

was that a railway between Esquimalt harbor and Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, should be commenced as soon as possible, and completed with all practicable despatch; the 2nd that the surveys for the mainland line should be vigorously prosecuted; the 3rd that a wagon-road and telegraph line should be constructed immediately along the route of the proposed railway; the 4th that at least two millions of dollars should be spent every year within the Province of British Columbia from the date when the surveys should be sufficiently advanced to admit of that expenditure on the construction of the railway; and the last that on or before the 31st of December, 1890, the whole line from the Pacific to the present furthest western point of the Canadian railway system should be completed and open for traffic. Considering that according to the original contract the Pacific Railway was to have been completed in 1881, it will be generally allowed that these terms involve a very great relaxation of the bond on the faith of which British Columbia was tempted to enter the North American Confederation. To a certain extent, however, the pleas advanced by Canada for the non-fulfilment of her bargain were admitted to be reasonable. If it was "physically impracticable," as Mr. Mackenzie urged, to construct the railway within the stipulated term, there was nothing more to be said. No one in this country, nor, as we believe, in British Columbia, had any idea of keeping Canada to the strict letter of her bond if the doing so involved the crippling of her own finances. It may be that the original contract was somewhat rashly entered into, and that Canada, as young countries are wont to do, promised more than she had any reasonable prospect of performing. The construction of a railway from sea to sea upon British territory, however important as a means of welding the Dominion together, was not the only object to be considered. If in the process of cementing the union we ruined its most important member, the result could hardly be satisfactory from an Imperial point of view. Justice and good policy alike demanded that the terms of the contract of 1871 should be liberally interpreted—that Canada should not be asked to bear a burden disproportionate to her strength—that British Columbia should not be forced into a premature development at the expense of her neighbors. All these considerations we cannot doubt were well weighed by Lord Carnarvon when he proposed the compromise of 1874. What we have to complain of now is, that not only have the terms even of that modified contract not been complied with, but that no attempt whatever appears to have been made to comply with them. While we find the Mackenzie Government energetic enough in pushing forward public works within those Provinces where it is most essential that its political interest is to be maintained, and prepared to enter into new engagements with the United States, involving the expenditure of a large sum of money, we do not see any sign whatever of a desire to comply with the terms of the Carnarvon compromise. The pretence that the Dominion Upper House rejected that compromise Mr. Mackenzie's own followers can scarcely regard as serious. In the majority of two by which the bill was defeated there were several of Mr. Mackenzie's own party, including one gentleman who had been only made a Senator a few weeks before upon his nomination. It is difficult to believe that if the Ministry had been in