

The net income was \$152,140. Every mile of the road built has been accepted by the Government, and this entitles the company to 10,000,000 acres of land under the charter. This land the company is selling rapidly to the settlers, at prices thus far averaging about \$5 per acre. The country through which the completed road runs is becoming rapidly settled; agriculture is being developed; the surplus products already form a large proportion of the carrying business of the road; the climate is noted for its salubry and uniformity, and the lands are unsurpassed in adaptability for raising wheat and the other cereals.

"It is intended that the work of construction will be resumed the present season; and when the financial condition of the country improves, the road will be pushed forward to completion. Meanwhile the existing valuable estate and property of the company will be well taken care of and economically administered. The equipment of the road is ample and of the very best character, so that no expenditure in that direction will soon be required.

"Nine-tenths of the bonds issued have been surrendered under the plan of reorganization, and are being converted into preferred stock. The small amount outstanding is coming in as fast as can reasonably be expected. By May next it is believed that your Board of Directors will be able to show the extraordinary fact of 555 miles of a thoroughly well constructed and equipped railroad, free from a bonded or floating debt; a fact believed to be unparalleled in this country.

"The certificates of your preferred stock are now being issued in exchange for the 7 3-10 bonds, at the rate of \$1,400 for every \$1,000 of the principal of the bonds, which includes interest thereon to July 1, 1878. This preferred stock is received at par for the company's lands east of the Missouri River. The preferred stock will be entitled to dividends at the rate of eight per cent. per annum, before the common stock is permitted to participate in dividends to any extent."

He (Mr. Miller) would not enter into the causes that led to the winding up of the Northern Pacific Railway, as they had nothing to do with his argument. What he would call attention to was, that although the Company had to stop in consequence of being unable to meet the interest on bonds, amounting to thirty millions of dollars, yet, although they had nothing but their wild lands to rely on

they confidently hoped to be able to meet all their liabilities by the sale of those lands, and be in a position to resume work in the coming season. They had, so far, sold all their lands at an average price of \$5 per acre. (Hear, hear.) Those lands were certainly not superior, perhaps not equal, to those of Canada in the Northwest. He made this statement on the authority of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture himself, who had lately been in the country, and who had told him that no man could form any idea of the great heritage they possessed in that unsettled region, without visiting it and seeing for himself.

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER DE ST. JUST—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—Will it then be contended that a Canadian Company with 50,000,000 acres of such lands, and a money subsidy of \$30,000,000, and a less difficult route, were not able to accomplish what was within the ability of the Northern Pacific Railway, without any money subsidy at all? Parliament may have been too generous in giving so much lands, which would realise at the rate quoted between two and three hundred millions of dollars, a sum far beyond the whole cost of the entire line, but they should consider those lands were worth nothing until they were opened up by railway communication. They should also consider that the fifty millions of acres reserved by the Government in alternate blocks, and thus enhanced, would ultimately yield an enormous sum to the treasury. But if they were sold at \$1 per acre they would nearly double the amount of Canada's money subsidy under the charter. The shrewd men who contended for that charter foresaw the great future value of those lands, and had the Government of Canada bound down for a limited time not to sell their blocks for less than \$2.50 per acre. Party spirit and personal rivalry, that wrecked that scheme, may well stand aghast at those plain facts and figures, and artfully endeavour to withdraw the calm contemplation of the country from them. At the worst, Canada would have secured railway connection from the Atlantic to the Pacific without costing one dollar in the end. He believed without reference to the causes of the failure, that the defeat of that scheme was the greatest calamity that had ever befallen the country, and will be the cause of retarding the development of the Northwest, on which the future strength and