

they put themselves energetically to work to restore prosperity to the country. Their predecessors followed the example of the unfaithful servant who folded his talent in a napkin and buried it in the ground, trusting to Providence entirely. In the next paragraph, His Excellency calls attention to the less fortunate condition of our fellow-subjects in Ireland, and proposes that we shall manifest our sympathy with them in their distress in a practical manner. I hope that this Parliament will be prompt in accepting the suggestion, and in doing so we will meet with the views of the whole people of the Dominion. He congratulates us, in the next paragraph, on the rapid settlement of the North-West. The development of that great country is of vital importance to the Dominion, and I am glad to observe that the subject occupies such a conspicuous place in the Speech. In fact the question of developing our North-West is amongst all others the question *par excellence*, the main feature of Canadian politics. We possess the means of at once developing our resources and of ameliorating the condition of those who are at present in a state of destitution in the old world. Nothing is wanting in our great North-West but the arms of industrious settlers to multiply its natural wealth a hundred fold. The question of developing that magnificent country overshadows all others with which we have to deal. The true way of accomplishing the work is by completing that part of our Pacific Railway which will put the North-West in direct communication with the old provinces. This, we are assured by His Excellency, is to be done very soon. He tells us that the railway is to penetrate to the very heart of the fertile belt of the North-West, and that we can reach the prairie lands through our own country. When the Pacific Railway enterprise was first broached, apprehensions, which seemed at the time to some perfectly legitimate, were expressed as to the possibility of the Dominion accomplishing such a vast undertaking, but events have justified the far-seeing statesmanship of the men who devised the scheme. There is a phrase in the Address which has specially struck me; in the French version it differs somewhat from the English. In the former we are

assured that the Pacific Railway will be pushed to "the heart of the most fertile country in the world." These are precisely the words uttered by Napoleon the First, when, from the Alps, he pointed out to his soldiers the plains of Italy and offered to their bravery the conquest of "the most fertile country in the world." When I heard that from His Excellency, I at first thought that the hon. Minister of Militia had suggested the phrase, and intended to lead this Parliament to the conquest of the North-West, but as he looks so pacific, I have no doubt that he has reference to a peaceful conquest—a victory over nature in the wilds of the North-West, from which the whole Dominion will derive a lasting benefit. Every patriotic Canadian who has the success of his country at heart should lend every effort to making the North-West what it should be, and what it must ultimately and ere long become—not only the granary of Canada, but also the principal granary of a large portion of the population of Europe. The next paragraph conveys the cheering information that the cost of managing the Intercolonial has been materially diminished. It is a subject on which we may well congratulate the country. Hon. gentlemen will recall the time when the Intercolonial was regarded as a necessity to complete Confederation, and when the expense of maintaining it was regarded as a necessary and unavoidable outlay. Now, we find that, by economy in management, the road is likely, ere long, to earn sufficient to cover the cost of operating it, and may yet become even a source of revenue. In the same way in our Province, apprehensions were entertained for a time that the North Shore Railway would be a burden upon the people, but in both of those great works, I am happy to observe, these apprehensions have not been justified by experience. They have ceased to be a burden, and promise to yield a direct return for the outlay upon them. These indications of prosperity are not only gratifying from a financial point of view, but also because they indicate an increasing trade between the Maritime Provinces and old Canada. They prove that the principal object of Confederation has been attained—that is, giving the British provinces the advantages of

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