

had been agreed to, they would have satisfied British Columbia. Her representatives in Parliament here all expressed that as the opinion of their Province. He saw nothing from any of her authorities that would lead him to a different conclusion. He hoped that even now the Government would change their policy; would act in a different spirit, and do what was reasonable with British Columbia, and for the advantage of the Dominion, instead of continuing to keep British Columbia dissatisfied with her connection with the rest of Canada, and probably engendering feelings of unfriendliness and estrangement which would be difficult to remove.

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER DE ST. JUST suggested that the debate should be adjourned.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD moved the adjournment of the debate until tomorrow, which was carried.

March 23, 1876.

Hon. Mr. McDONALD resumed the debate on Hon. Mr. Carrall's motion to resolve:—That the construction of the Pacific Railway having formed the principal condition upon which British Columbia entered the Canadian Confederation, every reasonable effort should have been made by the Government of the Dominion to satisfy the people of that Province that faith would be kept with them; but this House regrets to find, that whilst incurring, or ready to incur immediately, expenditures of several millions of dollars not needed or of doubtful utility, the Government has failed to proceed vigorously with the construction of our great national Inter-oceanic Railway, which is so essential to the material advancement of all the Provinces of the Dominion as well as to the early consolidation of political and social union among the whole people.

—He said: The position of affairs between the Dominion Government and British Columbia has arrived at a point when an expression of opinion of this House may not be out of place, whether as a guidance in the future to the Dominion Government or to our Province. In my opinion, the chief object in bringing forward this subject now is, that public opinion should be indicated, so far as an expression of this House can be taken as such indication, of a desire to have this great national highway perfected. And whether this House follows or leads public opinion, the result of this debate will be looked upon with interest in our Province. The idea of establishing communication

from ocean to ocean is not new, but to British Columbia remains the honour, if it be an honour, of being the immediate cause of pressing upon the attention of the country the necessity for this transcontinental railway; hence her deep interest in this subject; and whether the verdict be for or against maintaining the connection with our Province, the debate will be of equal importance. The hon. gentleman who moved the resolution now before the House reviewed clearly the terms upon which British Columbia came into the Canadian Confederation, and I do not intend going over the same ground again, but may briefly refer to some of the points. I will endeavour to state the case from my stand-point as clearly as I can. The first breach in the terms of union was made in July, 1873, by the failure to commence construction at that time, and to this the Provincial Government, as in duty bound, called the attention of the Dominion Government; and from that time until now they have continued to protest against the non-fulfilment of the terms of union. Whether this breach can be justified or not, the fact cannot be controverted. The Premier of the Dominion, in a speech at Lambton in January, 1874, alluded to the great difficulties of building the Pacific Railway, and said that a relaxation of the terms with Columbia must be had. This speech became known in the Province at a time when a combination of circumstances gave rise to some alarm and apprehension: The Provincial Government at that time wanted money, and were negotiating for a loan with the Dominion; and the fear that the true interests of the Province might be sacrificed, and the terms of union destroyed, caused the first political disturbance which ever took place in the Province. To us the terms of union are everything—our capital, stock in trade, and constitution—and if once broken through we have nothing on which to rely. Shortly after this communication Mr. Edgar was sent to the Province, as agent of the Dominion Government, to ascertain the feelings and opinions of the people on public questions, particularly on the Pacific Railway. After some time Mr. Edgar made a proposal to the Local Government to the following effect:—"To commence construction from Esquimalt to Nanaimo immediately, and to push that portion of the railway on to completion with the utmost vigor and in the shortest practicable time. Hon. gentlemen will observe that this was not offered as compensation, or as a branch line, but as a portion of the railway; and as a portion must be a part of the whole, this must