

should not be attempted until the country is thickly populated, the agricultural and mineral resources fully developed, trade, manufactures, commerce and fisheries all in the most prosperous and flourishing state, so that the railway would pay as a commercial speculation only.

This would indeed be placing the construction of the railway at a very "long time to come;" it being a well-established axiom in political economy that no new country can be colonized, or prosper to any great extent, without roads; and as for old countries, in which the invention of roads, like that of almost all other things, has graduated through all the phases of road-making, from the rudest beginning to the present climax of perfection—from the footpath, in which the pedestrian could with difficulty scramble along, through all the stages of the bridle-road, the pack-horse, the sledge and the wheel carriage road, the Roman paved road, the macadamized, and finally the railroad—so intimately does the prosperity of any country depend upon the introduction of roads, that this one class of improvements has always been held as an unerring criterion of the degree of prosperity and civilization of any country.

Speaking of roads, the Abbé Raynal justly remarks, "Let us travel over all the countries of the earth, and wherever we shall find no facility for trading from a city to a town, and from a village to a hamlet, we may pronounce the people to be barbarians, and we will only be deceived respecting the degree of barbarism."

Sir Henry Parnell, in his treatise on road-making, states that "the making of roads, in point of fact, is fundamentally essential to bring about the first change that every rude country must undergo in emerging from a condition of poverty and barbarism," to a state of affluence and civilization.

The Railway Commissioners would, therefore, appear to be reasoning in a circle. The railway cannot, say they, be constructed until the provinces are in a high state of prosperity, sufficiently so to make the railway remunerative, and this desirable result can only follow, and not precede, the construction of the railway, or some equally efficient mode of intercommunication.

It would not have been necessary to remark upon the unfair mode of treatment which Major Robinson's report has received at the hands of the Railway Commissioners by con-

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