

## THE COMMERCIAL

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### PROPOSED NEW WATER ROUTE.

Millions at Ottawa appear to be able to entertain interest in the proposed French River route. Hon. Mr. Tarte seems to be particularly enthusiastic in regard to this route, and he has brought it up on several occasions recently. It is stated that from an engineering point of view, no great practical difficulties stand in the way of opening the route. The distance from the mouth of French river, on Georgian Bay, to Montreal, is about 100 miles, which it is claimed that an engineering party has naturally made available and 48 miles can be made navigable by improvements, leaving about 20 or 30 miles of canalizing. This, however, includes the Lachine canal, already built, leaving only about 21 miles of new work to be done.

A committee of the Senate reported on this work some two or three years ago.

One feature of the work frequently referred to in the report is the enormous waterpower that could be rendered available. One of the engineers examined said that the Ottawa river would furnish a greater amount of water-power than any river on the continent. Water-powers could be developed from 20 to 40 miles apart along the entire route.

Reviewing the evidence presented, the committee concluded that the construction of a canal is beyond a doubt feasible and practicable.

The proposal was to build a canal in the best of water. One of the engineers figured out that the cost of carrying grain from Chicago to Montreal via this route, would be 50 cents per ton, or 1 1/2 cents per bushel for wheat. The cost from Fort William would be about the same. There would be, of course, a great saving of distance in the proposed route, the route being well on to 400 miles shorter than via the great lakes to Montreal. In concluding their comment on the evidence given and information secured, the committee says:

"Its construction will be of great commercial advantage to the trade of the country, as it would, an additional outlet for the conveyance of the heavier grades of freight from the West to Montreal and Quebec. It would also from its being a more direct route and shorter, save the effect of winter on the transportation upon these freights; for instance, grain from Lakes Michigan and Huron is laid down in Montreal at a lower rate, and at

Quebec at no higher rate than the lowest ever yet reached between the lakes and New York. Consequently a great deal of that trade which now goes by way of the Erie Canal would be diverted to Montreal and our Canadian ports. And, furthermore, your committee are unanimously of the opinion that the development and use of the enormous water power along the route for electrical purposes, in the mining and smelting of iron and other ores which are so abundant in the Ottawa Valley, and which cannot now be developed, by reason of the want of cheap communication and transportation, would of itself almost warrant the construction of the canal. It would also develop an enormous industry in the hard wood, pulp and other lumber industries of the Ottawa Valley. The development of all these industries and the opening up for settlement of the country will necessarily be means of creating employment for the masses of the Dominion, and its construction is not only advisable but necessary."

"The also extend attention to the advantage to be derived therefrom, as respects the present settlers of the west, and the future generations that would ensue in the future to the increase of the agricultural population of that fertile section of the country,

vessels could be used than on the lakes, on account of exemption from storms. Insurance would also be much less.

### NORTHERN PACIFIC TO RE-ENTER MANITOBA.

It is announced that the Northern Pacific Railway Company will again invade Manitoba. With this object in view two railway charters have been purchased. One of them is the Manitoba, Midland and Western. This charter was granted in 1899 authorizing construction from the international boundary at or near Emerson north-westerly to Carman, thence to Portage, thence westerly between the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Manitoba & North Western branch to the western boundary of the province, with branches to a number of points. No construction has been done on any of these proposed lines. The purchasers of the charter are asking for an extension of time wherein to commence work, the time for the commencement of construction as originally fixed having expired. The other charter secured is that of the Manitoba Central Railway Co. This char-

terly dare offer any serious opposition in this matter, in the face of the unanimity of public opinion in favor of freedom of railway construction. One of the strongest objections to the bargain made between the Manitoba government and the Canadian Northern, was the fact that it involved the purchase of the Northern Pacific lines in Manitoba by the Canadian Northern, thus forcing the Northern Pacific out of the province. If the latter company decides to come in again, by the construction of new lines, it will corroborate the feeling of general dissatisfaction felt at the withdrawal of the company from this province. On the other hand, Manitoba has assumed a great financial obligation in guaranteeing the bonds of the Canadian Northern, and it may seem unwise to some to permit further railway competition, in view of this obligation. Under the circumstances, the province is deeply concerned in the success of the Canadian Northern, so that we may not be called upon to meet the financial obligations undertaken in guaranteeing the bonds of that corporation. Increased competition would naturally lower the earnings of the Canadian Northern. The people, however, will not demand considerable treatment for the Northern Pacific in any proposals to build lines in Manitoba.

### New Harvester Works.

Canada is likely to have another large factory for the manufacture of harvesting machinery. The year of Chicago, the Deering Harvester Co. plant at Brockville, but this plant was only a make-shift as the factory is not capable of turning out nearly as much work as the factory in the Canadian trade. The western trade for Deering goods is supplied from the Chicago factory. It is reported that the company has decided to build a new factory at Port William, Ontario. The question of Mr. Kennedy, superintendent of the Deering Co., has been investigating different points, and among other places has visited Port William. The advantages which Port William offers are that the location between the east and west would be readily accessible, and that the factory is a large part of the Deering business will be in the west, the Port William factory should be a good one from this point of view. Port William also has the advantage of low water freight rates for raw material which would be used at the factory. Port William would, in fact, occupy about the same position in the Canadian trade to that of Chicago in the United States. The Deering Harvester Co. is the largest and best of the U. S. manufacturing harvester machinery companies. The company's army of something like 5,000 hands will be cut down to 1,000 this year, and it will be a great thing, as a factory in our Dominion, to have the company establish a factory in our Dominion, and a great thing for our Lake Superior port to secure that factory.

### Municipal Elevators.

The bill to allow municipalities to go into the grain elevator business, was read a second time in the Manitoba legislature on Wednesday. The bill is as follows: Chapter 100 of the revised statutes of Manitoba is hereby amended by adding thereto the following: "The council of every rural municipality may, by resolution, authorize the municipality to erect, own and operate grain elevators within the municipality and to receive the proceeds for the construction, operation and repair of such elevators and to issue debentures to secure the interest on the payment thereof on the rateable property within the municipality."

There is a possibility that elevators will be offering for sale cheap in Manitoba within a few years.



Proposed Water Route between Georgian Bay and Montreal via French and Ottawa Rivers and Lake Nipissing.

by affording them easy, cheap and safe transportation for their products, and thus the large area of land, now unproductive would become owned by a desirable producing class of settlers, who would consequently be contented, with the absence of the Dominion. Under the various circumstances your committee would strongly recommend the contemplative enterprise to the favorable consideration of the government, and that they may be pleased to extend such assistance in such manner, mode and conditions as will ensure the early construction and speedy completion of the work, feeling quite assured that the people of the country, when they are made aware of the advantages to be derived from the undertaking, will duly appreciate any action the government may take to facilitate the construction of a work of such national importance; it being an all-Canada route, open and to the seaboard to the west."

The vast benefit to the Dominion which would result from the opening of the route is not a debatable question, providing waterways could be opened at reasonable cost. It is only necessary to imagine a large part of the enormous traffic of the Great Lakes passing through an interior portion of Canada, building up cities and industries along the route, to say nothing of the local improvement of the country served thereby.

Being an inland route, it would be a cheap route, as a cheaper class of

ter authorizes construction of a line from a point on the Lake of the Woods westerly to Emerson, thence via Rosefeld, Roland and Rathwell to Carberry and Neepawa and northwesterly to the provincial boundary. Amendments are now also asked to permit of building extensions to these proposed roads, and for amalgamating the two companies.

It is hardly the unexpected which is likely to happen in the evident decision of the Northern Pacific to re-enter Manitoba. The company's line now terminates at the boundary, and it would be the most natural thing in the world that the company should seek to extend its system to some of the larger centres in the province. The Northern Pacific Company made a wonderfully good sale of its Manitoba lines. Indeed, the general manager of that road has stated that they could build new lines of the same mileage for half the sum obtained for the old lines. As a business proposition, therefore, the sale of the old roads and the construction of new ones is apparently a good move for the Northern Pacific. It is said that there is some opposition in the legislature to granting the legislation desired to enable the Northern Pacific Company to build the proposed roads in this province. The legislature, however, will