

port smelter was not a custom smelter now, and in any event that it was the property of British capitalists although located in the United States. He pronounced Mr. Corbin's projects the greatest factor in the making of Rossland, and thought that the road now proposed would give British Columbia and Victoria an impetus that they could not otherwise obtain, obviating monopolistic control of the Kootenay and Boundary Creek countries by the Canadian Pacific railway with which working freight rates could not possibly be obtained.

MR. D. R. KER.

Mr. D. R. Ker, in replying first to Mr. Bodwell, expressed the fear that that gentleman was in the unhappy position of the little boy who told a lie, and repeated that lie so many times that he finally came to believe it as gospel truth himself. Mr. Bodwell had been so long the advocate and special pleader for Mr. Corbin that he could not look upon any project with which that gentleman was identified in an entirely unprejudiced manner. He had, however, made out the best case that could be offered for the Corbin application, while of course neglecting to say anything of how the Boundary country was at the present time being looked after by the construction of the Columbia & Western railway—now being pushed to Cascade City by large forces of men working both day and night.

To build the Columbia & Western over this backbone of the country entailed very much greater expense than was involved in the Corbin plan, the latter costing something like \$18,000 per mile, while the road for making the mines tributary to Canada instead of her rival to the south would cost \$28,000 or \$30,000 a mile—so that it would be seen the land grant in this case cut a very insignificant figure. There was no doubt whatever in his mind that Mr. Corbin's object in this project was to tap the Republic camp, which was proving very rich and attractive; and if he could get in there and at the same time make the Boundary country also a feeder of his railway it would no doubt be a very good thing for him, as the line would be a cheap one to construct comparatively. It would be found, however, that the Columbia & Western met all the requirements of the country, while there was certainly nothing to prevent the Columbia & Western (or the Canadian Pacific railway—for it was really the same thing) from bringing the ores of the Republic camp for smelting on this side of the line.

The Columbia & Western was essentially a road for the benefit of the whole country, as it was eventually to be

extended up to the Okanagan, to Penticton, to provide an outlet and profitable market for the farms of that valley, and make the Shuswap & Okanagan railway a complete and financial success, so that instead of a losing it would speedily become a paying line and the province save some \$20,000 or \$30,000 annually, while the coast at the same time gained a much closer and better connection with the mining country.

As to the necessity of competition in the preservation of legitimate freight rates—the government had already made provision for the regulation of all rates, so that this argument fell to the ground entirely. The Canadian Pacific railway would not as a matter of business policy antagonize or seek to antagonize all Canada, and if they did, the government could step in at any moment and apply the check.

Nor was it the intention of the C. P. R. to build railways alone for the development of the mining region in consideration. They had a very complete and admirable plan for a series of smelters throughout the country, to treat British Columbia ores at home, while he knew of still another smelter company with \$600,000 in the treasury at the present time, prepared to give smelter facilities to the Boundary country at a very early date—this country being one in which smelters can be operated with the greatest advantage, more especially as the Crow's Nest line will enable coal or coke to be brought in cheaply.

Nor was the smelting industry standing still in British Columbia by any means. The smelters were now putting in lead stacks, and an immense trade with China in lead was opening up the ultimate proportions of which it would be hard to conjecture, British Columbia lead, home smelted, being carried to the Orient in our own Canadian steamers.

Again—looking at this railway question from a federal standpoint—the Dominion government at the present time was making a great effort to open up and settle the agricultural areas of the Northwest and Manitoba. A most advantageous market was found in this Boundary Creek mining region, directly to the south of which—over the line—lies an agricultural district in the United States. With the road proposed by Mr. Corbin it would be unfair to expect our own farmers and those of Manitoba and the Northwest to compete with their American rivals closer at hand, while with the Canadian Pacific railway's several systems in operation the mining and the agricultural districts in question might very well be developed to be mutually supporting.

The great point for Victoria, however,