

000, and fifty millions acres of land in alternate blocks along the line of railway, to a company to be chartered under the Act of Parliament. But it was said the project was not feasible, and in the next breath it was declared it would overburthen the country, and this was proclaimed by men who professed to be able to carry through the whole work as a Government undertaking.

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER DE ST. JUST—Why did the company not build it?

Hon. Mr. MILLER would tell the gentleman what led to the failure of the scheme. It was the rivalry of two of the most formidable companies ever organized in this country, who were at each other's throats for the possession of the charter. (Hear, hear.) Would any one say that the gentlemen composing these rival companies were not in earnest, and that they did not know what they were contending for. The staunchest capitalists and many of the ablest business men in the Dominion—merchants, bankers, engineers, and others—were members of these companies, and certainly knew what they were about. Then, if they knew what they were about, it surely will not be said that all these men had entered into a conspiracy to delude or rob the country. The chief cause of failure was their suicidal rivalry, adroitly fomented and used by party ambition, and at last over-weighted by the unfortunate occurrences he had already mentioned. If these companies could have been induced to amalgamate, that scheme could undoubtedly have been carried out. He happened to come across an important piece of information recently in an American journal in support of his view. The paper he intended to read was an extract from the Boston Daily Advertiser of the 8th of February, and was addressed to the bondholders by the chairman of the committee to reorganize the Northern Pacific Railway Company. It illustrates the practicability of the Canadian scheme, which had the advantage of a large money subsidy, which the Northern Pacific had not, as well as a large tract of valuable land. The document was as follows:—

“Deeming it a duty to present to you a brief statement of the condition and prospects of the company, I avail myself of the opportunity afforded in the transmission to you of your certificates of preferred stock, to enclose therewith such statement. The financial disaster of September, 1873, which crippled enterprises and destroyed investments through-

out the land, forced the Northern Pacific Railroad Company to suspend the construction of the road, and to make default in the payment of the interest on its bonds. About \$30,000,000 worth of bonds had been sold, the interest on which was nearly \$2,400,000 annually. The trustees of the mortgage, with some of the bondholders, recognizing the total inability of the company, under the circumstances, to carry such a burden, instituted legal proceedings to preserve and secure to the bondholders the trust estate; and in April, 1875, obtained, with the assent of the company, the appointment of a receiver. The bondholders were convened on the 30th day of June following, when they approved the proceedings taken, and appointed a committee of their own number to acquire for them the railroad, and all the property, rights, and franchises of the company, under a carefully considered plan for reorganization. On the 29th of September, 1875, the committee having become the purchasers at judicial sale as contemplated, and the assenting bondholders having converted themselves into preferred stockholders, the latter elected their own Board of Directors, and the reorganization was perfected.

“Your road is constructed and in operation from the western end of Lake Superior to the Missouri River at Bismark, a distance of 450 miles. This is called the Minnesota and Dakota Division. At the crossing of the Red River it connects, by lines of steamers, with the prosperous and rapidly increasing Canadian Province of Manitoba. Its traffic, by connecting steamers on the Missouri River and wagon trains from Montana, a territory of unbounded mineral wealth and fertile valleys; its large transportation for the Government troops, military stores, annuity goods and supplies for the Indians, and the United States mails, give promise for the future of this division. The Pacific division of your road is completed and in operation from the deep waters of the Columbia River to Tacoma, the terminus on Puget Sound, a distance of 105 miles. At Tacoma the Pacific Ocean coast steamers, and the steamers navigating the Sound, make daily connections with our trains running south to Columbia River, and the city of Portland, Oregon.

“Notwithstanding the continued financial depression of the country, the traffic on both divisions in 1875 was a satisfactory increase over that of previous years. The gross receipts of the 555 miles of completed road for 1875 were \$618,590.