

of Quebec westward, to have paralleled the river and lakes, avoiding, as far as possible, broken country; running, therefore, through districts barren of mineral, and laboring under the disadvantage of competition with low water freight rates; a drawback which the road must still keenly feel.

Canadian mining, therefore, did not derive the full advantage of railroad assistance until the Canadian Pacific was built. This railroad, like the first transcontinental railroad in the United States,—the Union and Central Pacific,—originated in a political necessity, and was not built primarily from commercial motives. The Union Pacific and Central Pacific followed the least favorable of the four lines suggested by the report made ten years previously when Jeff Davis was Secretary of War. The building of the line and the location were forced upon the government by the exigencies of the Civil War. They could not adopt the southern route because portions of it were in possession of the Confederacy. They were averse to the northern route because the Oregon Boundary question with Great Britain was still unsettled; and therefore the central route across the Rocky Mountains, where they attain their highest development, had to be almost of necessity adopted. In order to induce capital to undertake so heavy a risk, the government advanced very large sums of money to the two corporations, so much of which as has been due, strange to say, have been returned.

So likewise the Canadian Pacific was really originated in the necessity of linking together the newly-created states of the Dominion and in inducing British Columbia to enter the Confederacy, and securing an outlet to the Pacific at what at the time seemed a reckless price. Although the original idea of the confederation was conceived by Sir Alexander Galt, the real exponent and promoter of that magnificent conception was undoubtedly your townsman, Sir John A. Macdonald, and to him likewise, therefore, must be assigned the credit of recognizing the necessity, not only of the Intercolonial, but also of the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

Sir John and those who co-operated in creating the Dominion, certainly were a magnificent group of men. In nothing was their patriotism more emphatically evinced than in this, that when Canada was in the throes of violent political convulsion, they were willing and able to forget their political strifes, smother their personal animosities, and calmly frame such a constitution as that under which Canada is now being built up into a nation, which will rank as the principal partner next to the mother country in the future federation of the Great and Greater Britain. Above all, true patriotism was expressed in deed (it is easy to be patriotic in the hustings) when such bitter opponents as John A. and George Brown worked together in the same cabinet to start the confederacy on and steer it safely through its first voyage. Subsequently, when Canada was financially weak, Sir John cured her geographic debility by buying the great Northwest from the Hudson Bay Co., and, as we thought, swamping the country head and ears in debt by subsidizing the Canadian Pacific. His policy and its management bespeak not only his courage but the marvellous foresight and brilliant imagination with which he was endowed. He carried his mea-