

The debate continued at considerable length and the report is crowded out of this issue. It was eventually adjourned, and the house proceeded to other business, advancing many bills a stage before adjournment at 11:30.

MR. EBERTS, continuing the speech, the first part of which appeared in yesterday's issue, proceeded as follows:

The money and the land of the people had ever been so safeguarded. No one could say that broad-gauge railways in a mountain country like British Columbia could be built for anything like \$4,000 per mile, and one only had to read the preamble of the general act to see how distinctly in the very first section it was intimated that Dominion assistance was contemplated and expected. The proportionately greater advantage accruing to the Dominion was fully emphasized, and it was with a view to holding up to the Dominion government the fact that British Columbia was desirous of opening up her mining areas, while recognizing that it was the duty of the Dominion to come to her assistance in so doing, that the act of 1898 was passed, accentuating the act of 1897, and saying to the people of the Dominion and to the world that we are so desirous to hasten the construction of such lines as are required for the opening of our mines that if the Dominion will assist us in our policy we will give an additional \$4,000 per mile for such roads as we find necessary. In such a country as British Columbia bold legislation alone could be effectual; the Cheap John method would kill the country. The late government had had confidence in the country and had done all that was possible to induce capital to come in and roads to be built—as evidence the road now in construction from Robson to Midway, opening up the great resources of the Boundary Creek country. As to the conditional contracts referred to by the Attorney-General, he (Mr. Eberts) firmly believed in them, and further, that the bargain made therein would yet be carried out, unless, as was now proposed to be done, repudiated by the Province. If contracts were entered into, be they provisional or otherwise, the honor of the Province demanded that they be adhered to. In connection with all these roads that were referred to in the bill before the house, work had been done—perhaps not actual railway building, for surveys had necessarily to go before—and to repudiate the promises on which the expenditures in question had been made would be to work grave injustice upon the railway people interested. The late premier had been perfectly sincere in his statements that the roads referred to by him would be built in accordance with the statute, and it was going too far to be justified by political antagonism or unfriendship to cut off as was proposed the opportunity of the railway people interested to complete their contracts with the people. In regard to the position taken by the Attorney-General, that it would be the proper way for the people of British Columbia to build, own and operate their own railways—

Hon. Mr. Martin—I did not say that.

Mr. Eberts proceeded to quote the honorable Attorney-General's words.

Hon. Mr. Martin—Well, if I did say that, I did not mean it. I had no intention of expressing myself on the question of state-owned roads.

Mr. Eberts was quite prepared to admit this as yet another of Hon. Mr. Martin's curious mistakes. Yet when the opportunity offered it would be found that the government would be quite prepared to go in for this state ownership of railways. He for his part was quite agreed that the people should get all they could for the money or land put in railways, but state railways could never be made to pay in British Columbia, and in this connection he took the opportunity of quoting the opinion of so eminent a writer—himself an advocate of state-owned roads—as Mr. Willison, editor of the *Toronto Globe*, who, after most careful research, had arrived at the conclusion that railway nationalization was quite impossible in British Columbia, if not in Canada. British Columbia could not go into the money markets of the world and borrow fifty or sixty millions to build railways that at best were speculations. The province of British Columbia was in an essentially different position from other of the provinces and the western states, and he only hoped that the Government would adopt this fad of nationalization of railways before the next general election, so that they might learn the feeling of the people in the matter. He was sorry, however, to see a bill of the character of the present brought into the house. Allowing the acts affected to remain on the statute book could do no harm, for unless the railways referred to were built, not a dollar would be expended of the public money. Two roads were now coming into operation, and others would unquestionably be built, carried out as contemplated, unless this new Government persisted in its determination to cut the ground from under the feet of those who were desirous of giving British Columbia railway communication—in which event British Columbia would certainly be retrograding rather than progressing. There could be no possible harm in keeping the rights on the statute book that now existed, and