

the right to desire, to open up new territory; we desire to add to our population; we desire to add to our wealth, and exploit our yet undeveloped resources, both mineral and agricultural, but over and above all these reasons, important and valuable as they undoubtedly are, there are grave political causes at work which have induced the Government to propose this policy for your adoption. Sir, it is known to everybody who has bestowed the slightest attention to the subject that between the great centres of Canada, between the east and the west, there extends at present a great gap which must be bridged if Canada is to become a united and homogeneous whole. (Cheers.) The very success which has so far attended our efforts to colonize the west has in it elements of danger. You who choose to examine the map of North America will see for yourselves that that continent is very peculiarly situated in one respect. From New York to Winnipeg, and from Winnipeg to Edmonton, and probably further, there extends almost continuously a fertile belt many hundred miles in width.

TO BRIDGE THE GAP.

Naturally the north half belongs to us and the southern half belongs to the United States; it is equally natural that those who occupy the northern half would seek to trade with those occupying the southern half of this belt. The facilities of communication are probably easier that way than any other. On the west of that belt is what is known as the great American Sahara, and on the east there extends the uninhabited region which lies between Winnipeg and Quebec. Now, sir, our policy is, if we can bridge that gap to plant settlements of Canadians in the fertile land which I am happy to say the surveys of the Ontario Government have revealed to exist over a very considerable area of this territory. Our policy is to unite, and to unite for the benefit of older Canada, the eastern and western sections of the Dominion more closely together. If we succeed in the scheme which we now lay before the country, the total cost of which, as it has often been pointed out on the floor of Parliament, will barely exceed the cost of providing interest on a portion of that road for a matter of some seven years, think of what it will mean. Supposing that it is carried on on those lines; supposing that we succeed in adding one hundred thousand settlers, much more, two hundred thousand, and their families, to the population of that country, think of what that will mean to Canada.