

was only half that amount, a waggon road across the continent would cost about one-third of the total cost of the construction of railroad. When therefore the British Columbia delegates came to Ottawa and explained the cost of constructing a waggon road across the continent, it was quite natural that the able and practical men forming the late Government should say that if this road was going to cost so much, it would be far better to undertake the construction of a railway at once; and the result was that they agreed to construct the railway. When the difference between the cost of a waggon road and that of a railway was considered, it would be admitted that the Government acted wisely in agreeing to build a railway at once. The difference between the cost of a waggon road and that of a railway across the continent—for he believed a railway could be constructed from Edmonton to Red River, including rolling stock, for from \$15,000 to \$16,000 a mile—was not very large. There was another point to which he would call the attention of the House. Probably the hon. First Minister would explain how it was that only one of the petitions from British Columbia appeared in the blue book. The petition in favor of the Government scheme was published along with the despatches, but those that were opposed to it were left out. Having made these explanations, he would not detain the House at any length. He had only to say that he regretted the action of the Government towards British Columbia, in seeking a relaxation of the terms of the union, as a huge political blunder. All that this Government need have done was simply to have gone to work and tried its best to carry out the compact; and the people of British Columbia would have been perfectly satisfied. But the Government had irritated the people of British Columbia by the proposal to change a solemn compact, and had alienated their affections to a very great extent. The people of British Columbia were supporters of good principles and measures rather than of men, and if they believed a measure to be wrong they would vote against it. So far as the new terms of union were concerned, he had nothing further to say; but with regard to the graving dock, he called upon the Government to carry out their obligations or submit to the consequences. He had no

doubt that the Government with their large majority would not be afraid of the consequences, but he would tell them that the people of this country made and unmade Governments, and that they would not be likely to sustain a Government very long whose First Minister repudiated a deliberate contract which he had entered into with the Province of British Columbia.

Mr. ROSS (Middlesex) said the House had heard the question discussed from a Manitoba stand point, and from a point of view taken by the members from the Pacific coast; but he would consider it from a different stand point. He would not refer to the terms demanded by British Columbia when it entered Confederation, nor to the very immoderate demands made at that time compared with the very liberal concessions made to her before the Treaty was completed; nor would he call the attention of the House to the very extraordinary obligations which were assumed a short time ago in reference to the construction of the Pacific Railway, obligations which the late Government found itself unable to begin and carry on, and which the present Government, sustained by Lord CARNARVON, had admitted they were unable to carry out. But he wished to view this question from another stand point altogether. He was willing to admit that the people of Ontario together with the other Provinces of the Dominion were interested in the Pacific Railway as a national enterprise. He agreed with those who had already said that it was necessary, if we wished to unite all the Provinces of the Dominion and bring them within easy access of each other, that a railway be built connecting the older and Eastern Provinces with those lying in the Far West. All that he admitted; and yet this House should also consider whether or not the Dominion, in its infancy was able to carry out the obligations at that time undertaken. He agreed that this was not a commercial undertaking by any means, and yet it had a commercial aspect. When we look at the Province of British Columbia and consider the small share it contributes to the revenues of this Dominion, he thought that we should find the representatives of that Province, to say the least of it, a little more moderate, if not a little more modest in the demands they were making on the Exchequer of this Domin-