

to be melting away like April snow. Again, the northern coast of Lake Superior, may prove, as some assert, to be a country teeming with mines, and sure to attract a great mining population. In that case, a railway carried through it, instead of being commercially unproductive, will pay well, and the whole case, including the character of the present bargain, will be greatly changed.

We, by no means, feel sure that could the question have been fairly put to the people, we should not have had them on our side. Matters, however, have taken a different course. The political and military objects connected with the Anti-Continental policy have prevailed. They have prevailed with both the parties, for the late Government adopted the entire scheme, and betraying its misgivings only by being more hesitating in execution than the present. Canada stands committed to the construction of the political and military line. But upon commencing the enterprise as a Government work, the difficulties and evils which always beset great works undertaken by Governments have appeared. It has become evident that a vast commercial enterprise in the North-west cannot be properly managed by a political department at Ottawa: the contracts have given birth, as the evidence taken by the Royal Commission shows, to jobbery and corruption on the scale usual in such cases; party hostility interferes with the operations; a prospect of indefinite expenditure is opened, and a burden of uncertain magnitude presses on the commercial spirit of the country. The Government, therefore, has resolved to transfer the undertaking to a Company, and its resolution is beyond doubt approved by the nation, which received the announcement of the successful result of the negotiations with universal expressions of relief. The agreement, at the time of our writing, is not before us in detail, but its main conditions seem to be known. The Government gives the Company twenty-five millions of dollars and twenty-five millions of acres of land. On what principle the land is to be selected does not yet appear, but it is stated to be valued at two dollars an acre. The Government finishes the road from