

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 28th Feb., 1878.

BEST TERMINUS FOR THE PACIFIC RAILWAY.

MOTION FOR RETURN.

MR. DECOSMOS moved for a return containing a complete copy of every special and general report of the Chief Engineer and Acting Chief Engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway in possession of the Government, respecting the cost of constructing the line of the Canada Pacific Railway, (including the bridges) between the head of Bute Inlet and some place or port in Vancouver Island. He said the question that he proposed to raise was of more immediate importance than that of the hon. the member for Vancouver (Mr. Bunster) in favour of biennial Parliaments. He would state that the members on the floor of this House, the hon. the Minister of Public Works, the press, and the people generally, had been under an impression that, if the railway passed from Fort George to Bute Inlet, and thence to a first-class port on Vancouver Island, it would be necessary to expend a vast sum of money in constructing the latter section. Now, he was persuaded, from reading the report of Mr. Fleming, issued during the past year, that he had never recommended that the railway should be constructed from the head of Bute Inlet to Vancouver Island at present; that there was nothing at all in the report to indicate that the railway should now be constructed on the mainland beyond Waddington Harbour; but, that thence, a ferry should be used to reach Vancouver Island until such time as the Dominion could afford to complete this section of the railway; and that thus a vast sum of money, which was said to be enormous—twenty millions of dollars—need not be expended at all. It was to get the report in favour of Waddington Harbour being made a temporary terminus, if there were such a report, before the House, that this motion was made, in order that they might at once have the evidence that the railway need not be located on a line objectionable and injurious alike to the Dominion and to the Province of British Columbia. In saying this he begged to draw the attention of the House to a matter of very

great importance in connection with selecting a port as the western terminus of this railway. He had before taken occasion to intimate to this House that there were only three ports south of British Columbia, in the territory of the United States, where a trans-continental terminus on the Pacific could be established. The first was San Diego, near the 32nd parallel, on the Mexican border, towards which the Texas Pacific Railway was now in progress. The next place where a railway terminated was San Francisco Bay. From that bay northerly, no other point could be made the terminus of a trans-continental railway, except Puget Sound, opposite Victoria. Now, they would discover from this fact that, if the Canadian Pacific Railway were to become a competing line with American lines, the greatest care should be used in locating the route of the railway, and more especially the port on the Pacific where it should terminate. He doubted whether those who gave their attention to public statistics or the commercial interests of the Dominion in this House, had ever turned their attention to the position of San Francisco, which, to-day, was one of the greatest commercial cities in the world. We had to look at the present position of San Francisco in order to form a correct judgment as to where the terminus of our Pacific Railway should be located. In order to give the House some idea of the business done by San Francisco, and the importance of that city, he would read some of its statistics for 1877, and would compare these statistics with those of the whole Dominion of Canada for 1877, now before the House. In the first place, he would take the imports. The imports of Canada amounted to \$99,327,962, the imports of the port of San Francisco, not including treasure, were \$75,713,287. That new country, scarcely thirty years old, had imported nearly as much merchandise as the whole of the Dominion of Canada. The exports of Canada were \$75,875,393, while the exports of San Francisco, excluding treasure, were \$61,911,237. The aggregate foreign trade of the port of San Francisco for last year was \$137,624,509, within \$40,000,000 of the aggregate