

assistance towards its construction. The hon. gentleman who moved the resolution said :

"I believe that, under these circumstances, we may look with confidence to the action of England in this matter, and, considering that Canada is at this moment committed to a large expenditure, in permeating the best and more accessible portions of the fertile prairies of the North-West we may ask the Imperial Government to give us substantial aid, or to give us a guarantee which will cost the Empire nothing, to assist us in reaching the rich prairies of the North-West, by penetrating the Rocky Mountains from the Pacific coast. And, Sir, we can go to the Mother Country with additional confidence, seeing that, again and again, having received her endorsement of our bonds, we have always maintained our credit, and have never allowed England to be called upon to contribute a single dollar in consequence of any guarantee she had given us. Under these circumstances, we look with confidence to the Mother Country as a source to which we are entitled to look for for substantial aid in the construction of the work. But we are not only prepared to give the sound, untarnished credit of Canada in support of any aid or assistance we may ask, but we are prepared to place at the bottom of that national credit of Canada, one hundred millions of acres of the most fertile land in the world."

The hon. the First Minister spoke in the same or stronger terms. He said :

"We will allow the British Government to choose one Commissioner, we will choose another Commissioner and those two men shall hold a quasi-judicial position, somewhat like the Auditor-General in England and the Auditor-General, free from all political exigencies, from the chance of all political change. They shall be charged to faithfully and honestly administer that enormous estate of 100,000,000 acres, to invest it in Dominion securities, not to sell any land under \$2 an acre, except with the joint consent of the two Governments, the Government guaranteeing and the Government honouring, and besides all that, to administer the operation of the railway itself.—Just consider what a hand, if I may use a simile from the gaming table a Minister would hold, who should go to England and say not only is the credit of Canada pledged for this road, but 100,000,000 acres of land are set aside for it, not to speak of this great railway itself and all its future earnings, which is to be built by Canada and kept free of incumbrances. It will be good substantial security for all it can earn over its working expenses. It is a scheme that must succeed, and not all the puny well-directed shafts by which it is attempted to disarrange this great work will have the desired effect."

Again he said :

"But I believe that when the scheme is presented to Her Majesty's Government, and they

have seen the Imperial importance of this work—when they see the enormous advantage it will be to relieve the over-crowded portions of the Mother Country, by removing the surplus population into the New Britain in the Far West, they will grant a guarantee where they have granted it before, with this additional security which, without obliging England to pay a single sixpence, will enable us to push on the work and obtain all the money required for this great work on as advantageous terms as if it were a direct liability of her own."

And, after a string of resolutions showing the grounds on which the appeal was to be made, the House was asked and it agreed to authorise and direct the Government to secure the cooperation of the Imperial Government in this great undertaking and to obtain further aid by guaranty or otherwise in the construction of this national work. Inspired by these assurances on the part of the Administration, that the policy they propounded would succeed, and influenced by the formal resolutions to which I have referred, the House assented, as a part of the complete scheme brought down, to the Government, being authorised to enter into contracts for the construction of 125 miles in British Columbia. But there was a special reason given for this assent. The Government stated that they pledged themselves to British Columbia to commence construction during the then coming and now past season. It was, as the hon. member asserted, because there was an emergency, an exigency that the work should be commenced before Parliament would again sit, that the power was asked and given. The hon. gentleman opposite in his speech entered into some discussion as to the obligations in this particular of the Pacific Railway Act; but it is needless to follow him in this, for he did not deny or repudiate—on the contrary he expressly asserted—the propriety of obtaining the sanction of the House to such contracts as these. To use his own words he "endorsed the sound principle that all these contracts should be submitted to Parliament where possible." We were led to believe until very recently that the formal execution of these contracts had not taken place, and the language of the Speech is perhaps ambiguous as to the fact of execution, though it points with painful clearness to an intended completion without submission to the House. It is admitted that the