

the property more than anybody else: no one must be allowed to say that he will cut off the streets from the water. It is proposed to fill in the water front nearly 400 feet south of the Windmill line, the line to which, until recently, the filling was to be confined. The new line, sometimes mis-called the new Windmill line, encloses a water space, and the title to it is still in the Government. A grant of this extension was expected by the city for public uses, and it is said that a patent was made out, when a new competitor appears in the C. P. R., which claims it partly for a public purpose, and partly for a private purpose—any purpose, in fact, to which that company may think proper to apply it.

The latter part of the declared purpose of the company would be an abuse of the right of expropriation, which should always be confined to public uses. The company claims the right to rent such parts of the property as it may not require, or to build boat-houses on it, in fact to do with it precisely as it likes. This claim is an incident of the ownership of property, no doubt, when the acquisition is free and not compulsory on one side. But here the case is different. When a railway company is permitted to expropriate property it obtains a privilege denied to individuals, and the deviation is justified on the ground of necessity and public utility; the answer to objectors is that the company requires the property for a public use, in carrying on its business as a common carrier. To this extent expropriation may be justified; this is a point which we have no intention to dispute. But we must protest against a claim that would justify expropriation for any purpose, if exercised by a railway company. Sir John Macdonald remarked, when this question was first before the Railway Committee, that the company ought to be allowed to put the property to whatever use it liked, if it filled in the water space. This condition, we submit, would in no respect justify such a use of the water front or any portion of it. In this particular, the company ought to have no greater right than an individual. If the mere converting a water space into land would enable a company or an individual to do what it or he liked with the land, obtained by expropriation presumably for public purposes—for that is what the extraordinary power contemplates—there would be great danger of the privilege of expropriation being universally abused. If one company obtained such a license, the same privilege would be claimed by dozens of others, and without gross favoritism it could not be denied. In that case the public interest would be subordinated to private aims, under pretence of public utility.

If any latitude such as is now claimed can, under the law of expropriation, be maintained, then the time has come when we must partially retrace our steps, and insist on this privilege stopping at the limit of public interest and public necessity. It never was contemplated that this great and unusual privilege should be exercised for private ends. A company has no more moral right to claim its exercise for private uses than an individual; if we ever went

beyond this point, the right of expropriation would be practically unlimited, and no man would be safe in the enjoyment of his property if some one else desired to obtain it.

If the city were in possession of this extended water front, it would see that no obstruction was put in the way of the exercise of public rights. In this point of view, the city would be the safer custodian of the property. Assuredly the company can have no right to expropriate for any other than the purposes of its legitimate business. If it put part of this water front to private uses, it might do so to the detriment of the public, especially of rivals, actual or possible, present or future. It is, perhaps, well that this extravagant claim has been made, since it must cause the just limits of the exercise of the right of expropriation to be rigidly scrutinized and settled on fair and defensible grounds. The C. P. R. does itself no good in constantly showing its disregard of the rights of others in proclaiming its monopolizing desires. The only effect is adverse to itself, by engendering a fund of hostility to its plans and distrust of its purposes. The result must be, unless a change be made in its policy, that this corporation will create such a mass of antagonism that it will be found hard for the company to get bare justice where it has been wont to revel in the sunshine of favoritism. But a change of policy rests with itself, and we shall not commit the folly of throwing away advice upon imperious incorrigibility.

LOAN COMPANY DEBENTURES.

It was long considered, on both sides of the Atlantic, a very anomalous thing that while bonds of various kinds were accepted by the Finance Department at Ottawa as deposits by insurance companies, the debentures of our best mortgage loan companies were refused by the department. We have repeatedly urged the absurdity of such a refusal. It was not wonderful, under the circumstances, that the Ontario Association of Land Mortgage Companies made representations to the Government that such a restriction as had been made should no longer be maintained. And it is agreeable to learn, as we now do, that the Treasury Board has directed that the debentures and debenture stock of three out of the five classes of companies doing business in Canada may be accepted as deposits on behalf of insurance companies.

Very properly, the Government has laid down strict requirements, with which every company must comply before its debentures can be accepted. It is wisely decided to approve only the companies which possess limited borrowing powers, and are restricted to investments usually considered the safest that can be had. These requirements are as follows:—

1. The company shall have kept strictly within the powers in relation to borrowing and investment conferred upon it by the Act under which it is incorporated.
2. It shall have a paid-up capital of at least \$500,000.
3. It shall have been in successful opera-

tion as a loan company for not less than ten years.

4. It shall have a reserve fund amounting to not less than 25 per cent. of its paid-up capital.

5. The stock shall have a market value of not less than 25 per cent. premium.

It is also directed by the Treasury Board that the debentures of such companies as come under class III., viz.: those incorporated under private Acts, and fulfil the foregoing requirements, and whose borrowing powers and powers of investment are not greater than those of companies coming under classes I. and II., may be also accepted upon the terms above indicated.

Every application on behalf of an insurance company for the acceptance of any such debenture or debenture stock must form the subject of a special reference to the Treasury Board, and the company is required to supply all necessary particulars (properly certified, if required) for the information of the board.

BANK MEETINGS.

Very good earnings are shown by the Imperial Bank of Canada, which has paid eight per cent., added \$50,000 to Rest, written off \$7,281 from bank premises and furniture, and carried \$21,900 forward, a result which may will be termed gratifying. The increase in discounts keeps pace with that in deposits, and we observe that some \$300,000 additional has been invested during the year in Dominion, Municipal, and other debentures, in accordance with a settled policy of the bank. Reference is made in the report to the opening of branches of the bank under favoring circumstances at Portage la Prairie and Sault Ste. Marie.

After providing for everything in the way of assets which they "considered in any way weak or doubtful," the directors of the Standard Bank were able, out of the profits of the year to pay seven per cent. dividend, add \$30,000 to the Rest, and carry something forward. They did not earn as much this year as last, but considering the different circumstances the bank did very well. The general statement exhibits its customary satisfactory features.

The directors of La Banque Jacques Cartier, finding earnings increased by \$14,000 over the previous year, have raised the dividend of the bank to seven per cent., after doing which they carry forward \$18,000 at credit of Profit and Loss Account. The bank has got rid of lawsuits which troubled it for years, and not only locked up its capital but involved heavy costs. It is now in a better position to earn profits. We observe a reduction in the item of "various securities," but still must remark that a sum of \$136,000 overdue out of discounts of \$1,600,000 is a larger proportion than should be.

Quite an increase in volume of business is shown by La Banque Ville Marie, and immediately available assets are in rather improved proportion. Although the directors report but small losses from bad debts, the overdue accounts and notes appear larger than they should. Referring to the loss by