

country. The wrecks will preach salutary sermons on the effects of Imperialism and the influence of Knighthoods; but the money will not return into the pockets of the Canadian people.

We may be under an illusion, but, judging from all that we can gather in private as to the real tendency of opinion, we should say that the people, if fairly consulted, would decide by a great majority to rest content with opening up the Prairie country on commercial principles, for its own benefit, that of Canada, and that of the continent at large, and to put off building the unproductive portions of the line, at all events, till there was a profit from operations in the Prairie country sufficient to build and run them. To assert that the country is shut out from adopting a sane policy by national faith and honour is preposterous. British Columbia has, over and over again, offered us in the plainest, not to say in the rudest, terms the alternative of separation. Separated she would hardly be, inasmuch as she would remain, with Canada, a member of the great federation of the Empire, like Newfoundland, the inclusion of which is to the Dominion an object of greater importance, and better worth the expenditure of millions, than the inclusion of British Columbia. The Columbians would carry off a round sum of Canadian money already expended on their territory: otherwise all would be as it was before the Treaty.

Such is, and has throughout been, our view. We have frankly avowed it because it seemed to us right, though with all due respect for the patriotic motives of opponents. To those who have charged us with Annexationism we have replied, and reply again, that the straight way to annexation, in the most ignominious sense of the term, lies through financial ruin. Nor have we a doubt that the tide, even among the politicians, is turning in favour of our opinion. No one can fail to see that the new leaders of the Opposition, though hampered by the former acts of their colleagues and by their own acquiescence in those acts, would, if they were at liberty to speak their minds, declare against the construction of the unproductive parts of