

I ever had the pleasure of meeting you, and to the nature of my business at that period.

In the spring of 1863 I visited London, in the interest and at the request of that isolated Colony in the interior of British North America, known as the Red River Settlement, and in order to promote so far as lay in my power the establishment of a line of communication from Canada to the Settlement and hence to British Columbia. Learning that I was in London on public business, and that I originally hailed from the constituency which you represent in Parliament, you very kindly sent me a note of invitation to lunch with you at your private house on a certain day. On reference to my diary I find that on Tuesday, 16th June, I called in accordance with this invitation at your house, at half-past one o'clock, had lunch with you, your mother, and Miss Aytoun, and left before four o'clock.

This is the only occasion, so far as I remember, I ever had the pleasure of meeting you, and I am quite certain that I never, before nor since, (until the present moment) wrote a line to you or to any member of your family on any subject whatever. It is quite possible that the projected Intercolonial Railway may have been alluded to, amongst a variety of other subjects, at your table on the occasion referred to, but I could scarcely have said anything respecting the country through which it is intended to run, to which much importance could be attached, as up to that time I had never seen either Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, or set foot on any part of the country between Quebec and Halifax.

My mind, at that period, was mainly occupied with the immediate object of my mission to London, viz., the opening up of a road through the wild unoccupied districts between Canada, the Rocky Mountains, and British Columbia; and I think it more than likely that I asked you to accept a copy of a Canadian Parliamentary publication on this subject, and which embraced some rather lengthy observations on a proposed system of constructing Railways and roads, generally, through unsettled districts.* In these observations the Intercolonial Railway is alluded to incidentally, and it is shown that the proposed system for building lines through countries in a condition of nature, might, with advantage, be adopted, should all other means fail in securing this important and much wanted link of connection between the several Provinces.

* *Vide* Canada Sessional Papers, 1863, No. 83.