

easy access to it by the Canada Central, at or near Sturgeon River, sixty or seventy miles west of the present terminus at South East Bay. From the head of Lake Superior at Nipigon we will again strike the line by water communication, and at Fort William we will have a railway for the purpose of reaching it at that end. Striking at these three points, I believe we may safely put that work at \$30,000 a mile, which would add \$18,000,000 to complete this great national highway. If we were to put it at \$30,000 a mile, an amount to which it may be safely reduced, we make a total of \$82,869,618. Mr. Fleming estimates this 600 miles at \$20,000,000, which would make \$84,869,618. When I remind the House that the land alone, according to the authority of the right hon. Minister of the Interior, upon the calculation which he believes to be sound, within the next ten years will give us \$38,000,000 in hand, and \$32,000,000 to receive on mortgages within the following ten years, or a total sum of \$70,000,000, it will be seen that we incur no risk. But suppose the land does not give us that, we have an authority with hon. gentlemen opposite will accept: that the Customs Revenue from the people, who will go into the country for the next ten years will furnish the interest on \$60,000,000. I have no hesitation in saying that the whole sentiment of the country has changed on this question. I am not at all ashamed to say that my own opinions have completely changed in relation to the character of this great work. I remember well that when the then First Minister brought in his Act in 1874, for the construction of this as a Government work, I felt that we were incurring too great a responsibility. I believed, at that time, it was an unsafe and unsound policy for the Government of this country to undertake the construction of this great national work from end to end as a Government work, and I did not hesitate to express my opinions as freely and as forcibly as I could on the occasion of the passage of that measure. But the whole condition of Canada has changed since then. There is not an intelligent man in this country who does not look upon the prospect of the settlement and development of the North-West with entirely different feelings from those

that were then entertained. Why, who could listen to the glowing statements of the hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton), when he pictured the enormous tide of emigration into the North Western States, and pointed out that a similar tide was only waiting for an opportunity to pour into our own North-West; who could listen to the evidence the hon. gentleman gave that the investment of \$54,000,000 capitalised, would have given the United States all the money that had been received from those lands, and enable them to have disposed of them by free grants instead of by sale, without feeling that he was furnishing the strongest evidence of the safety of the course that this Government was adopting in grappling with this question. By our land regulations we present these fertile regions of our North-West Territory in a more attractive form for settlement than even the lands in the United States were offered, and, at the same time, held within our grasp, for sale, lands enough to more than recoup Canada for every dollar expended on this Railway. Let me again quote an opinion that is much stronger with hon. gentlemen opposite than anything I can utter, that is, an article in the great organ of their party, the *Globe*, which, after a most careful examination of this whole question, says:

“It is admitted by everyone that the plains of the North-West Territories are exceedingly fertile, and capable of sustaining, by agriculture, a population twice as numerous as the present population of the United States. It is also admitted that a railway from Selkirk to the Rocky Mountains will open up the country so rapidly that in a very few years the line will pay, as a commercial enterprise. There is nothing to be gained by constructing it much faster than a continuous westward settlement can be made on the adjacent belt of land. But no one can doubt that it will pay the Dominion well to build that piece of road. It will be 900 miles long, or over one-third of the whole Pacific Railway. * * * We find, then, that no less than 1,924 miles of the proposed Pacific Road may be fairly considered as a commercial enterprise. That it is also a national enterprise, is a very poor argument against the project. When the road has been carried from the eastern terminus to the Rocky Mountains, it is safe to say that the population of the North-West will be great enough to contribute to the Dominion Treasury a larger sum than will pay the interest on the loan, for which the older Provinces must first pledge their credit. We have taken no account of the land sales, which must, if well managed,