

all the information that was then obtained, it was premature to decide that Burrard Inlet should be the terminus, how premature was it for hon. gentlemen opposite to decide that Esquimalt should be the terminus in 1873? That is the problem, the arithmetical calculation, which I shall desire the hon. gentleman to answer. The hon. gentleman laughs at it. We know that whenever the hon. First Minister hears an awkward question he turns it off with a laugh, but it will be admitted that the hon. member for Lambton, and the House and the country knew more in 1878 about what should be the terminus than any one could know in 1873. Therefore, if it was not premature to select Esquimalt in 1873, it could not be premature to select another terminus in 1878. Then there is a resolution that it is necessary to keep good faith with British Columbia; and then there is a provision, the sting of which is in the tail. The 14th resolution declares that the Government be authorised to make further explorations, and to enter into contracts for constructing a portion of the line in Columbia not exceeding 125 miles in length without the further sanction of Parliament. Here for the first time do we find the policy of building a railway in British Columbia as a Government work brought down by the Government for the consideration of Parliament and adopted by Parliament. Well, on what was it that this part of the Government policy was based? On what was it that the House was asked to hurry into an engagement to commence, as a Government work, 125 miles in British Columbia? Was it upon something old or upon something new? Was it upon something fresh? Yes. The hon. gentleman pointed out that there were hundreds of thousands of unemployed poor in England. He referred to their misery and destitution, he said it would be necessary for the English Government to provide some means for their relief. He pointed to what he was going to do in England. Both he and his colleagues declared that the scheme possessed certain elements of success. The first Minister declared it must and would succeed. He said that they would go home; that they would enlist the sympathies of the Imperial Government; that they would obtain the co-operation which they

solicited, and which this House authorised them to obtain, the Imperial aid, by guarantee or otherwise, towards the construction of this line. They went home, and, like other people who have gone home, they came back again. But, Sir, although we heard a great deal of some matters they transacted, although the Finance Minister's loans, and the Minister of Railway's purchases of rails were told to us over and over again, until we got more tired than ever of discussing the rate of interest upon loans and the price of steel-rails—although, I say, these proofs of financial and commercial ability were discussed *ad nauseam*, not a word was heard upon the great mission—upon the principal point. What in the world is the difference whether we get one-half per cent. more or less on a loan of a few million dollars? What in the world is the difference whether we buy steel-rails at \$24.40 or \$25.40 compared with the other question? Very important things both; but what in the world do we care about these questions compared with that of obtaining a sound and solid basis of Imperial aid for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway? We have heard a great deal of the mint and the anise and the cumin, but of the weightier matters of the law very little indeed. Now, why this silence? We have endeavoured to elicit information on the subject. I, myself, ventured to put a question or two, I endeavoured to draw out the hon. gentleman on the Address, and subsequently by a question, but still there was silence. We authorised the Government to proceed to England to accomplish a most important work, but not a word is told of the result. Something, indeed, was told. Oh, yes. We asked whether any arrangement had been made, any promise had been given, and we were told there had not. Some person asked the same question in the Imperial Parliament, and the answer was the same. But, to-night, we are told that these Ministers at home are diplomatic, that there was in effect a secret understanding, that they were deeply interested—O, so deeply interested—in this matter. The Minister is now able to state this fact, perhaps—may I venture to suggest—with greater confidence than he would