

sure as the sun shone, that railway, constructed at a vast expenditure, if it took the route by the North Branch of the Thompson, then down the main branch, and thence through the Cascade range to Yale, would be a thorough failure so far as contributing to the settlement of British Columbia or the settlement of the country to any distance east of the British Columbia boundary was concerned. By taking the Northern route, not merely would their pastoral, agricultural and mining wealth be increased, but they would be in a condition to compete with any line on the American side of the international boundary for the trade of the Pacific and the trans-continental trade. He trusted the Government would see its way clear to bring down the papers and maps called for by his hon. friend, so that the House, and particularly the Independent members of this House, might have at their disposal the best means to form a conclusion as to the true route to be adopted for the Pacific Railroad.

MR. MACKENZIE: There is no report in the possession of the Government other than what is embraced in substance in the report of Mr. Smith, embodied in the Public Works Report now before the House, and which states substantially all that Mr. Hunter has stated. Mr. Hunter has to make a detailed report, which he has not yet been able to complete, and he also proposes to prepare a map. It will be observed that his survey was scarcely a complete one; it was not to any extent an instrumental so much as an exploratory survey. He made an instrumental survey of a portion of the more difficult parts of the Pass, respecting which, it is stated, he found the grades would be somewhat difficult for a few miles; some sixty feet to the mile, I believe. It is impossible, therefore, to base any actual decision upon the information which Mr. Hunter has communicated. We know very nearly as much before receiving Mr. Hunter's information as since, as Mr. Selwyn traversed this part of the country and gave a similar report; that is, that it would be possible to obtain a route for a railroad

by that river or so-called pass. All the information which the hon. member for Victoria has referred to, has been before the public and, of course, is known to the members of the Government as well as to other parties, and will, no doubt, exercise its proper influence on the Government in coming to a final determination as to the route which the railroad would take. But there is one point which neither of the two hon. gentlemen has mentioned and which constitutes a serious difficulty in the further consideration of the adoption of this route. In order to obtain an accurate knowledge of the route, which would have to be taken from very near Livingstone all the way up to Fort George, a distance of 1,100 or 1,200 miles, it would be necessary to spend two years in further surveys of the country before the Government could be able to form an exact estimate of the difficulties to be overcome, and the expense to be borne in carrying the route in that direction. I have pointed out on previous occasions the political difficulties which are connected with locating the route. Were the Dominion Parliament and the Government at liberty to deal with the selection of the route purely on its merits as a work of engineering and a work for the promotion of the settlement of the country, we would be placed in a much more favourable position for considering many of the suggestions which naturally arise in the course of an exploration of half a continent. But the hon. members from British Columbia and the British Columbia Government never ceased their importunities about the immediate commencement of the road, and the Dominion Government felt that it was necessary to commence the road as soon as it was possible to obtain the location in British Columbia itself. Acting, therefore, upon political considerations, unless there is an understanding arrived at with that Province for their assent to further delay in the prosecution of those surveys, it would become absolutely necessary to adopt the pass which is already known to be feasible, where the line has been fully located, and the matter in controversy, then, would be limited to the route to