

shops and factories in Canada. We shall provide a market for the products of Canadian farms, and if the Klondike turns out to be what we hope it will, it would mean something of consequence to Canada, because the amount of supplies and provisions that would be required to provide for the wants of even one hundred thousand miners in the Klondike region would be a very considerable item in the interprovincial trade of the Dominion. I am not an expert in railroading, and do not profess to know very much about the construction of railways, especially in a country such as the one in which this road is to be built; but the probable cost of that road is variously estimated. In some cases it is as low as \$15,000 per mile. Well, it may be possible to construct a road in that country for a sum so small as that, but I must say I do not believe that that would be an adequate remuneration for the contractor undertaking that burden. In the first place every one must admit that the time limit will add materially to the cost of work. All the supplies, and all the material necessary for the construction of that road, or a large proportion at any rate, will have to be transported across the continent and find its way up there at an extremely heavy cost. Then in addition to that, the gentlemen who have that contract I fear will be subjected to serious competition with the employers of labour in the mining country, and, further than that, I imagine there is danger that the employees of that syndicate when they discover that that company is compelled to complete the road by the 1st day of September, or forfeit the quarter of a million, will in all probability be ready to take advantage of that condition of things. Therefore I say that the company undertaking a work of this kind requires more than the ordinary price in a settled country for constructing a railway. One would think to read some of the newspapers which are dealing with this question that the syndicate who are building this railway are likely to become millionaires at once. They may be now for aught I know. They have, it is true, a large area of country under this contract, but I do not believe that it is possible for them or anybody else yet to determine the value of it. That has to be proved. Gold in that country is not got without digging for it. You would suppose to hear some people talk about it, that all the syndicate had to do when they got their

railway through and got down to the Klondike, or the mining country, was simply to load up their steamers and ballast cars, and bring millions out of that region. But mining cannot be carried on, even in Klondike, without considerable cost. As I said before, with regard to the building of railways, I am not an expert, or an authority, but I had the pleasure of listening to an address delivered in another place not long since, by a gentleman who was deeply interested, who was the manager, I think, of one of the English syndicates seeking to invest capital in that country. That gentleman said, if I understood him correctly, that to produce \$22,500 worth of gold would require an expenditure of labour amounting to \$20,000. So that if Messrs. Mann & McKenzie should be so fortunate as to take out of these large tracts of land a good many millions, 90 per cent at least would be expended for labour, according to the calculation I heard the other day, from which certainly the government must derive a considerable benefit. I think that the limited time at the disposal of the government justifies their hasty and energetic action, and I have no doubt if that contract is completed in the time specified, the people of Canada from one end to the other will be prepared to appreciate and endorse the conduct of the administration which made that contract. I do not propose to refer to all the matters contained in the speech, but there is one particular question with reference to which I do intend to say a word before resuming my seat. The government have announced through the speech of His Excellency, that it is their intention to introduce a measure this year looking toward a plebiscite, or a vote on the question of prohibition in Canada. As a temperance man and prohibitionist, I have to say that I trust that the measure will receive a majority of the vote in both Houses of Parliament; and when the people at the polls are called upon to pronounce upon it, I trust also that the majority may be decisive in favour of a prohibitory law,—a law that will prohibit in Canada the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. But I have also to say that unless the majority is a decisive one in favour of it, I would rather that it be decisive the other way.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND (in French)  
Before adding some comments to the remarks