

of British Columbia, a measure which manifestly commits the country to the rapid construction of the entire line. That Mr. Mackenzie, when he became Minister, hesitated on the brink of the gulf, cannot be doubted: if he had been strong enough to follow the dictates of his own judgment, he would have declined to proceed, and offered British Columbia, as the price of rescinding a ruinous bargain, either replacement in her original position, or a money payment which, looking to her general demeanour on the subject, it could not have been deemed indelicate to propose. Had he called a halt, we have not the slightest doubt that he would have had the sense of the country, which throughout this business has been ill represented by the politicians, on his side. But with the *Globe* pressing him behind, and the late Governor-General also, we suspect, urging him on, forwards he went, and his misgivings were betrayed only by a faltering and piecemeal mode of execution, which would probably have proved the most expensive in the end. It is true that Mr. Mackenzie is no longer leader, and that with the new leader, the spirit hostile to the enterprise, and to the policy of which it is the embodiment, has begun to prevail. But the change of mind, if it has taken place, has not yet been avowed, and till it is avowed, and frankly avowed, the Government will have a right to treat the difference between it and the Opposition as one regarding the best mode of prosecuting the enterprise, not regarding the enterprise itself.

The question between the Government and the Opposition is still further narrowed by the assent of the Opposition to the proposal to transfer the undertaking to a Company. On this point the country is unanimous. The revelations of the Pacific Railway Commission were not needed to show us that, besides the mismanagement and waste universally attendant on great commercial enterprises carried on by a government, we were being drawn into a bottomless slough of jobbing, and beset by a brood of schemers of which we might have been long in getting rid. Nor has any serious objection been urged