

# The Commercial

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## NORTHWESTERN REPRESENTATION.

In common with other parts of Canada, there has already been a good deal of agitation throughout Manitoba and the Territories regarding the elections for the Dominion Parliament. The probability of an early dissolution of the present House has set the party machines in motion, and professional politicians, political party wire-pullers and independent aspirants have for some time been shuffling around actively preparing for the fray. As to the actual date when the elections will take place there seems to be a glorious uncertainty, and the general public will be kept in the dark on this point up to the time of the issue of the Governor's proclamation settling the matter. In the meantime those demagogues who are "quite intimate with Sir John," you know, and who are kept fully informed as to the doings of the Cabinet, will continue to throw out sundry vague hints, accompanied with knowing winks and nods, as to what they have been informed in the matter. These parties could no doubt enlighten the public as to the date fixed for the elections to take place, but, of course, it would never do for them to outrage the confidence reposed in them by giving the thing away. In the meantime the wire-pulling and organizing goes bravely on, and new aspirants are daily appearing upon the scene.

In spite of all the knowledge monopolized by the favored ones, the Government will bring on the elections when it is considered to its interest to do so. The state of uncertainty thus produced is not without a demoralizing influence to a considerable extent upon commerce and industry. The knowledge that the Government can dissolve the House at any time, must always have a tendency to unsettle the public mind to a greater or lesser degree, as the usual limit of the Parliament draws toward a close, and this in turn is reflected injuriously upon business to no slight extent. It would, therefore, seem in the interest of the commerce of the country, that some definite time should be fixed for the regular dissolution of Parliament, whereby this needless excitement and unsettlement of the national pulse months before the proper time, could be done away with. When the

vultures commence to gather it may be taken for granted that there is carrion in the vicinity. Likewise when the candidates and wire-pullers show unwonted activity, it may be considered that an election contest is not far off. Thus the country is thrown into a feverish state of excitement which is rendered more intense by the air of mystery surrounding the situation.

What might be termed a peculiar feature in connection with the preparations in the Northwest for the next Dominion elections, is found in the fact that the prospective candidates have been largely outside men. Although the Northwest is supposed to be not one whit behind any other part of Canada in the education, intelligence and ability of its population, yet it seems that we have few men in the country fit to go to Parliament. At least, this must be the inference drawn from the present aspect of affairs. It has often been the boast of Northwesterners that our population is largely composed of the cream of the older provinces, but in inviting outsiders to represent us in Parliament, the lie is given direct to this proud boast. And just here is one of the worst features of the case; and that is, that the people of Manitoba and the Territories have, in several instances, invited these outsiders to become candidates for constituencies in this country. What would the people of Nova Scotia or Vancouver's Island think of a Manitoban becoming a candidate in their country? It is certain that such a candidate would be looked upon as possessing a full supply of that commodity usually termed gall. Yet in finding men to represent the Northwest in Parliament, the Dominion has to be ransacked from the little Atlantic province of Prince Edward Island on the east, to the Pacific Coast on the west. To say the least, is not this an insult to the intelligence of the people of this part of Canada?

It is, perhaps, going a little too far to say that these outsiders have been invited by the people. In one or two instances invitations emanating from party gatherings have been sent to eastern politicians, but as such gatherings are usually manipulated by wire-pulling demagogues, it could hardly be said that the invitation was endorsed by the people. In other instances, formal invitations have been extended, but interested parties have been endeavoring to work up a feeling in

favor of certain outsiders, no doubt with the approval of the latter. Still in other cases these outsiders have personally forced their claims upon the people, whilst others, more modest, have only hinted of their willingness to serve the country, should they be largely requested to do so. All this comes of the lingering feeling in the older provinces, that the Northwest should be used as a sort of preserve for the rest of the Dominion, and it is only applying to politics what has frequently been claimed by the people of the East in commercial and other matters. This the people of Manitoba and the Territories should resent in every form.

Notwithstanding the many outside candidates named, we have in this country as good material from which to select parliamentary candidates, as can be furnished by any other portion of Canada, so far as the best interests of this country are concerned. Although it would be an insult to the intelligence of the people to return to Parliament as representatives for the Northwest, outsiders—men gathered from all portions of our broad Dominion,—yet this is not the worst feature of the case. Of all parts of Canada the Northwest, as a whole, is the least known by statesmen at Ottawa, but at the same time it is above all that portion which requires the greatest care in matters of legislation. Its vast extent, in comparison with the rest of Canada, is hardly imagined by those who have not travelled through the country, whilst its great natural resources require most careful and intelligent handling for their proper development. Now, at the commencement of the settlement and development of this great region, is the time to lay the foundation for its future. How important is it, then, that this foundation should be laid broad and deep and on a solid basis. The greatest drawbacks which the settlers in the Northwest have had to contend with ever since the territory passed under the control of the Canadian Government, have been brought about by legislation created by men who were practically ignorant of the wants and requirements of the country. Legislation affecting the most vital interests of this vast stretch of country, included in the term Northwest, has been directed from an Eastern standpoint, by Eastern men, and always in the