

for settlement much further north at the present time. At the rate of 100,000 a year, as they are now going in, how many years will take to settle that country? Double that and you have over 25 years before you get your five millions of people in there. I hope it may be doubled and I hope it will still further increase beyond that, but at all events, many years must elapse before you will be required, it appears to me from what I can gather, to lay down any more railways in that particular section of the country for the accommodation of the settlers who will be going in. We have been told that settlers are teeming into this district. They may be teeming into a part of the country forty, fifty, sixty, seventy or eighty miles away from the railway; they may be teeming into another part of the country altogether. We are told that this country, which was once the home of the buffalo and wild tribes, is teeming with activity. If this activity is in another section of the North-west, and not giving any evidence of its existence in the particular section of the country through which this railway is to run, why build the railway now? It appears to me that our duty is plain now. Why are we rushing into this thing with such speed as if our very life depended upon it, as if the very existence of Canada depended upon it. I want to ask is there any dark cloud overshadowing us that the ratification of this contract will immediately lift. If there is, I do not know it. Is there a well-grounded fear that the Grand Trunk Railway Company will not allow us, two or three years hence, to build and make them a present of this line, that they will not accept it? Is there any well-grounded justification for that fear? I think not. I think we will find them in just as receptive a frame of mind two or three years hence as that in which they are to-day. Is there any congestion away up in this country which requires a railway to be built? Is there any depression in business? We hear about the employment of the toiling thousands in the workshops and fields of Canada. They are, happily, now all employed, but is that a reason why we should start now to build another railway? I think not. It is not a cogent reason. I do not hear that labourers are seeking employment in vain, nor do I hear that there is any depression in the manufacturing industries of the country. I could understand that, if the conditions were entirely different, it might be desirable for the government to undertake a work a little in advance of the time that it was required to relieve, if possible, such a depressed condition in order that people might be occupied, but I never heard yet of a government feeling that they were in duty bound, when everything is booming, when times are prosperous and when men are employed, when wages are high and when conditions are as favourable as they ever

have been or can be, to expend a large amount of money for such a purpose as this. Why not wait and be sure? If this is a wise policy, it will be wise two or three years hence; if it is a defensible policy, it will be easily defensible then. Then, it may be that one of those cycles which come about in all countries will appear, when business will become less active, when depressed conditions will occur, when the public exchequer may well be opened and when great works may be undertaken for the purpose I suggested a moment ago of helping to tide over the period of bad times until better times should appear? But I am told by one of the leading organs of public opinion in this country, which seems to be most extremely anxious to see this project go through, that we must build this road now or never. Now or never? What does this mean? Is it really a fact, now or never? What are the conditions which exist now which may not exist five, ten or fifteen years hence? Then, it says further that it matters not how we have drifted or have been drawn into it, we are face to face with a grave crisis. At the time this announcement was made by this leading organ, I thought it was striking, and I took it to ponder over, and I have pondered over it. 'It matters not how we have drifted.' If we had drifted we would not have moved with such celerity. We have more than drifted. We have been drawn into it. This editorial article says that we are face to face with a grave crisis, and therefore this railway should be built. It must be built from the east to the west, from ocean to ocean, even if \$150,000,000 has to be expended upon it, because we are face to face with a grave crisis. I would like some one to tell me where or what the crisis is. Where is it located? Surely, if there is a crisis we would all like to know about it. If it is a tangible thing, we would like to feel it. Let somebody who does know locate it. If somebody has it in his pocket let him produce it. But, Sir, we have been left in blissful ignorance down to this very moment, that we were in the midst of any crisis. Somebody did try to make a little political crisis out of the recent changes in the Department of Railways and Canals, but that is a very small thing. This one we are speaking of, we are told, is a grave crisis; it is a grave crisis that we are called on to face, and because it is a grave crisis we must build this railway. I do not wonder, Sir, that such strained advocacy as this could find expression in one of the leading organs of opinion in this country, and that it ever could be considered as carrying any weight or impressing people successfully into the support of this project. I think, Sir, that the crisis ought be disclosed. If there is a crisis we should know the truth. If it does not exist now, but if it is impending, it would be well to warn us. If it is a crisis