

assigning conditions of settlement, is removed in favor of this unfortunate Syndicate. I say, Sir, that if they are going to establish an immigration agency it would probably be to their interest to see the free grants settled, and they could afford to hold over a very large area of their territory until the labor and industry of the free grant settlers had made the roads and bridges and improved their farms, and thus made their untaxed domain valuable. I know that there is another element that is calculated to induce them to settle the land early; I am aware that there is a large element of profit to be derived from settlements by railways. I know that, in the prairie country, we are told that ten miles on each side of a railway will support a railway. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I believe it to be true, but what makes it true? Why it is the rates they charge. It is because they are landlords of the area of twenty miles. That is the reason it is profitable, and unless you have given them power to exact those extortionate rates, they will not have the great interest to which I have referred, to get settlers on their lands. Then there is, it seems to me, a practical privilege of abandonment, for I do not see anything in this contract of reverter of the railway to the Government, or reverter of the lands to the Government, in case they fail to complete the ends, or either end after building the middle. Again, they have great privileges as to telegraph lines, as to elevators, and we know what extortion is practiced by combined elevator companies, and as to other matters. Again, they have the right to build railways just wherever they please. The hon. gentleman said: "What, do you complain of that? Why, in the United States any man can go and build a railway wherever he pleases." The hon. gentleman has become in the course of this discussion, an ardent admirer of United States legislation. I want to remind him that whatever the virtue of that mode of legislation may be—and it is not now under discussion—we are not contrasting the situation of the Syndicate with reference to the happy inhabitants of the United States who enjoy those privileges; we are contrasting the position of the Syndicate with reference to Canada and Canadians, and their roads, and the legislative policy that exists with reference to private persons building railways in this country. These are what we have to compare, and the comparison is not satisfactory, irrespective of the special provisions of this contract, because it has not been our way to give to any individual or number of individuals the power of making and declaring themselves a corporation and taking possession of lands and building railways wherever they pleased. If the hon. gentleman is disposed to devise a general policy of that kind, let him bring it down and dispose of it *pari passu* with this measure; but if he gives this railway power in such a manner as to render it difficult to grant charters to other companies, do not let him tell us that he is putting the Syndicate on a level with his fellow countrymen—with other Canadians—when he says that they shall have what no other Canadians have power to do, power to build railways wherever they please. Sir, it is a serious matter to say to all the rest of the world, you must come to Parliament and run the risk of getting a bill through, and getting it on whatever terms the Government may decide, while these people shall have the right to build wherever they may choose. It tends to prevent people from coming to Parliament to get legislation. They will say, "What is the use of us going down to Parliament. The moment we find a scheme for a road, make explorations and surveys and prepare our bill, the Syndicate, which is rolling in wealth, will just fyle a plan in the Secretary's office and go on and build the railway;" and if they do take some steps to carry out their project, the Syndicate may step in and run their railway in a way highly prejudicial to their interests. It would not only give the Syndicate privileges and advantages and

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monopolies which are refused to all the rest of the world; but they have the right to build anywhere; they have the right to choose their route—there is no restriction on them as to the course their railways are to take. They may go south with their main line. They may, instead of making it the backbone of that country, instead of placing it in the position approximately in which it is now placed, sweep down very much to the south and take into their main line the whole of the traffic, and thus prevent any kind of competition almost, and greatly deteriorate from the advantage of the railway as a great central line intersecting that country. It is true we have a protection. We have the protection of the consent of that Council which has signed this contract, but what kind of protection that is, Sir, I will leave to you to say. But they may do something more; they may run branches anywhere north, anywhere to the south side of their line. Yes, anywhere to the south or south-west, anywhere southerly, anywhere westerly, yes, no prohibition for them. They can go down, if they please, if it is to their interest, down by the Turtle Mountain to Sault Ste. Marie, or any way which will connect them with the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway, if only they can get on good terms with that corporation, if only they can agree with themselves, for we know they are in fact and substance the St. Paul & Manitoba Railway Company, and though they are perfectly free to go where they like and make any arrangements they please with American lines, nobody else must. Oh, it would never do, after you pay them a price and a half for building the road and give it to them and allow them to take whatever they please for fares and freights—it would never do to allow any one else to build south or south-west. No; they must be protected in their vested rights, and there is a prohibition for twenty long years that no one else can construct any line which shall go south or south-west of any line which shall go within fifteen miles of that abominable boundary. But they may go themselves; they only may touch it, they can do no harm. They are the country, they are the Government, and, of course, they can do no wrong; but all the rest of us are prohibited solemnly, by the Parliamentary contract, which binds our descendants as well as ourselves; binds all those who may be induced to go into the North-West; declares that in the constitution of any new provinces to be created out of that vast territory there shall be inserted a constitutional provision divesting the inhabitants of that country of the right to build railways wherever they may think advantageous to them, and leaving them to the mercy of the Syndicate. They have the absolute right; you cannot restrict them; you cannot say others can build with the consent of Parliament, for the Syndicate have the absolute unconditional right to build in a way from which every body else is absolutely excluded. Now, there is in this a practical monopoly of the trade of the North-West Territory secured by law for at least twenty years, and it probably means *in perpetuum* to this corporation. There is no security for the accommodation—none for the accommodation whatever. Those men are to have the absolute powers, but there is no security as to the class of accommodation they are to give to the public, and there is no practical security for the rates. The hon. gentleman referred to the clause in the General Railway Act, and he glorified himself in the fact that the Government had been so careful of the interests of the country that they had actually imposed certain limitations upon this corporation which did not exist in the Railway Act. That Act says that 15 per cent. profit shall be the minimum below which you shall not reduce the tolls; we have cut it down, he says, to the modest figure of ten. Now I need hardly observe that this corporation stands in a somewhat different position relatively to Parliament and to the country from the great mass of railways in Canada. The great mass of railways in this country have been constructed out of resources