

between us and Asia, that we look across the Pacific to India, and that to reach the east the true path is to go west.

These facts are recent revelations to many of us, and I ask your indulgence while, as briefly as I can, I relate the leading circumstances which have brought Canada to realize her new position—a position not any longer at the far extremity of the Colonial system, but midway between the British Islands on the one hand and her rich Colonies and Dependencies in the Pacific and Indian Oceans on the other.

I think it will be obvious, from the few facts and dates which I desire to submit to you, that it is in no small degree owing to the benign influence of the Home Government, bearing on the people of the Canadian Provinces for many years back, that British America has advanced step by step, and that successive administrations have from time to time been enabled to consolidate British interests on the Western Continent. The more recent efforts have succeeded in constructing improved means of communication between remote parts of the country, they have overcome obstacles once deemed insuperable, and their efforts have culminated in establishing across the widest part of North America a great national railway, destined, we believe, to become an essential factor in the defence and future prosperity of the Empire.

For a moment I shall refer to the records of history.

In the reign of King William IV., the Home Government, solicitous for the safety of British America, granted £10,000 to be expended on exploration for a railway from the Bay of Fundy to Quebec. The survey was entrusted to Captain Yule of the Royal Engineers. This was in 1836, fifty-one years back.