

treaty between Great Britain and France granting to Britain the most favourable terms conceded to any other country, English built ships were admitted into the French market upon payment of a duty of a like amount as Austrian vessels. I am aware that this question engaged the attention of the late Administration, and that it used every exertion to effect a reduction of the tax at present paid by Canadian-built ships in France. I may state that, when application was made to the French Government to induce them to admit Canadian-built ships on the same terms as English, the French authorities decided that the treaty only extended to English alone and not to colonial vessels. The consequence was that Canadian-built ships have been subjected to the tax of the general French tariff which, in this article, I believe amounts to 40 francs a ton—a duty I believe still in existence. I also believe that such a duty as that practically amounts to the prohibition of this branch of trade. It would, therefore be very desirable, indeed, and I am sure the Government, would receive the hearty thanks of the country if they could see their way, to open negotiations which should result in reducing the tax on Canadian vessels to a point that would render that line of business profitable to Canadian shipbuilders. It would also be a happy result if those negotiations should open up to Canada the trade of the French and Spanish colonies. I suppose, in asking for those concessions—this diminution of foreign tariffs—this country would be called upon to reciprocate in some way. A new trade with those nations and their colonies would widen the circle of our commerce, and give increased employment to the people of the Dominion, extending the inducements we have to offer to men leaving the Mother Country, in which the competition is too keen to allow them to earn a living. We should have all such inducements to present to them as well as those liberal laws and that wise legislation which is calculated to encourage the emigrant to come and settle in Canada instead of the United States. And, when we remember that this country is larger in extent than the Republic—when we look at her inexhaustible resources—her boundless wealth in agriculture, forests, mines and fisheries, and

consider that at present, comparatively speaking, those great inexhaustible sources of wealth are lying dormant for the want of hands to develop them, it will be seen how necessary it is, in the promotion of our interests, for this Administration to lend their best energies, by negotiation and otherwise, to enlarge old and create new industries for the employment of our people and the development of our trade. The next paragraph of the speech has reference to the Pacific Railway. The purpose of the Government is to press for the most vigorous prosecution of this work, to meet the most reasonable expectations of British Columbia. If I understand this question aright, after Confederation, after the various outlying Provinces of the Dominion entered the Union, it was deemed absolutely necessary that some mode of easy communication should be adopted to bind those distant Provinces closer to the older portions of the Dominion. I believe, also, that a work of this kind was advocated and urged by men of all parties. I think, moreover, I recollect seeing, some years ago, in a very influential newspaper, not a supporter of the First Minister of the Crown, an article asking why he delayed the prosecution of that work. I believe differences of opinion exist as to the mode in which this work should be carried on. But one consideration admits of no doubt—that, when British Columbia entered the Confederation it was upon the distinct understanding that a work of this kind should be constructed, and that those outlying Provinces should, as far as possible, enjoy every facility of communication with the east, and easy transportation to the seaboard for the products of those regions. The faith of the Dominion has been pledged to this enterprise, and it is better to be bankrupt in purse than bankrupt in reputation. I understand that, in a short time, 500 miles of this work will be completed, connecting Lake Superior with the great North West. That will be a great advantage, but I believe it is only an instalment of what the inhabitants of British Columbia may sanguinely look forward to. I believe it will be the policy of this and every other Government to prosecute this work consistently with the means at their disposal. It is stated