

a great idea and carry it out. Much that has been said of their folly and infatuation in not completing this Pacific Railway appears to me gratuitous and unfounded. There are enormous difficulties in the achievement of such a project; the idea of the Canadian Government is to execute the railway step by step, as there shall be a population to benefit by it, or as sections of 100 or 200 miles can be shown to be profitable; and if we only allow time, it will find its way by that process to the Pacific. But I must say, I for one should think it the height of folly on the part of the Canadian Government to rush into this great work in its entirety at the present time, or for any party of English statesmen, responsible to the people of England for their taxation, to volunteer to lend them 20,000,000*l.* or any similar sum that they might require. Gentlemen of the Stock Exchange can tell you something of the capital that has already gone to Canada for making railways, scarcely one of which at present pays. I think, therefore, we must be a little patient; we cannot anticipate what is really the work of the slow development of history. We have no more marvellous proof of the rapidity of that development than in the subject which has been brought before us by Colonel Strange to-day. It is but 40 years since a handful of French Canadians, on grounds so obscure that they are almost forgotten, half frightened us out of our senses lest we should lose Lower Canada, led to enormous and costly efforts to suppress them, and to the occupation of the country for the next 30 years by a strong Imperial garrison. Now the country is in a far more loyal position and temper towards the British Empire than it ever was before. It has developed what is a perfectly new thing in Colonial history, a regularly organized, well-conceived militia system, embracing every branch of instruction from the highest to the lowest, not realised perhaps as fully as it exists on paper; but there is the seed, out of which the matured plant may hereafter grow. Can we not be contented with that for one generation? Can we not let these magnificent dreams of empire work themselves out according to the destiny of nations? Where is the present danger? What was the condition of the United States itself in regard to its military armaments prior to the great contest of North and South? Why, they were as thoroughly neglected as they were in Canada; they thought themselves free from external foes, and therefore could afford to dispense with them. They have since developed them to some extent, but they are still, as measured by the scale of European preparation, in a very defective state. Canada can also afford to leave much that is in an abstract sense important, to be met when the necessity arises. Of course we admit the necessity of having a foundation laid to carry any future superstructure; but to say that everything that may have to be done in war is to be done in anticipation in time of peace, is to ask what no responsible statesman can agree to; and I do not think that any one of us, if we were addressing a constituency with a view to election to Parliament, would venture to adopt such a line of argument.

Colonel STRANGE: I thank you very much for the remarks that have been made, which I think are even more valuable than the paper itself. I have not heard that the secession question of British Columbia has been settled in Canada. Sir Cooper Key remarked that the English Government were not in a position to interfere in this matter. To a certain extent of course we all know that is quite true, but surely to purchase shares in a Canadian Pacific railway would be as legitimate as to purchase shares in the Suez Canal. Surely we are as closely connected with Canada as we are or might be with Egypt. I have also been asked whether there has been a vote before Parliament for a small-arms factory in Canada. The matter has never been brought before Parliament. I have urged it in Official Reports, in Blue Books, which are laid before Parliament, but apparently never read.

With regard to Sir Henry Lefroy's remarks, I am not in a position exactly to answer them. I know his long familiarity with the country and his great wisdom, and it would seem presumption for me to say anything on the subject in the way of reply. He alluded to the Rebellion of 1837, as giving us 30 years' military occupation and trouble, but another speaker pointed out it was the want of considering what the French Canadians wanted in time that was the cause of all this, and Sir Henry himself has alluded to the marvellous development of things now-a-days that requires us to be up and doing, and will not allow us to drift as we used to drift in the old times. He spoke about American people not having military institutions and orga-