

and which had been distorted by the party press of this country. He regarded the course of the Government in dealing with British Columbia with respect to the Pacific Railway as a great political blunder; and he would prove it. The people of British Columbia exacted from this Government nothing but what the Dominion could fairly discharge without imposing additional burdens upon the people. They were as loyal and patriotic a portion of the people of the Dominion as could be found anywhere, and all that they asked was that the railway should be commenced, and commenced at once. If the financial ability of this Dominion was not sufficient to build the road in seven years, they would be perfectly willing to allow fifty or seventy years. Now, what do we find? We find that the party now in power had over and over again denounced the construction of the railway, and these men who were bold enough as statesmen, working in the interest of the consolidation of this country, to undertake it. But when they came into power they said to themselves "We have said that the Pacific Railway is wrong, but now we have to prove it is wrong." According to the member for South Bruce it was a mad bargain, and according to the First Minister, as stated in one of his despatches, it was an act of insanity; but such would not be the verdict of posterity. When that party came into power they sent an agent to British Columbia when they ought to have sent surveyors to locate the line and navvies to build it. It was stated that the Government of British Columbia refused to treat with Mr. EDGAR because he had no credentials. He (Mr. DeCosmos) was not here as an exponent of the British Columbia Government, but he knew they treated the Dominion agent with all due respect so far as his written authority entitled him to. That agent, over and over again, went to a certain gentleman in British Columbia to get his credentials from the First Minister in order that he might negotiate for a relaxation of the terms of union. To that statement he defied contradiction, and if necessary he could give the gentleman's name. The Local Government then asked the Dominion Government if they would endorse the action of Mr. EDGAR, and the

answer they got was that the proposal was withdrawn. If there had not been so much hot temper shown in this matter—so much desire to override a small Province—so much of the feeling exhibited by the member for South Bruce in his famous Aurora speech—if there had been less of that feeling of insolence which dictated the withdrawal of the 'proposal' of Mr. EDGAR,—and if there had been more of that feeling of magnanimity which recognized the fact that British Columbia was a young country and expected assistance in her youth which she would return ten thousand fold—there would have been much less trouble over this whole matter. In an Order in Council of the Government of this Dominion it is said that the smaller Provinces should pay great respect to the opinion of the larger Provinces. In other words the larger Provinces were to govern the country. If the First Minister after having committed the first blunder in the case of British Columbia had said that Mr. EDGAR was his authorized agent, he believed that instead of an appeal to England, the difficulty with that Province would have been easily settled. He would say more—and he was assured of this fact by the members of the British Columbia Government—that they were not afraid to go to the country, but were willing to appeal to the people on any proposition they might have agreed to with the Dominion about the railway. What the Government, however, required to know was whether the agent of the Federal Government who was sent to that Province was authorized to make terms, and *binding* terms. He would now refer to some of the utterances of the hon. member for South Bruce. While he admired that hon. gentleman's eloquence on some occasions, he had to differ with him as a collater of facts; his logic was often wrong, simply because it was based on false premises. The hon. gentleman then quoted from a speech made by the hon. member for South Bruce in the course of which he said it would have been in the interest of this Dominion if the arrangement which had been made that Esquimaux should be the terminus of the Pacific Railway, had been cancelled by the new arrangement entered into. What was the history of this whole ques-