

any of the countries on the seaboard, like California, Cape Town, or Australia, where they would have the facilities of railway or water transportation, he ventured to say the settlement to-day would have been a populous and thriving colony. Then came a distressing period in the history of the Dominion—the failure of the Allan scheme to build the railway. He would not challenge the sympathy of hon. gentlemen in this room in response to that, but he would express his own individual opinion, when he said he looked upon the failure of the Allan scheme as a national calamity. It was a prelude to the fall of Sir John Macdonald's Government. That Government, whatever their policy, were, with respect to their tariff or their foreign policy, straightforward to British Columbia. The new Government came into power, and the first steps they took—he desired to speak more kindly of them than his duty to his Province would permit—was to connect the Edgar mission. He had no doubt that all hon. gentlemen were conversant with the details of that mission; but as their minds had been occupied with so many subjects since then, he desired to make an allusion to it. It was well understood by the people of British Columbia that they were not to insist that the railway was to be completed in ten years; but the Government wished to make a point out of it, and hence the Edgar mission was undertaken to enable the Ministry to go to the people of Ontario and say:—"We have gone to British Columbia, and we have relieved the country of the terms imposed on them by the late Government; we have made better terms with British Columbia, and saved the Dominion." They sent Mr. Edgar over, uncredentialed, to negotiate with the Provincial Government; but when he was asked to show his authority he refused to do so. When the question was asked the Premier if he knew Mr. Edgar did not present his credentials, the Premier's reply, as given in the House of Commons, was—"I became aware of it a week ago." He coquetted with Columbians to endeavour to make them believe in the honesty and earnestness of purpose of the present Government, and beguile them into making some proposition which could be used in the interests of the Reform party. These negotiations were not carried on with much grace or propriety on either side, and the Premier of the Dominion exhibited a great deal of petulance and irritation, and broke off all negotiations by abruptly recalling his

ambassador. That ended the Edgar mission. Then, of course, the people who had discovered that he had come there simply to spy out the country, and without power to enter into any negotiations, felt considerable resentment at the Government and the people of Canada. They saw fit, in their local legislative wisdom, to come to Ottawa for orders, and the Provincial Premier came as a delegate to negotiate with the Premier here, but without resulting in a settlement satisfactory to either party outside of the original contract. The British North American Act provides, that on the admission of a Province into the Dominion it should be on the joint address of the two contracting parties—the Imperial Government, and, as it were, stands god-mother for the good faith of the Acts of the Dominion towards the smaller Province. So British Columbia naturally referred the matter in dispute to the Imperial Government, which resulted in what is known as the "Carnarvon compromise." The original terms of the union in respect to the railway clause, the one more particularly under discussion, says:—

"The Government of the Dominion undertake to procure the commencement within two years from the date of the union of the construction of a railway from the Pacific towards the Rocky Mountains, and from such point as may be selected east of the Rocky Mountains towards the Pacific, to connect the seaboard of British Columbia, and further to secure the completion of such railway within ten years from the date of union."

The matter was referred to Lord Carnarvon by the consent of both parties, and he thought his Lordship volunteered and was accepted as arbitrator. In the second clause of his despatch Lord Carnarvon took the ground that the work had *not been proceeded with in accordance with the terms agreed to at the time of union*. The despatch read:

"That the Dominion Government should GREATLY INCREASE the strength of the surveying parties on the mainland, and that they should undertake to expend on the surveys, if necessary for the speedy completion of the work, if not an equal share to that which they would expend on the railway itself if it were in actual course of construction, at all events some considerable definite minimum amount."

The effect of Lord Carnarvon's compromise was, that the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway should be built, whether or not it should become part and parcel of the trans-continental road. Among other things, the instrument provided that not less than \$2,000,000 annually should be expended in British Columbia