

expenditure, approximating to \$36,000,000, and after its completion will involve an enormous annual charge on the revenues of the country for its running expenses; and I doubt much if that section can be kept open after it is built. I think the chief advantage the British Columbians will derive from the enterprise will consist in the circulation of money and the profits of mercantile operations attendant on the construction, and that Canada will be a frightful loser by the affair. Now, even under these circumstances, the fact that the population of British Columbia is only some 10,000 altogether, representing, perhaps, not so many householders as the audience I now see before me, ought not to disentitle them to say—"You shall fulfil your bargain or release us from our bonds." It is their right to take such a course, if they think fit, but I deny that this is any reason why we should plunge this country into ruin by the attempt. I have some reason to believe that these people are sufficiently sensible and reasonable to recognize and act on the truth of the matter, unless, indeed, they are sustained by agitators in this country, who are willing, for the sake of creating an embarrassment to the Government, to excite false and delusive hopes among them. The temper of Parliament you may judge from the fact that during last session an amendment was moved by one of the British Columbia members insisting upon an early prosecution of the work in that Province, but he was sustained by five members only—two or three from his own Province, and a couple of those whom my friend Mr. Mowat delights to call Ontario Tories. (Laughter.) If under all the circumstances the Columbians were to say—"You must go on and finish this railway according to the terms or take the alternative of releasing us from the Confederation," I would—take the alternative! (Cheers.) I believe that is the view of the people of this country, and it may as well be plainly stated, because such a plain statement is the very thing which will prevent the British Columbians from making such extravagant demands. If these 2,000 men understand that the people of Canada