

since the confederation of the provinces that has occupied it more, and that has been of more importance to the Dominion at large than the question of the Canadian Pacific Railway. When the gentlemen who led the Government of this country from 1867 to 1873 completed the confederation of the older provinces, they turned their attention westward, and they found there a large extent of country, which was comparatively unknown, but which it was believed contained that which was necessary to the completion and to the success of the whole Dominion. They had seen that, notwithstanding we had abundance of good soil in the older provinces, that the ease with which the prairie farms could be cultivated, and the productiveness of the soil, offered attractions to many of our young men which they were unable to resist, and for years some of the best blood of the country—the bone and sinew of the provinces—had been passing over into the United States, to find homes on that prairie land, and help to develop that western country and build up the whole Union. The census of 1870 shows that for the ten years preceding, there had passed out of Canada on an average, twenty-four thousand of our people every year; and I am quite satisfied that the census of this year of the United States will show that of Canadian born subjects, or the descendants of Canadian born subjects, there are now in the United States, between one and two millions of people, most of whom but for the prairie soil, or the great impetus that has been given to eastern trade in consequence of the development of that western country, would be residents of the Dominion. Therefore, there was wisdom in endeavoring to ascertain if that great drain upon this country could not be stopped, and that those who desired prairie farms should find the same attractions under our own flag as exist in the Western States. Therefore, the purchase of the North-West was completed, and then the Province of British Columbia was added to it. Then the question arose, "How are we to utilize this purchase?" and the only answer that could be given to that was by providing facilities for rapid and easy intercourse with that territory, not only to enable the intending settlers to reach the

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prairie, but that the produce of their farms might find a route to the markets of the East. The whole people agreed as to the desirability or the necessity of having a Pacific Railway to open up this country, and to connect and bind the whole together. Differences of opinion, however, existed as to our ability to meet the cost, as well as the mode to be adopted to secure it. The men, who then led the Government of the country, proposed the plan pursued largely in the United States, of making the lands contribute largely to the cost of the roads over them. In the past twenty years the United States Government has given over sixty millions of dollars in money, and 200,000,000 acres of land, mainly for the construction of railways. The proposition of our Government originally was based upon this practice of the United States: to give to any company undertaking the work a subsidy in money, and land. Circumstances to which we need not refer, prevented the accomplishment of that policy. A change of Government took place. The road was taken in hands by the new Government, and construction was proceeded with, and, I am sure, if we required any proof of the wisdom and advantages of the other course, we had it during the five years in which the railway was being carried on as a government work. Another change of Government has taken place, and the gentlemen who originally moved in this Pacific Railway have now the management of it. Adhering to their original plan of construction by a company, as approved by Parliament, they have sought for one equal to the undertaking, and announce to us that they have succeeded. The particulars of the contract are not yet public, but doubtless there is a subsidy of money and lands, as originally proposed. The land without railways is of no value whatever to us, and if by giving even a large portion for the construction of a road which will render the whole, including what we retain, of value, then we are the gainers—looking to the mere disposal of land—and shall have by that enhanced value more than the money portion of the subsidy returned to us. The whole territory, when held by the