

the union will not much longer be delayed when the interests of both countries shall demand confederation. The paper just read will help forward such an union, and I only regret that the author was not present to lend the attractions of a *viva voce* delivery to the intrinsic merits of his history. (Cheers.)

Dr. RAE: I can say only a very few words on the subject which has been so well and so eloquently described in Mr. Sandford Fleming's paper. I think it one of the clearest and most modest descriptions I have ever heard, for there is nothing beyond a plain statement of facts. There is some difference of opinion as to the action of frost on the crops in that large tract of country, but I may tell you that far to the north, on the Mackenzie river, fully 700 miles beyond or north of the line marked out for the Canada Pacific Railway, barley and potatoes almost always ripen well, and would be less affected by frost if the woods were cleared away to a greater distance, which the Hudson's Bay Company's people have no time to do, and clear no more ground than sufficient for their own use. At Fort Liand, 550 miles north of the railway route, barley and potatoes, with many other vegetables, grow well, and wheat also generally ripens. Cultivation and drainage also help to get rid of those fearful tormentors the mosquitoes, whose powers of annoyance a gentleman has just now so well described. Close to the Arctic circle I have seen them so numerous that they made a noise like the swarming of bees; we could not eat our food without swallowing some of them, and the reindeer rushed into the water, and to protect themselves left nothing but their noses above the surface. I have known them to make a very good Wesleyan clergyman almost swear—(laughter)—which I thought a sure sign of the very acme of suffering, a sort of martyrdom, in fact. This worthy man used to tell me that mosquitoes were sent as a punishment for our sins, on which I said it was curious that they annoyed him, one of the "unco" good, more than they did a poor sinner like myself. Mr. Fleming has alluded to the dangerous rapids of the Fraser River. After crossing the Rocky Mountains in command of a telegraph survey through the pass chosen for the Pacific Railway—the latitude of which I corrected to the extent of twelve or thirteen miles, and found the altitude very nearly the same as afterwards more minutely measured by the surveyors—I descended the Fraser in small dug-out canoes about eighteen inches wide. When my men learnt that the usual Indian guides could not go with us, those who had been engaged to accompany me refused to go, and I had to be beat up for recruits, threatening to go myself if no one would volunteer; fortunately two smart young fellows did, and we ran all