

British Columbia, with regard to the building of the railway on Vancouver Island. A Bill for the construction of such a railway passed this House last Session. The building of that road was part of a proposal from our Government in consideration of the inevitable delays in carrying out the bargain which the late Government entered upon. This Bill did not pass the Senate, and it remained for the Government to consider what was to be substituted. The offer of a lump sum instead of a railway on the Island was decided on. With regard to the remainder of the proposal, for the work on the mainland, the obligation of the Government remains the same as ever, and there is no reason to judge that they have given up their intention of going on with the road. But it must be remembered that the former proposal, as well as the latter, was subject to the resolution adopted by this House that we should not be bound to increase the rate of taxation for the completion of this railway. It appears then that we were never bound, nor are we now bound, to lay additional burthens on the country for the building of this railway, but only to go on with it as rapidly as possible. Other reports by the engineers engaged in the survey of the Pacific Railway will, I understand, show that very considerable progress has been made during the recess. They will show that in the Cascade and Rocky Mountain ranges explorations have been made in hitherto unexplored districts, and more favorable routes have been discovered. They will show also that there are still large unexplored regions in that country which it will perhaps be well to look into before finally adopting a route for some parts of the road. However, considerable progress has already been made in the location of the railway, and it is understood that further explorations will be made next year. Mr. Selwyn, Director of the Geological Survey, has visited a portion of the country known as the Peace River district, considerably north of the first place chosen as the route of the Pacific Railway. He reports that where the river cuts through the Rocky Mountain region the mountains practically disappear, and only a

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district of rolling country covered for the most part with prairie soil appears. On the Pine River there is a pass whose elevation is not more than two thousand feet above the sea, scarcely half the altitude of the Tête Jaune Cache, which was considered formerly so favorable. This extends not only through the Rocky Mountain Range but up to the very edge of the Cascade Mountains. Through this an outlet could probably be obtained to some point on the Pacific Coast—to Bute Inlet or Gardener Channel, for example. The climate of this country Mr. Selwyn reports on very favorably. Even as far north as Lake Arthabaska, he obtained specimens of wheat of fine quality which were produced there from grain sown in May and reaped in August of this year. When the House remembers that this point is over 600 miles north of Fort Garry, it will be seen that the country there is better than we ever expected to find it. Mr. Selwyn's reports point to the conclusion that the country is well worthy of consideration. We are also called upon in the Address to note that the Government has taken all necessary steps to secure the settlement of our claims in regard to the Fisheries under the Washington Treaty. It is well-known to the House that the settlement of these claims was postponed simply on account of negotiations with regard to reciprocity. Now it appears that our Government has taken the necessary steps by appointing a Commissioner, and we may hope the matter will soon be brought to an issue. I cannot help, on behalf of myself, and perhaps some other Members who feel as I do, expressing a wish that some more definite basis might have been established for the settlement of this matter. We all remember that it was in order to ascertain the extent of our claims in regard to those Fisheries that the High Joint Commission was first asked for by our Government. It is also known that this Commission broke up without having come to any decision on that matter, so that the question of the extent of our as well as of the American claims remains exactly as it was before the Commission sat. There are, consequently, certain embarrassments.