

our system. And yet, he might say, that he believed the desire for it was rather imported from another country than indigenous to our own. The great object of the ballot was to prevent intimidation of voters by employers or wealthy patrons. He thanked God that few of our voters were subject to such influences, and hence the protection of secrecy was here, he thought, of comparatively little consequence. When they had the ballot, he trusted they would take means to prevent the special abuses to which that method of voting was liable. He would say very little on the subject of the Militia laws. He was not himself of a very belligerent disposition, and knew almost as little of those brilliant decorations which were judged necessary to make up the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war" as he did of the manner of setting a squadron in the field. He would omit all mention of that subject, the more readily as he was to be followed by a gentleman of large experience in the service. Reverting to civil life, he would express his hope, that while some amendments were to be proposed in the Insolvent law, and experience had shown that some amendments were requisite, the main structure of the present statute, and the great principles which were embodied in it, would be allowed to stand. He believed that he might claim some acquaintance with the opinions of mercantile men, and he ventured to say not only that the law was very generally approved of, but that the dislike of it which was at first felt is rapidly diminishing. At the same time he knew that there were in particular clauses provisions which were either flatly unjust, or else failed to carry out the wishes of the country and the Legislature.

They should, he was sure, cheerfully give their co-operation to any judicious plan for carrying forward the Canadian Pacific Railway. The original plan, as they all knew, was an entire failure—a failure, let him add, for financial and not for political reasons—a failure predicted from the first by the coolest and most capable financiers. What had already taken place should warn them against rash engagements, especially as to time. When they remembered the many years which it would have taken to accomplish such a work as the intercolonial, lying all along a series of harbors in a long, if not thickly settled country, they should see at once the folly of pledging their good faith to any hard and fast time as to the time of its completion. The late Government did bind itself to a given, and in his judgment far too short a period—both for

beginning and ending—and it failed to keep its promise. But it is one of the understood rules of public treaties that the parties to them were only held to an endeavor in good faith to act up to their engagements and were not bound to do what was impossible. They must act under that rule. On the one hand the act of an authorized Government is the act of a nation, and they were doubtless bound to-day by the undertakings, however rash, of the preceding Government. But, on the other hand, the failure of the late Administration established the propriety of refraining from additional obligations of the kind, which they could not carry out. Let them acknowledge their obligations to construct a great trans-continental highway as early as possible; but let them make haste slowly in order that each step might be perfect in itself, and an assured advance towards the great design. He acknowledged that he attached a great deal more importance to the speedy improvement of our canals and harbors than to the Pacific Railway, for the benefits of the canal and harbor improvements were immediate, and were conferred at once on two or three millions of people, who would at once turn them to account for their own prosperity and that of the Treasury, whereas the gain from the railway was prospective, and was to be secured for people who had yet to be brought to settle in the great waste to the West of us. He was sure that the House would heartily support the promptest and most energetic measures for that end. Among this class of improvements he must especially notice that which was intended to connect the waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, with those of the Bay of Fundy. Nothing could be more conducive to that West Indian trade and Southern trade to which our merchants and manufacturers were now turning their attention. They should all rejoice at the prospect of the opening of a larger field for commercial transactions with our immediate neighbours. He supposed it was yet too early to indulge in any exceptions as to the success which might be hoped for; and they were all aware of the obstacles which conflicting interests create. But it was pleasing to know that the American Executive had taken a liberal view of the matter, and had manifested a cordial desire for the re-opening of negotiations. He believed that these negotiations could not be in better hands than those of their colleague, Mr. Brown, and that under his guidance there was little danger that the treaty, if