

comparatively small, confined for the most part to the older Provinces. This limited population has incurred an enormous expenditure in overcoming obstacles of very great magnitude in opening up for colonization the fertile region recently acquired. She has had no little difficulty, and incurred no small outlay, in connection with the Indian population, but the greatest and most costly of all her undertakings has been the railway across the Continent; and, in establishing this undoubtedly great work, she has been impressed with the conviction that she was promoting the general interests of the Empire, and contributing not a little towards its consolidation and defence.

There is now a continuous line of railway from Halifax to the Pacific, entirely on British soil. The Pacific Railway was opened for public use last year. Eight months before it was opened for public traffic the last rail was laid; but the last rail had not been laid many days when a consignment of naval stores passed through to the station of the North Pacific Fleet from Halifax. The time occupied on the then unfinished railway was seven days and a few hours, from tide water of the Atlantic to Esquimaux. Without the railway it would have taken some three months to have sent the same stores in a British bottom to their destination. This one fact must be recognised as of striking significance, as it clearly shows the immense political value of the Canadian Pacific Railway. This new line practically brings what was once the most remote naval station, in the most distant colony of the Empire, within about two weeks of Portsmouth.

I will not venture to take up your time by dwelling upon the naval and military and political importance of the Canadian Railway to the Pacific. The highest authorities in England have