

Were the explorations of 1879, then, a mere sham? These explorations were solemnly, avowedly undertaken for the express purpose of averting a possible error, a calamity "ever after to be deplored" as Mr. Fleming gravely wrote. [See page 5, of Report.]

The results of these explorations are glaringly apparent, and point unmistakeably to a far better route for colonization purposes, and also one much easier of construction, and consequently less costly; yet, notwithstanding, the Order in Council of July, 1878, was ratified, and a report framed in accordance.

The whole matter is certainly well worthy of a searching investigation, and in the meantime may afford the taxpayers ample food for reflection.

Within the past few weeks there have been rumours of a proposal, on the part of the Dominion Government, to hand over fifty millions acres of land in the North-West, to a company of English capitalists for the purpose of building the Pacific Railway. Recent movements of Ministers appear to confirm the truth of the report, and it is not unlikely, ere many weeks elapse, that something more definite may be heard.

In 1871, the scheme in which Sir Hugh Allan figured so prominently, but which, fortunately for the country, fell to the ground, involved a grant of 20,000 acres of land, together with a cash bonus of \$12,000 for each mile of railway constructed. The land was to have been taken up along the entire length of the road from Nipissingue to the Pacific, good and bad acres, indiscriminately.

That scheme, impolitic as Canadians then judged it to be, was far less dangerous to the interests of the North-West than the present proposition. It now appears, if newspaper reports can be relied on, that English capitalists will not look at any of the lands within the Woodland and Rocky Mountain regions, knowing that both eastern and western sections of the road where located now, pass through a worthless country. They are to help themselves to the "cream" of the North-West, and will confine their choice within the erroneously designated "thousand mile" belt of prairie.

The proposition, if allowed, will be excessively unwise, and merits universal reprobation.