

level is really far west of the Rocky Mountains proper so far as the road is concerned, as it passes through the Rocky Mountains, and is somewhat lower than the waters which flow east through the range of hills. Then, we have but comparatively little knowledge of the serious difficulties which might have to be overcome in crossing the deep valleys east of the Rocky Mountains which cross the track of a possible railway. I think—I speak from memory—that Major Butler, in his book (not an accurate engineering work, to be sure, but a book of some interest as giving a tolerably correct description of the country) states that the depth of the Smoky River valley is nearly 1,000 feet below the general range of the level of the prairie region through which it passes. The valleys, however, are of enormous depth and undoubtedly constitute serious engineering difficulties, and might add, not only very materially to the expense, but also, for all time to come, to the serious difficulty of having high grades as well as a large amount of curvature. These are all matters which, of course, the Government is bound to consider before coming to a decision as to the route which shall be followed through British Columbia proper; and I can only say that nothing causes myself more anxiety at the moment than to be able to come to a right decision—one which we trust will not be regretted in after years when the road will be in operation, and when the weight of any blunder which might be made now will be seriously felt on the trade and commerce of the country.

Mr. BUNSTER said the discussion had thrown some light on the intention of the Government, and they were now promised two years more delay in the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway for the purpose of securing further surveys. It was evident that the time provided in the terms of Union for the construction of the road would be exceeded by several years. The House had been informed by the hon. the Premier that the British Columbia Government was pressing the Dominion Government to carry out the

agreement entered into by that Province. That fact need not be wondered at inasmuch as the people of British Columbia held the opinion that the contract had not been carried out by Canada as agreed upon. Mention had been made of political considerations, but such considerations should have nothing to do with the carrying out of the terms of the treaty with British Columbia and Canada, an engagement which had been solemnly entered into with that Province. It was not very creditable for any Government to make any such allusion as that political considerations should interfere with the performance of a just contract, one that British Columbia would never have entered into if it had foreseen the manner in which it would have been treated, and that, by its loyalty to Great Britain and confidence in Canada, it had been deprived of a railroad which the Americans were anxious to build through British Columbia to Alaska. The credit of the Pacific Province had, moreover, been affected by the action of the Dominion. Not only the British Columbia Government, but the members from that Province and the people whom they represented, felt sensitive in regard to the railroad question. In anticipation of the work of constructing the railway being carried forward in good faith, the Province expended large sums of money, and sent its own agent to Europe to induce immigration there, for they well knew that the Province possessed land well fitted to receive emigrants to cultivate the soil. The House had been told by the hon. the Premier that as soon as Mr. Hunter's report was prepared, it would be brought down; but there was nothing definite about that statement, and they did not know whether it would be within one, two, or three years. Such was not the proper manner to treat hon. members who came to Parliament from long distances at the risk of their lives. The commencement of the work might be delayed until after the general election, and, on that ground, the people of British Columbia had cause for alarm. While he believed there were considerable political considerations affecting the railroad question, he still