

onerous than those formerly entered into. Let me here call the attention of the House to statements that have been made in reference to the value of British Columbia as a country. It has been asserted, over and over again, that British Columbia was of no value to the Dominion, and, in fact, the hon. member for West Durham went so far as to make the statement that the country was utterly worthless. It was contended that British Columbia was of no value because she was not a grain-growing country. Now, there is a mistake about that. There is more arable land in British Columbia than it is generally credited with possessing. We never put forward a claim that it is a grain-growing country. Our claim is that it is a mineral Province of great value, as will ultimately be proven. Our grain-growing section lies principally east of the Cascade Range. As was shown by the map laid on the Table of this House, a few days ago, which purported to exhibit the tracts of good and bad land in the North-West and in British Columbia; in that map a tract of good land, lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Cascade Range, was shown, which, on measurement, was declared to be 20,000 acres in extent, in which, I take it, sufficient wheat could be grown to make an important item in the traffic of a railway. After my election I obtained information from every district in the Province as to the quantity of grain that had been grown in the Province. I was astonished at the result. I found that our farmers had raised during the year 8,000 tons of grain, and when we come to consider the small number of farmers to be found in a population of 12,000 or 15,000 persons, the House will easily understand the ground must have been very prolific to raise so large a quantity. We must remember also that the crop was put in at a time of serious depression, for this House had just declared that the location of the Burrard Inlet route was premature, and everything indicated that the Railway would be carried away north of all settlement. Consequently, each farmer put in a limited number of acres. It will hardly be assumed that we have now under crop one acre in every hundred of arable land we possess. Should we have an addition to our population of 12,500 farmers, who

will cultivate eighty acres each—and surely this is a moderate calculation—the result would be that 800,000 tons of grain would be raised yearly. Taking it for granted that we could spare 400,000 tons, or say one-half, for exportation, would that not yield to the Railway quite a considerable revenue. It would go a long way towards paying the expense of that 127 miles for twelve months, and, in fact, would very likely yield a revenue. Well, now, it might be said: "Is it likely that this 127 miles of road which simply, as it were, enters the country—is it at all likely that there is country enough through which it runs to raise 800,000 tons of grain, and is it concentrated in such a shape that the Railway can take it up?" Extraordinary as it may appear, that is a fact. The road starts at Yale, it goes through the canons where there is no land of any account until it reaches Lytton. At Lytton, by taking the course of the Fraser, and expending a few thousand dollars in the improvement of that river, we secure navigation for 25 miles. I have the report made to the hon. Minister of Public Works, a few years ago, dated 1875. Before reading extracts from this report, I will inform the House that the Columbia River is very similarly situated to the Fraser River, and that previous to the improvement of that river, it was impossible to move grain to the front; and agriculture to the east of the Cascades, in Washington Territory and Oregon, was, as it is with us at the present time, confined to supplying the wants created in the vicinity. I gather the following from the Report:

"I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of Mr. G. B. Wright's Supplementary Report on the big bar canon of the Fraser River, showing the nature of the obstructions to the navigation of the river at that point. Mr. Wright estimates the cost of removing rock at \$100,000, but I think that his estimate is far too high, even for work carried on so far in the interior. It appears that a road or tramway can be built from the reach below to that above, not exceeding two miles in length, at a cost of about \$3,000 to \$4,000, with a good landing at each end. With a view to show what has been done in Washington Territory and Oregon by the improvements of the Columbia river, in developing the country, I desired Mr. Wright to obtain some statistics bearing upon this subject, the general results which I now lay before you for the consideration of the hon. the Minister of Public Works.