

Though its financial success is not regarded favourably, the road is an important undertaking, as it throughout opens a country which, though far from productive, is not so barren as many a large section of the southern routes, and is in parts of surpassing fertility. For so tempting are the inaccessible valleys of Montana, that population is even now braving every danger and difficulty to reach them. Great benefit the portion already constructed has conferred by affording carriage to the already overcrowded granaries of Minnesota, a State whose climate is as severe as that of much of our own North-west, and into which, nevertheless, because it has the same prolific soil as the Fertile Belt, emigrants have poured before there was transport for the fruit of their labour. How deeply it may affect mining it is presumptuous to predict; but, as without the means of any but the most dangerous and difficult transport for self or effects, and without the aid of adequate machinery, the hardy miner of the West extracts from the mountains of Montana, Idaho and Washington, (through the midst of which the line will pass,) no less than \$20,000,000 of treasure annually, there can be little doubt but that a road offering cheap rates and speedy carriage will so stimulate production as to draw from the mines ere long as heavy a freight as that carried by the Union Road from the more developed regions of Colorado, Southern Idaho, Utah and Nevada.

Two main sources of traffic, which the promoters have always placed in the foreground of their prospectus, and from which evidently they counted on deriving more profit than from any others, were the wheat of the Saskatchewan and the furs of Hudson Bay. But if the Canadian Pacific be built it will rob them of these.

The road was being constructed with a speed not inconsistent with economy and excellence; but Jay Cooke & Co.'s failure proves that other more cogent causes than prudential reasons account for the slowness

with which work has progressed. Captain Butler, in his amusing book, "The Great Lone Land," tells how navvies, who had idled on the Union Pacific, were groaning at being obliged to work when engaged upon the Northern road.

The estimated cost of the whole road of 2000 miles, built and equipped on the standard of the Union Pacific, is \$85,277,000, or \$42,638 per mile,—an outlay the Company expects will be met by the sale of the 50,000,000 acres of land ceded by the United States Government in aid of the undertaking.

The branch of this road terminating at Pembina brings us in contact with the Canadian Pacific, through its Red River branch.

A country without railroad communication between its provinces is as lifeless and certain to remain so as a body without arteries to carry vitality throughout its members. Consequently, when the Confederation of the Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia was effected in 1866, the Intercolonial R. R. was at once proposed to unite the sea-board with the inland Provinces; and when, subsequently, the North-West was purchased from the Hudson Bay Co., giving Canada control of the only extensive fertile zone in the interior of North America; and, later still, when British Columbia, lying isolated beyond the Rocky Mountains on the Pacific shore, was incorporated into the Dominion, it was argued that these acquisitions, instead of being acquisitions of power, would be but sources of weakness unless brought within easy reach of the centres of government and wealth. The Dominion Government consequently yielded without reluctance to the demand of British Columbia, as a condition of its entrance into the Confederation, that a Pacific R. R. should be built. Very few months elapsed, therefore, after the admission of that Province, before parties were in the field laying out a road between some point