

provisions of the Limited Liability Act, and appointed four of their number to act as Provisional Directors. The Company thus constituted, accompanied by several members of Parliament and gentlemen well known in the mercantile world, waited upon Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton.

The deputation pressed upon him the political and commercial importance of the undertaking. They quoted the Acts of the Legislatures of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Canada, passed in 1849, promising to Her Majesty £20,000 per annum each, and all the ungranted Crown lands situated within ten miles of the proposed line of road, provided that Her Majesty, either by herself or through the instrumentality of a private Company, would undertake the construction of the road.

They concluded by asking to be recognized as "the Company" mentioned in the above-cited Colonial Acts, and to be appointed the agents of the Government for carrying out the work.

Sir Edward's reply was encouraging. He said:—

"I think the question divides itself into two great divisions: one is the political, and the other is the financial. So far as the political is concerned, which more immediately comes under my notice, I have given the best consideration I can to the subject, and I think that the imperial advantages are not exaggerated. I think that there is a sufficient degree of imperial advantage to be derived from the proposed line to justify, to my mind, the Government, in giving assistance to the colonies; and the more I look at the great importance of it, the more favourable I think the proposed course is."

On the following day, the deputation re-assembled at the official residence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to whom they advanced nearly the same arguments as those they had before urged upon Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton.

Mr. Disraeli replied:—

"It is not an unfavourable period for undertaking these great works, if you can agree upon any arrangement. I can only say that I am duly impressed with the great importance of it; and your (Lord Bury's) very clear and lucid statement has revived my recollection. I remember a great deal on this point when Lord Grey was in office. It certainly is, in every point of view, a matter of the highest consideration, and I will confer with Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton immediately upon it."

The promoters of this undertaking, on considering the answers given to them by Ministers, were impressed with the belief, that the obstacle which principally prevented them