

the Atlantic provinces, the Canada Pacific must do for our relations with the Pacific province; and if I could present before you in a prophetic picture all that would follow from the establishment of such a connection, and the trade of the great sea and lands beyond, which might flow through our country, you as citizens of a commercial city, as well as in the capacity of votaries of science and scientific art, would at once say that at almost any sacrifice this great work should be executed. The difficulties in the way are undoubtedly great—so great that this generation of Canadians should scarcely be called upon to overcome them unaided, but they are probably not insurmountable, and the mode of meeting them is certainly at present the greatest public problem that our statesmen have to solve. It is further undoubtedly the duty of those whose scientific studies show them the grandeur of this great question and the nature of the practical results of its solution, to aid in every way that they can the progress towards an unobstructed highway through our territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

If it is in our power thus to bring together the resources of the whole breadth of the Continent, we may hope to consolidate our connection with the Mother Country by making ourselves indispensable to her interests, to relieve ourselves from the galling commercial yoke laid upon us by our neighbors, to provide homes and work for the surplus population of our older provinces, to build up the wealth of great trading centres, and to render vast and naturally wealthy regions productive of subsistence for millions of men.

When I look forward to the future of this country and base my anticipations, not on the merely human elements of to-day, but on the geologic treasures laid up in past ages, I see the Dominion of Canada with a population as great as that of the United States, and with some of the greatest and wealthiest cities of this continent in Nova Scotia and British Columbia. Geologists are not merely prophets of the past, they know something of the future as well. It might perhaps be well if we could inoculate our statesmen with a healthy belief in the geological future of Canada, or even with some faint idea of the billions of dollars of accessible treasures that lie beneath the soil of British Columbia and Nova Scotia. We might then see them put forth some effort to realize this El Dorado within the time of those now living, rather than contentedly allow it to wait the action of men wiser and more energetic than ourselves.