

the bad rapids as far as Fort Alexander. Some of these were long and very dangerous, so much so, that at one of them, where we met an Indian and his wife, the latter was in an agony of fear although her husband *only* was to run the rapid, she remaining on shore. It was curious and exciting to see the men in the leading little dug-out, sitting, as it were, in the turmoil of waters (for the canoe was not visible), as we (my man and myself) followed close in their wake. There was a charm in the whole thing that was very pleasurable. The people at the forts we arrived at were surprised at our having got down in safety without guides, and in such small craft. Our little half-breed leader, Kenny McKenzie, was a cool and practised canoeman, and guided us sometimes with consummate skill and nerve within a very few feet of almost certain death. I may add that all along the north bank of the north branch of the Saskatchewan, the soil is very rich, and we were riding through vetches or wild peas up to our horses' knees a great part of the way. On the whole I agree very fully with Mr. Fleming's favourable report of the country, and believe that the chief drawbacks, namely, grasshoppers, mosquitoes, and frosts, will become ameliorated by colonisation and cultivation.

Mr. HADDAN : I believe this railway across the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean is obliged to be made, because its construction forms one of the conditions by which British Columbia was joined to the Canadian confederation. A railway of some sort must be made somehow. Both the author and Captain French have told you that even the districts to be traversed by it are not surveyed yet, and that the country is of the roughest, and in many places uncultivable. I fancy, therefore, it will be difficult to get persons to invest in such a speculation, especially as not a week since Mr. Fawcett, M.P., demonstrated, that even Indian State railways had not returned one per cent. interest on the capital expended. The picture on the wall represents a view of the Pioneer, or one-legged railway, a structure which, as you perceive, is made entirely of timber, and possesses no earthworks or masonry of any description. It requires 4,500 cubic feet of timber per mile, and its cost would not exceed £600 complete, while in twenty months the whole line, from ocean to ocean, could be constructed, and it can easily be constructed by 200 men at the rate of two miles daily. Railways, as we understand them, are permanent structures, and therefore not suitable for a tentative line like the Interoceanic Railway, for an earthwork railway once made cannot be altered. Nor can a narrow gauge be turned into a broad gauge, nor, as suggested by the author, can territorial roads be constructed