

difficulties about transshipment, there are difficulties that have been alluded to with regard to the bonding privileges, there are difficulties even in the summer time and still greater in the winter which will render it difficult to use that river: owing to the rapidity of the current the ice would not be sufficiently strong in some parts for winter travelling, probably it may, but there are doubts on that score about the Little Cañon and other parts of that river, and then I think we would have to use American territory in getting up in the winter season. There are all these difficulties in the way, difficulties international and physical, in connection with the Stikine route. But I am willing to admit this, that the railway it is proposed to build from Telegraph Creek to the head of Teslin Lake is apparently in line with what would form a good trunk line, would form a section of a good trunk railway from the navigable waters of British Columbia to Dawson, say from Portland Canal, and on that account I have some feeling for a railway between those two points. But I say the contract we have before us with regard to this line, provides that this shall only be a tramway, a three foot or three feet six gauge—we do not know which it is to be—and it cannot properly furnish even a link in a trunk railway leading from Portland Canal or Port Simpson, or whatever point may be selected in Canadian territory, right up to the Yukon country. Then, again, the enormous consideration we are giving for building the link—not a link, because it will not be of such a character as to form part of a trunk line—that the consideration we are asked to give away is so great that it would, to a great extent, tie our hands in the future with regard to obtaining a through line all the way and paying for it. Now, I have a statement here of the comparative distances. They are approximate—I suppose as nearly correct as we can get—and the estimate is that from Victoria to Dawson by the Stikine River route is 1,638 miles. Of that, 750 miles will be ocean, 178 miles rail; the contract provides for 150, but, I think, it is pretty clear from Mr. Jennings's report that the railway will be at least 178 miles long—and inland navigation on the Stikine River and over Teslin Lake, and the other rivers and streams that connect between Teslin Lake and Dawson, about 710 miles;

and the estimate is for an electric railway—I do not know whether it is the intention of the government to build an electric railway, but that is the only information we have of anything of an official character—the estimate is \$2,850,000. We have also figures that we gather from Mr. Ogilvie's report that via the Lynn Canal and the Chilcat Pass the distance is 1,585 miles from Victoria to Dawson; 1,000 miles of that would be ocean (250 miles more ocean than via the Stikine), by rail it would be 245 miles by Mr. Jennings's report from the head of Lynn Canal to Fort Selkirk, and the inland navigation 340 miles, and the cost according to Mr. Jennings's estimate of the railway portion would be \$5,636,000. There is still another route, via the White Pass, for which there is a charter as far as this parliament of Canada is able to give it, to the British Yukon Canadian Company, and for that route the distance would be 1,000 miles by ocean, 123 miles by rail, and by inland navigation about 600 miles: altogether 1,723 miles, and at a cost for the railway according to Mr. Jennings's report of \$3,236,000. These are the three propositions that seemed to stand out boldest for reaching the Klondike. Now, however, we have only the government plan before us, and we have only that to deal with as set forth in this contract, and that is for building a railway from the head of Stikine River to Teslin Lake, and to depend upon water communication for the rest of the journey. And now for the building of that road what is the consideration that we are asked to give? I have already said that if that road were of a broad gauge and of a substantial character, and if a policy were announced of reaching Fort Simpson or the head of the Portland Canal, get an open ocean port there, the building of that road would be a matter well worthy of the consideration of the House and the country. But even then we would have to look carefully into the consideration we were giving for the building of that road. What is that consideration. We are asked first in this contract to give the company 25,000 acres of mineral lands in the North-west Territories for every mile of railway. It is true that that railway is spoken of in the contract as 150 miles long, and there is also a provision that the Governor in Council or the Minister of Railways can object to the