitoba road, as well as a rival of the Northern Pacific, it may be expected that the latter company will do all in its power to bring itself into advantageous competition with the Canadian road. The most effectual way of doing this would be to tap Winnipeg, which would at once bring the two Pacific railroads into direct competition for the trade of this province, not only with the Pacific coast, but also with the East, *via* Duluth and the South Shore route. All that lies between the consummation of this result is disallowance, and the building of about 150 miles of railway over a level prairie. The latter can be overcome

in three months, by a little push in the way of railway building. The former can only be overcome by a firm and determined expression of the will of the people of Manitoba.

In view of the almost incalculable advantages which would accrue to this province from the extension of such a system of railway competition into the commercial centre of the country, the determination to overcome disallowance and monopoly must be shown in a more forcible manner than it has ever yet been expressed. The opportunity of obtaining an alternate route to the Pacific coast, whereby our merchants would be placed in a better position to compete for the trade of British Columbia, and which would have the effect of doing away with the discrimination in favor of Montreal as against Winnipeg in the competition for the Pacific coast trade, should not be allowed to slip by. Direct connection with Minneapolis and St. Paul, in competition with the Canadian Pacific Railway and St. Paul & Manitoba combination, there to connect with the independent lines for Chicago and all points east, west and south, we cannot afford to miss without a struggle. Above all we cannot afford to have railway connection with Duluth put off a single season longer than possible, when it is known that such a connection could not but prove of the greatest advantage to our exporting and importing trade, especially in exporting grain, etc. All these great advantages could be secured by the extension of the Northern Pacific branch, now terminating at East Grand Forks, Minnesota, to Winnipeg. The prospect of an early extension of the Grand Trunk Railway system to Sault Ste. Marie, and thence to connect with the Northern Pacific, adds immensely to the importance of securing an entrance of the latter road into this province. When, therefore, the Northern Pacific Company knocks at the door of our province for admission, as it will likely do during the coming summer, such a united effort must be made by the people of Manitoba in favor of its admission as it will not pay the Dominion Government to disregard. Relief from monopoly is at hand, if the people of Manitoba stand firm for their rights.

## LAND MONOPOLIES.

Notwithstanding the sudden collapse which overtook the colonization fever a few years ago, it would appear that there

is still some disposition to embark in similar enterprises. The latest thing mentioned, which partakes of something in the nature of a colonization scheme, is the gigantic project originated by Sir John Lyster Kay. This titled gentleman is negotiating for vast tracts of territory in the Northwest, which he proposes to stock with cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, etc. Attention will also be given to raising cereals, bringing in settlers, building up villages, etc. This is to be done by means of a company with a capital of \$5,500,000. The land will be selected in blocks of 20,000 acres each. The wisdom of encouraging these gigantic landed schemes may be called into serious question, and many reasons can be urged against the advisability of allowing vast tracts of territory to become locked up in the hands of individuals and corporations.

It is one of the great arguments used in the old country in favor of emigration to Canada, that each settler can become his own landlord, and be free from the evils of landlordism which have to be contended with in Britain and continental Europe. If large landed estates are an evil in Britain, (and Canadians, as a rule, profess to believe that they are), they will be a still greater drawback to this free western country.

The old colonization companies, for the establishment of which there was such a rage a few years ago, had many favorable features in comparison with the scheme of this titled Britisher, yet these colonization undertakings were looked upon with merited suspicion by many. The colonization companies did not propose to hold the title for the lands granted them, and settle it with tenants. They were bound to colonize at least one-half of the property with settlers, and these latter were to obtain a clear title for their holdings, the same as if they had taken up Government land. The supposed advantages to be derived from these colonization companies were, that they would increase immigration in their efforts to settle their holdings, and that they would materially assist immigrants in locating and establishing themselves in the country. In return for this the companies were to be allowed a portion of the land, not in a solid block, but in alternate sections, in their own title.

The scheme proposed by Kay, however, partakes of the nature of a vast landed proprietary arrangement, and a