

this House is promoting the measure. The hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Davin) informed the House that this railway ought to be located in the interests of the population of the North-West Territories, that the interests of the people of Manitoba should not be considered, or that they should be made subordinate.

Mr. DAVIN. No.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I understood the hon. gentleman to make a distinction between Manitoba and the North-West.

Mr. DAVIN. No.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Perhaps the hon. gentleman will tell us what he did say?

Mr. DAVIN. What I said was this: that my hon. friends naturally take a great interest in this line as Manitoba men; I take a great interest in it as a North-West man, because I look forward also to a line running from Regina to San Francisco. I did not try to put the North-West Territories above Manitoba, or to contradistinguish them. My hon. friend will remember I said that I regarded this line as the harbinger of a great Hudson Bay Railway that would not only come down to Winnipeg, but would also be carried forward to San Francisco.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). The hon. gentleman told us that the natural route between Japan, China and Liverpool was a railway extending along the Saskatchewan from Port Nelson or some other port in Hudson Bay. In fact the hon. gentleman told us that the construction of a continental road, a road to convey the traffic from the great east to western Europe, was to be a road altogether different from the Canadian Pacific Railway. And the central portion of Canada should undertake to construct a road lying a thousand miles away from the inhabitants who are to bear the burden and pay the taxes. The hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Denison) holds that although we have many millions of acres lying in the vicinity of railways already constructed unoccupied and fit for settlement, for which settlers have not been found, we should go on and furnish railway accommodation for every mile of territory which we possess, whether we can get any one to occupy the territory or not.

Mr. DENISON. Not exactly that. It was to develop the western country and the lands there.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). To develop a country without inhabitants and for which you are not getting inhabitants where railways are already provided. The hon. gentleman's proposition reminded me very much of a story told by the poet Moore in criticizing a work on Church and State by an English bishop. Moore tells that there were butchers' shops established everywhere throughout Hindostan for the benefit of the Brahmins, and although it was true that the Brahmins would not eat meat, yet, as it was necessary the butchers should live, it was only right they should be compelled to pay for the meat, so long as the meat was provided. And so we must go on and provide railway accommodation for the whole 3,000,000 square miles of territory we possess, although we have at the present time but 5,000,000 of inhabitants. We have to-day railway accommodation for more than three times the inhabitants we possess. What has been the effect of this extraor-

dinary construction of railways, not merely in Canada but in the United States? We have scattered our population over territory many times as large as it should occupy. This has depreciated the value of real estate more than the protective tariff, and we are continuing to do so by pursuing the policy on which hon. gentlemen opposite have set out. Why should the farming population and the industrial and artizan classes of the older provinces burden themselves with additional taxation to provide railway accommodation for men who are still on the other side of the Atlantic and likely to be there for a generation, when every mile of railway built has a tendency to diminish the value of real estate in the settled districts, the amount of capital the people possess, and increase largely the burdens already imposed. I could point to districts in the adjacent Republic where a quarter of a century ago real estate was worth twice what it is to-day, and it is depreciated because a considerable portion of the population have been withdrawn from these districts and taken into the western territories. What are you doing in the North-West? Why, you are withdrawing perhaps five or six thousand people from each of the western counties of Ontario. You have diminished the value of real estate by at least \$3,000 for every man you have taken away, and you have scattered these people over an immense area of country where there are bridges to build, school-houses to erect, churches to build, taxes to pay for the maintenance of school-teachers, and where they have immense sums to pay for all these purposes, a mere fraction of which they would only have to pay if they had continued in the agricultural districts of the older provinces. I am not saying that we ought not to encourage settlement in the North-West, but I do maintain that you ought not to go on with the construction of railways far beyond the yet settled portions of the country, and thus enormously diminish the value of real estate in the older provinces and enormously increase the difficulties of life in a new country by the sparseness of the settlements which are established along these immense stretches of railway. I have no doubt that where settlements have already been formed we ought to take into consideration their wants and necessities, but the policy of the Administration with regard to railway construction in the North-West during the past four or five years has gone far beyond this. I know that some hon. gentlemen from the west have pressed upon their constituents their fitness for the place on the ground that these bankrupt companies are indebted to them and that they have a special interest in having them succeed in this House. It seems to me that we will be obliged to call a halt some time or other. You propose now to give \$80,000 a year; that represents the interest upon at least \$2,000,000 capital which is locked up for twenty years, and what compensating advantage does the country obtain which is called upon to pay that sum of money? Look at the depreciation you are producing in the value of real estate in the older provinces. I am not going to enter now into an elaborate discussion of that question, but it can be made as plain as twice two are four that if you extend railway construction over vast and unsettled regions you will seriously affect the value of real estate, and you diminish the wealth of the