

to defame the good name of the country, instead of upholding its honor, they may rest assured that they will not, by this means, destroy the good name of Canada, they will not destroy the good name and fame of the statesman who has presided over the destinies of the country for the last twenty-five years, they will not even destroy the Pacific Railway, the greatest of all the enterprises we have undertaken. Since I first entered political life I have been accustomed to see the persistency of my hon. friends on the other side in speaking of the bankruptcy of the nation. I heard it in 1854, when I was not fourteen years old, on the first occasion, when I heard two of the greatest orators of our Province, the great Morin and the great Papin; I then heard statements that the Grand Trunk Railway system had brought the country to ruin and bankruptcy. I heard the same thing years afterwards, and still I have seen the country growing more and more prosperous year after year. I heard the same thing in 1866, when the scheme of Confederation was before the country, when, from parish to parish and from county to county, I, though a young man, was fighting the battle of Confederation; I heard gentlemen saying that Confederation was to be the ruin of our Province, and was to result in the bankruptcy of the whole Dominion; that the vast stretch of country embracing seven Provinces, and extending from ocean to ocean, without any backbone, would result in disaster. But, Mr. Speaker, there was a backbone; there was the energy of British subjects, the energy of the men who had made this country; and that backbone has saved the country, in spite of all that defamation, in spite of all those who have been decrying our country. I heard the same thing again in 1870; and I remember, in 1872, when I was contesting one of the seats for this Parliament, that I heard one of the best champions of liberal ideas in the Province of Quebec, my hon. friend from Verchères (Mr. Geoffrion), saying that the price paid by the Government of the day for the North-West, £300,000, was a loss to the country, and that those wild Provinces, where the buffalo still roamed, would be no profit to us. Since that I have seen millions upon millions of capital invested in that country, and thousands and hundreds of thousands of people flocking to that region, which will become the granary of British North America, as the north-west of the United States became the granary of that country. I have witnessed the progress of our country, in spite of all that has been said to retard it. And, after that, when this great enterprise of the Pacific Railway came before the public, I heard a repetition of the same