

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, AUGUST 17, 1886.

TIGHTENING THE GRIP.

Many are the rumors now afloat regarding the alleged and still uncontradicted resignation of Mr. J. M. Egan, general superintendent of the C.P.R. and his removal to a similar position in connection with the St. P. M. & M. road. A few uninformed people were ready, when the rumor first went round, to attribute Mr. Egan's changing to dissatisfaction with his present position, or a desire to once more make his home under the sheltering wing of the American eagle.

Those who have been on intimate terms with Mr. Egan, are aware of no reason he can have for dissatisfaction, and it requires only a very slight knowledge of him to know that he is possessed of too much solid sense, to allow his national prejudices to interfere with his business, or to become as patriotic as the Hibernian, who preferred being hung by the neck in "Ould Ireland" to dying a natural death in any foreign land. We must therefore look for a cause for his removal in another quarter.

We believe the secret of Mr. Egan's moving to St. Paul can be found in the fear, that another far reaching effort is being made, to tighten the grip of railway monopoly around the Northwest. A St. Paul journal has stated, and probably with more truth than we have any desire to believe, that the C.P.R. Company have acquired control of the St. P. M. & M., and Mr. Egan's change is only from one position in the employ of the company to another.

There are many circumstances which favor this theory, which we now put forth. Monopoly has a pretty firm grip on this country at present, but not so firm, but united and resolute action on the part of the people of Manitoba, would compel any Government in Ottawa to remove it. The heads of the C.P.R. Company see this clearly, and their game now is, to put the possibility of competition by a southern route as far away from the boundaries of Manitoba as possible. With the St. P. M. & M. in their clutches, Fargo is the furthest north point at which a connection could be made with an American line, having any route through Minnesota to Lake Superior, and then the Northern

Pacific with a rather round about one would have to be made use of. The direct road from Minneapolis to Sault Ste Marie, is one of the railways of the near future, and to make this of any material advantage to the millers of Minneapolis, the C.P.R. must be depended upon for a connection with the Atlantic seaboard. This fact gives strength to the rumor that the leaders of the C.P.R. Company are about securing a controlling interest in this new short cut from Minneapolis to the Atlantic, and once they secure that and the road to Sault Ste. Marie is built, their grip on the Manitoba monopoly is as tight as a vice. They can even put pressure upon that other monopoly the Minneapolis Miller's Association, and the influence from there will be strong in binding the chain of railway monopoly around this country.

Hitherto there has been heard a cry of Canadian patriotism in support of the C.P.R. monopoly, but we wonder where patriots would find inspiration in such an arrangement as we outline. At present our Manitoba millers find it hard to compete with those of Minneapolis in the Montreal market. The relative duties on wheat and flour are no protection to them from such competition, for milling in bond, as arranged in the United States, by a rebate on exported flour made from imported wheat exceeding the Canadian tariff on flour, gives the Minneapolis miller an actual advantage to start upon, and during the last few months the millers of Minneapolis have had their flour carried to Montreal for twenty-four cents a hundred via Chicago, while millers in this province have been paying the C.P.R. about double that rate for carrying theirs direct to Montreal. When the road from Minneapolis, to Sault Ste. Marie, is built and controlled by the C.P.R. that company will have to carry flour from Minneapolis to Montreal for less than twenty-four cents, to compete with the existing roads, and we feel certain that they will not make any reduction in the rates from Manitoba. When they commence carrying flour from Minneapolis for less than 24c, and from Manitoba for about 50c, they will be accomplishing the patriotic work of crushing the millers of Manitoba, Ontario and even Quebec out of existence, and placing our Atlantic markets at the mercy of the Minneapolis Miller's Association. There is one way which Canadian millers may evade being crushed out, an

that is by reducing the price of wheat bought in the Northwest seven or eight cents a bushel, and in this way they can bestow all the benefits of C.P.R. patriotism on the Northwestern grain producer, and thus our farmers will pay the piper in the long run.

ANNEXING CANADA.

It is truly amusing to read the effusions of the rank and file of the United States press on the subject of annexing Canada, an undertaking which it is generally assumed in such quarters, requires only the edict from Washington to make it a fact, for the great majority of the people of Canada are eager to rush under the wings of the American eagle. All this is so much pardonable national egotism a feeling not confined to the United States, for the press of every free country, might be accused of displaying it. From a matter to smile at such national gush becomes something to create pity, when we see it made use of in such a periodical as the *Banker's Magazine* of New York. Under the heading of "Financial facts and opinions," that magazine has a paragraph on the late Nova Scotia elections, and accounts for the unexpected results by accepting them as another proof of the desire of Canadians generally for annexation to the United States. After pointing out the folly of simple secession by Nova Scotia, and relegating loyalty to the British connection to office holders and sentimental people the *Banker's Magazine* concludes its article with the following.

"But what the vast majority of Canadian producers, laborers and business men want more than anything else is to earn more, live easier, and accumulate property more rapidly. They want, in short, the market of this country, which is, and long will be the best one in the world. If they can get it by reciprocity treaties they would probably prefer it, but if it is only by annexation that it is obtainable they will go for that. We should have had Canada long ago if the Southern States in 1854, then having the absolute political control of this country had not deliberately and designedly prevented it by negotiating the Canadian Reciprocity Treaty of that year."

The first sentence of this statement is perfectly correct. The people of every country want to "earn more, live easier, and accumulate wealth more rapidly," but the great bulk of the Canadian people see clearly, that this is not to be reached by