

general experience of the world in reference to estimates of this description; and my conjecture is that this road is as likely as not, instead of costing \$10,000,000 to cost \$12,000,000 or more. The contracts, however, provide, as the hon. gentleman as said, that the Government may suspend operations if the vote is expended at any time, or in case the public interest requires, a suspension of the work, and may in such case cancel the contract; and that in no case will the contractor be entitled to damages by reason of loss of profits, but only to expenses incurred in connection with the collection of material and work already done. The Georgian Bay branch contract was lately cancelled by the Government under similar provisions. The hon. gentleman has stated that he expects the expenditure next year on this work will not exceed \$1,000,000, but, although possibly no more than \$1,000,000 may be expended the first year, yet it is certain, according to the estimate formed of ten millions, and if the work is to be carried out according to the terms of the contract, which provides for its completion in five years, that an average of two millions a year will be required, and if we are going to expend only \$1,000,000 next year, this means that there will be a larger amount expended relatively in the following years. Roughly, we are involved by this contract in an average expenditure of \$2,000,000 a year for the next five years, and if the road costs \$12,000,000, then \$2,400,000 a year for the same time will be required. The hon. gentleman has said that the road, which is in the middle of British Columbia, will be a pretty good thing. It starts, it is true, at a point from which the ocean is accessible by light steamers; it runs a considerable distance into the interior, but, as far as I can observe, considering the condition of the country, its population, its capabilities for early settlement, this may be said of it, that it begins nowhere, ends nowhere, and will serve no earthly purpose. I quite agree that in the construction of the Pacific Railway as a through line, by the Burrard Inlet route, this might have been the best point to commence at, but I am speaking of it as it is. The hon. gentleman has prepared a map, which he laid on the Table in the course of his speech,

as showing what recent explorations convince him is the state of the country, with reference to its capacity for settlement. Without turning at this time to that portion which affects the North-West, I would desire the particular attention of my hon. friend the member for Vancouver, to that portion of the map which represents the Province of British Columbia. The hon. member will observe that the parts which are marked brown are barren and unfit for anything. The parts left white embrace certain small tracts in which people may find a living. The hon. Minister, in the early part of the evening, insulted my hon. friend by calling his country inhospitable, and my hon. friend will see what a double insult is conveyed in his laying on the Table a map showing the bulk of the Province unfit for settlement.

MR. BUNSTER: I would like to ask my hon. friend if he did not have that map coloured on purpose.

MR. BLAKE: My hon. friend no doubt believes that I am the only person who would have ventured to produce such a map. But it is not my map. It is the map of the hon. Minister of Railways, who has done the hon. member for Vancouver "brown." It is not to be supposed, however, that all this white ground is available for white men. There is a large portion of the land even there, which the hon. the Minister of Railways, in the early portion of the evening, rightly called inhospitable. For example, the northern part of the tract left white is useless, in consequence of climatic influences. Although there are some portions of land in it, which are rich enough to be cultivated, yet the climate prevents their being settled, but in the lower portion there is a little land capable of settlement, as the hon. gentleman has said. At the delta of the Fraser River, there are some 400,000 acres of land capable of settlement, though I believe some of it requires dyking in order to make it useful. East of the Fraser River there are 640,000 acres, or 1,000 square miles, at the outside, according to the statement in the official report, of land capable of settlement; and west of the Fraser River there are 192,000 acres, if so small a quantity is worth mentioning. There is of arable land 1,200,000 acres, not altogether, but

MR. BLAKE.