

have performance instead of promises. They had been tantalized too long. They had come to believe that promises about the railway were made only to be broken, and they were determined to have a bit of railway somewhere, though it should cost the life of the Dominion. What was life without the railway? No doubt political British Columbia took this tone, and exerted pressure, and even used threats. But surely we are allowed to examine their position, and in doing so we are to assume that the people of British Columbia have the same kind of common sense that people elsewhere have. Now, in the name of common sense, what benefit are the bulk of the people of Vancouver's Island and of British Columbia to get from a railway beginning at an insignificant village in the heart of the mountains of the mainland, then winding away from them for an hundred miles or so, and ending nowhere; costing about \$100,000 per mile; with a total population of two or three hundred souls along the whole hundred miles, and with no population, and no hope of population beyond? Certainly, no benefit, it will be answered at once, unless the hundred miles in question be a necessary part of the main line. But, if no competent authority ventures to say that the main line should take this route; if the Chief Engineer says, 'I am not in a position to decide, for it may be found in the course of a year or two that the main line should go hundreds of miles to the north'—what then? I would like an average British Columbian to give a reply. In his absence I may—with submission—suggest what might have been done.

The state of the case being as I have described it, could not a Cabinet Minister have been found in one Government or the other, wise enough and bold enough to have assembled the British Columbia representatives in some tea-room and have discoursed to them substantially as follows:—

'Gentlemen, we all—you as well as I—are anxious to preserve this Confederacy of ours; we know too that its various parts must be linked and welded together with iron; that organic filaments will weave themselves round those long iron rails, and make us truly one people; but look calmly and as practical men at the present position. Here we have Marcus Smith contending vehemently against this Burrard Inlet route; men like Selwyn, Horetzky, and others, declaring that we should cross the Saskatchewan, below Prince Albert, make direct for Peace River, and thence to the Pacific by the Pine River Pass; and above all, our Engineer-in-Chief repeatedly asserting that the facts under his hand do not yet warrant him giving a decided opinion, and therefore counselling delay. No sane man then will venture to say that it is clear that the main line should go to Burrard Inlet. If we adopt a route in ignorance, and it turns out that it is a wrong route, we shall not only have thrown away ten millions, but we shall have thrown away for ever all hope of getting a Canada Pacific Railway; for no Government would ever try it again, after such a gigantic blunder had been committed. Therefore, would it not be better all round for us to give you the interest of the ten millions for additional judges, dry-docks, wet-docks, dykes, pumping machinery, branch roads, subsidies to steamers, or anything else under the sun likely to benefit all Canada, and particularly your intelligent constituents, until we get more light, and are clearly and unmistakably in a position to commence construction?' If the representatives saw in some such proposal as this, only a snake in the grass, a cunning scheme to induce them to consent to further delay, and very likely they would, when the Victorians would not change a letter of the inscription on their arch at Lord Dufferin's request, and make it 'Carnarvon terms or Reparation,' instead of 'Carnarvon terms or Separation.'