

companies, and we find that it was the anxious desire of the Government to embrace in one company all the influence and power obtainable in Canada for the construction of this great work, and the Government is entitled to the thanks of the country for their efforts in this direction. My hon. friend from Toronto says the Interoceanic Company was formed principally with a view to keep this work in Canadian hands. We find it was composed of 107 individuals, gentlemen of wealth, influence and independent character. The Canada Pacific with which the Government desired to secure its amalgamation was composed of 18 members only. Can it be possible that 107 gentlemen of the high position and influence spoken of were afraid they should be coerced and controlled, and deprived of the management of this enterprise by the 18? If that company really was organized to retain the control of the road in Canadian hands it should have at once amalgamated with the other as the surest way to secure its object. The honorable gentleman from Toronto is a tower of strength to any company. His unstained record, his great ability, and long connection with public works have given his name great weight as a guarantee of the standing of the company with whom he might be associated, and it is with great regret I see that he has taken a position antagonistic to this important enterprise. The Interoceanic Company have not protested or petitioned against this charter. Have we any memorial or remonstrance, or anything to show that the company considered that the Government had not dealt fairly and honorably by it in this matter? We have none, and when we see the names of some of the most influential members of that company now incorporated with the Canadian Pacific Company, we are inclined to think that it is not regarded by any considerable portion of them as an American enterprise. The hon. member from Paris (Christie), looks forward to the events he imagines possible after the next six years, with a feeling of dismay. Then, he says, the road is to pass into American hands. This is not a possible event. If it is constructed and managed by Canadians for six years, its national character will then have acquired such stability in the country that there will be no danger of its passing into the hands of Americans. I have studied carefully several works written on the North-West Country, and cannot agree with the hon. gentleman from Paris that there is something like a thousand miles on the

route of the railway unfit for settlement. True, the great American desert extends north of the boundary line into Canadian territory, but I believe there is the best evidence to show that it will not reach the line of the Pacific railway. We have in Ontario itself many spots not well adapted for cultivation, and doubtless in many parts of the Northwest there may be similar tracts, but I believe that from the base of the Rocky Mountains to Manitoba the country is generally fit for settlement. When we compare the proposed route of our railway with the American Pacific Railways, we see the immense advantages we possess. We have a better tract of country for a railroad than the so-called rival line, the Northern Pacific, which passes through several hundred miles of the Great Desert, or than the Union Pacific more especially, which traverses a region of elevated land, which for 1789 miles stands at an average height of 6,000 feet above the sea, while the elevated land of the Canadian Pacific line extends 1,200 miles, with an average height of 1716 feet above the sea. Competent judges consider the subsidy of 30,000,000, with our liberal land grant sufficient to pay for the construction of the railway. I am satisfied it will prove so, and do not speak without some acquaintance with such matters, having been formerly a land surveyor myself. We have, therefore, no need to anticipate injurious competition from the Northern Pacific Railway. It has to pass as I have already stated, through hundreds of miles of the great American desert, and has already reached the vicinity of its unsaleable tracts of lands. Much fault has been found with the Government for attaching the average minimum value of \$2.50 an acre to the lands, contiguous to the railway as excessive. The Americans have placed double value on their railway lands. I have in my hand a list of prices of land on twenty-four American railroads, and the lowest quoted is \$3.07 per acre on the Kansas Pacific. On the Northern Pacific it is \$4.25; on the St. Paul, \$6.50, and yet the Government average value of \$2.50 is spoken of as a high one. I believe the average value fixed conditionally by Government will be found just and fair. But if it should prove an impediment to settlement it is open to correction.

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER DE ST. JUST—
By what mode is it open to correction?

Hon. Mr. VIDAL—By a provision of the charter it must be submitted for the sanction of Parliament. The member from Paris has asked whether the Government is going to bring down a measure to ob-