

*Document B.*—This should clearly have been published. After my examination was closed the Commission allowed a bitterly hostile witness to give abusive evidence against me at great length (pages 1700 to 1732.) I asked only the publication of this single communication to meet all the statements. The refusal of the Commission to publish this document or notice it is the more extraordinary, as it was also placed in their hands by the Secretary of the Department of Railways and Canals during his examination, nine months before the date of their report.

*Documents C, D and E* are in reference to Sections 41 and 42, and the steps taken to secure the completion of the work in a satisfactory manner within the estimated cost.

*Document F* is in reference to personal charges in connection with land speculations.

*Document G.*—This will be referred to when I come to consider charge No. 5 above.

#### CHARGE No. 1.

##### (Preliminary Surveys.)

Whatever special pleading may urge to the contrary, the country of British Columbia and of the Hudson Bay Territory, when the railway was first proposed, was an unknown land, as far as its capabilities for a railway could be considered. Indeed what limited knowledge we then had was unfavorable, and doubts were freely expressed as to the possibility of establishing a line of railway north of Lakes Huron and Superior as well as through the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific. Ample proof could, if necessary, be adduced on this point. I need only refer to the Report of the Minister of Public Works for the fiscal year ended 30th June, 1873, an extract from which is appended.\* As the Commission have either been unable to grasp the magnitude of the undertaking, or have endeavored to belittle the difficulties of the case, I have to direct special attention to the first two paragraphs of that Report.

When I was asked to assume the various duties intrusted to me by the Government, prompt and energetic action was demanded. In the terms of Union of British Columbia with the Dominion it was stipulated as follows:—

“The Government of the Dominion undertake to secure the commencement simultaneously, within two years from the date of Union, of the construction of a railway from the Pacific towards the Rocky Mountains, and from such point as may be selected east of the Rocky Mountains toward the Pacific, to connect the sea-board of British Columbia with the railway system of Canada, and further to secure the completion of such railway within ten years from the date of the Union.”

This stipulation was referred to in the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the Session immediately following the Union. It was forcibly impressed upon Parliament by Sir George Cartier, in introducing the Pacific Railway Bill and on other occasions. He stated “the Government had no other alternative than to come before the House this Session, in order to carry out the covenant with British Columbia, and propose a scheme for the construction of the railway. The condition of Union with British Columbia was that the road should be commenced in two and completed in ten years. \* \* \* He regarded it as not only possible, but as a certainty that the whole work would be completed in ten years from Fort Garry west to the Pacific and east to Lake Nipissing.”—(*Hansard* page 735).

I did not seek the position of Engineer-in-Chief, and it is not surprising when Sir Hector Langevin, then Minister of Public Works, in a manner which I will not soon forget, induced me to accept it, that I hesitated. I could form some idea of the work I was asked to undertake, having, ten years previously, carefully considered the question of a Pacific Railway and given my views to the public in a *brochure*,† which has frequently been cited in Parliament by members on both sides; I had, therefore, some conception of the responsibility I was requested to undertake, and it was with great diffidence and anxiety that I was induced to accept the position offered me.

\* See Appendix No. 9.

† *Vide* Sessional Papers, Province of Canada, 1863.