

Province. From early Government reports and surveys carried on incidental to the C. P. R. project in part of British Columbia, it was conclusively proved that not only in the North Thompson country, but in golden Cariboo, represented so ably and efficiently by the gentlemen whom we see here to-day, there was such a land of promise as would readily justify railway construction as incidental to the development. We know the disputes and difficulties that arose over the final adoption of the route for the C. P. R., but while we had as a matter of record to acknowledge these things to be true, at the same time we must acknowledge that all the early discoveries and investigations into this part of the Province amply prove this to be indeed a very rich and wealthy section of our glorious Province, and a portion that will repay adequately development by proper railway transportation so soon as when that can be provided for.

In addition to the very valuable country of the North and South Thompson, we have that section between Kamloops and the Coast, which is still capable of enormous development. Who is there with any intimate knowledge of the rich benchlands of the North Thompson, the valley of the Fraser, or the fruit-producing areas in the vicinity of Kamloops, that will ask for proof of the statement that these important sections of the country are not by any means developed to their capacity? Where we have a City of Kamloops to-day containing a population of two or three thousand—perhaps my friend opposite will say five thousand—people, we should easily have with a full development of the great farming areas tributary to that centre, a Kamloops of fully ten thousand people. The wonderful benchlands of the Thompson River and the Valley of the Fraser—the lands of the dry belt as well as the lands outside that special section—are only in the infancy of their development. It is amazing to find from the investigations of those technically proficient to speak with authority, that their conclusions as to the wealth of the soil in this particular region of British Columbia are in the very highest degree favorable. But still we have to-day the Kamloops of two or three or perhaps four thousand people; and we still have the Spence's Bridge—the Lytton—the Ashcroft of twenty years ago. It is true that of late, by reason of the general westward movement and the development to some extent of our fruit lands, some little progress has been made, but nothing in proportion

to the relative growth that the natural conditions and potentialities of those regions in question amply justify. The explanation is simple. These sections have not advanced—they could not advance—because there has been afforded them no competition—because the people have had no alternative competitor for their business which would have provided them with the means of selecting the vehicle that would take their various commodities and products to the natural markets and also would enable them to market the products of their industry at a fair transportation price. The route selected will traverse this Thompson River Valley, and will quickly produce development on a large scale, while giving competitive rates; and undoubtedly will produce also in the near future both population and wealth. Much the same conditions and much the same arguments apply with respect to the country lower down toward the Coast, where the surveys already accomplished by the Canadian Northern have already led to a great deal of activity. And this brings us to Vancouver Island, and the line to Barkley Sound. There has been a great deal of criticism and skepticism expressed with regard to this section of the road. In the first place there was a section of the people, a very small section, I am glad to say, who freely pointed out that our negotiations for the incorporation of the Island portion of the line with the Mainland section would never amount to anything, because, they said, the character and the configuration of the West Coast would prove almost prohibitive to any scheme of railroad building in that quarter. I am particularly glad to be able to dissipate once and for all the criticism to which I have just referred. With regard to the construction of this Island section, let me say that the projectors of the road were from the beginning desirous of having an interest in the Island—they were anxious to have some participation in the development of this glorious Island of Vancouver. And they were not by any means uninformed as to the conditions prevailing here, and already possessing some knowledge of Vancouver Island, they were quite ready to embrace the Vancouver Island section without any variation of the terms proposed for the construction of the other portions of the system. They were aware of the configuration of our Island coastline, and of the difficulties that have been referred to with very considerable tendencies toward exaggeration. They were aware also that the different sections to be