

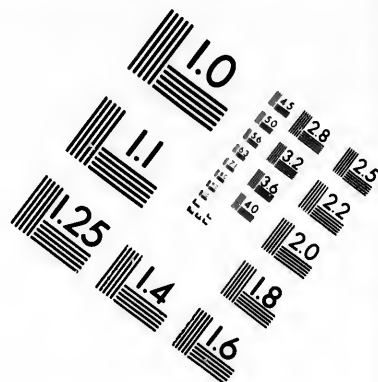
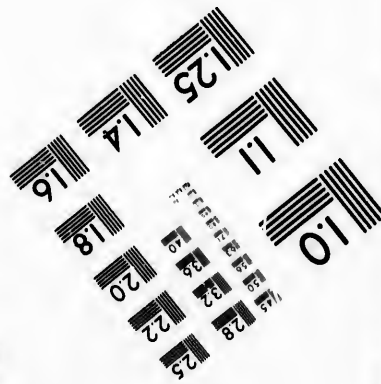
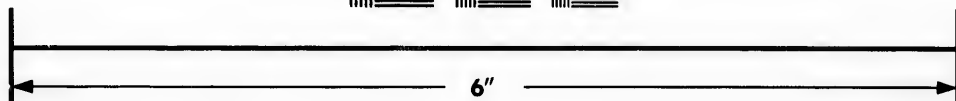
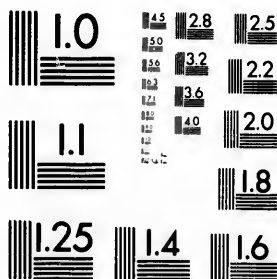


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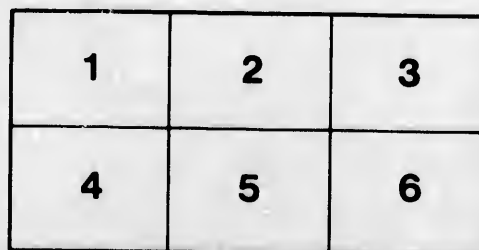
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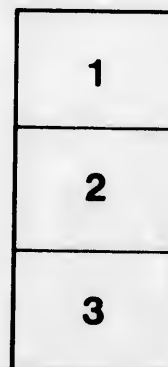
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SPEECH

Mr. DeCOSMOS

ON THE

PACIFIC RAILWAY.

HANSARD REPORT.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 8th May, 1878.

Mr. DeCOSMOS said it was not his wish to inflict a speech on the House. It was a matter of necessity that compelled him to occupy its attention. The utterance of the First Minister in respect to this railroad was one that the Canadian people of to-day and the Canadian people of the future would condemn. The utterance of the First Minister on this point was neither right nor wrong. It was one of the hon. gentleman's metaphysical efforts, and if he was allowed to say so without doing violence to Parliamentary usage, the hon. gentleman's utterance with respect to the Canadian Pacific Railway was a delusion and a snare. The hon. gentleman conveyed the idea to the House that it was his intention to adopt the Fraser River route. He did not believe that this was the hon. gentleman's intention, or that he intended to adopt any other route in British Columbia. He believed that this was one of the hon. gentleman's Machiavellian efforts to deceive the people of British Columbia, and at the same time to try and keep

them within the Union, for fear they might take both the Federal and Provincial Governments of the country into their own hands.

MR. HOLTON: Hear, hear.

Mr. DeCOSMOS said he heard his hon. friend from Chateauguay, who was one of the original Annexationists, he believed, in the Province of Quebec, say "Hear, hear." He (Mr. DeCOSMOS) had never a particle of Annexationist blood in his veins; but he would make this remark, that unless the people of Canada were prepared to build this railway through that country, they had no other destiny on this side of the Continent, than to take the course of the hon. member for Chateauguay, when he signed that celebrated petition for annexation to the United States. Their whole frontier, from Manitoba all along the Eastern Provinces, and all along the great bend of the Intercolonial, was all tapped by the United States. They had no great back country, no great north country. They had the means of making a country, so far as a manufacturing country might go, but it was only in the great West that they had the backbone and body and

the future soul of this north end of the Continent. If there was to be any such thing as a nation in this north end of the Continent, and such a thing as an Anglo-Norman nation, as in Asia and Europe—there was the Russia-Northman nation—they must build this railway. It was railway or absorption into the United States; railway or dissolution. He was astonished at the stupidity of the Canadians in that they could support any Government in this country who were not bold enough to take the thing into their own hands and construct a railway across the continent. He was not, he would remark, making a set speech, but talking as if in private conversation. There was only one portion of this Dominion where they could make a great city, and that was in British Columbia, and this was, first, where this Administration had failed. With millions and tens of millions and thousands of millions around the Pacific Ocean, gathering and commencing with the population of Russia, North of China, floating down to the millions of China, and to the islands still unoccupied, there was an immense trade to be done there to-day and in the future. And what were our Canadian rulers doing? Nothing. The hon. the Minister of the Interior had taken in several icebergs, he believed, recently, near the North Pole, and expected Her Majesty to pass an Act through the Imperial Parliament in order that he might take these icebergs into his possession and utilize the drift, if there was any drift in the Pleocene period, or something of the sort. Speaking a little more seriously, he would say, that if they took the whole route from Livingstone to Edmonton, he was assured by the Commissioner of the Fur Trade branch of the Hudson Bay Company, that there was not 20 per cent. of the land there fit for cultivation. He was assured, on the other hand, by gentlemen belonging to the Hudson Bay Company, and their Commissioner also, that if they took a northern route, they could carry settlement from the borders of Manitoba into the Rocky Mountains, and carry this railway through the Rocky Mountains into British Columbia, and find as good a country as Germany was

1,000 years ago. They could also find on the Pacific a port where they could compete with the United States ports. He would repeat, what he had previously told the House, that there were only three ports on the Pacific Ocean owned by the United States where a terminus could be made for a transcontinental railway—a terminus in the face of 1,000 millions of people such as the 800 millions as our terminus would front. The first point on the part of this Ministry, and of the engineers employed by it to have decided, should have been where this port should be; and when the port had been found, then to construct the railway. The indications given by the First Minister the other day were that this road would run by the Fraser Valley route, moving from the Dominion through a barren country down to Kamloops, through another barren country, and taking the trough called the Valley of the Thompson, and down through a gorge in the mountains and through another gorge, at last finding a small valley about forty miles this side of the Fraser River, where it would be possible for the hon. gentleman to go up and find a little way traffic, forty miles from the terminus at New Westminster. He had in his desk a copy of the North Pacific Railway Bill, and in it was reference to the running of a line north of the existing terminus at Tacoma. When they ran a line north of this terminus and reached Holmes Harbour, there would be nothing more easy than for these people or anybody else—and he knew the people who proposed to do it—to run a line towards the Fraser River and connect with the Pacific at Sumas, and by this means draw all the ocean navigation in sailing and steamships to that certain point; and thus build up one of the greatest cities that by any possible means could be built on the American continent. They would build it on Puget Sound, in Washington Territory, with the aid and assistance of the people, who, in his judgment, did not know how to build up this great nationality. The proper route for this railway to take was the Northern route, and by way of Bute Inlet. When they reached Johnson's Straits, they

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could there, if they wished, build the Constantinople of this continent, and a historical city that might live for ever; and be protected and have such a history in the coming future as even the Bosphorus and Constantinople possessed; and, to be still more practical, when it reached this point it could be crossed by a ferry. He was very sorry, and he regretted to say that the Premier had not brought down the papers with respect to this matter; and sorry to say, in addition, that the Premier had not brought down the correspondence asked for, and called for, and demanded by this House. The hon. gentleman had dared to keep back the correspondence between the Imperial, Provincial and Dominion Governments in this relation, and they were there to-day without the evidence they should have had in their possession to enable them to form a just conception of this subject. A remark was made the other day about ferries and bridges; but there was no earthly necessity whatever for any expenditure in order to connect the Bute Inlet route with Vancouver Island. Any hon. gentleman who had visited New York within the last 30 years, must know that there were upwards of a million people gathered around the shores of New York harbour; and when he wanted to go to Washington in winter, when the ice was floating down the river, he got on board a steamer and passed over to New Jersey. In their country, where they could connect Vancouver Island with British Columbia, no ice floated. Scarcely a frost was felt there, and we could pick pansies and daisies all the year round, and yet they heard here, over and over again, and read it in the Press, that they must have bridges at this point. There was no necessity for bridging there, and the moment they struck the centre of Vancouver Island, they struck a country full of iron and coal, the most accessible for settlement existing in their Province to-day. And yet this Ministry dared and professed to do what? To bring this railway by a route that would not only make the chief town on the North Pacific, on the American side, but also deprive Canada of the commercial advantages to which she was entitled. He would go

further. A map had been prepared, and was in the possession of the Department of Public Works, which indicated and showed the character of the land. It was prepared by the acting Chief Engineer to give information to this country; and why had not this map been brought down to the House and circulated through Parliament, and communicated to the Senate? There was a design in this, and this design he believed was not in the interests of this country. Whatever it might be, it might be to shelter the Chief Engineer. He had no confidence in the Chief Engineer of the Pacific Railway, but he had full and complete confidence in that lion-faced engineer, Marcus Smith, who knew more of the west side of the Dominion than any man on earth. He would repeat again that gentleman knew more of the western portion of this Dominion than any man on earth. If he (Mr. DeCosmos) were Premier of this Dominion, he would relieve himself of an engineer of whom he had stated on the floor of this House that he was more an author than an engineer; and he would take that man who was a thorough engineer, who had explored the country, and had written reports on it year after year, of which he believed the present reports before the House to be a garbled copy. He (Mr. DeCosmos) knew that reports existed to-day in the Department of Public Works which had never been produced before this House. This House was called on to cast a vote for the Pacific Railway, and yet did not get the necessary information. He felt ashamed to see that documents bearing upon one of the grandest undertakings of the country were kept back, in order to prevent hon. gentlemen from using them. Therefore, as far as he could gather, the great object of this Government was to delay the construction of the railway. The great point to be considered was, first, to find the port, then to go on with the work. The late Government found their port, the port of Esquimalt, though, he believed, the sound judgment of the hon. member for Charlevoix, was that there were other ports which could be selected, the ports of Alberni and Quatsino, of all of which the Government could

take advantage, if it were willing to adopt the right route. His firm conviction was that this Government had no idea of building the railway. If he recollected, the hon. the Premier, in a letter written to the convention at Toronto last February, stated they would not have attempted to do anything towards building the railway on our western coast, had it not been obligatory on them. In what way were they fulfilling this obligation? There had not been a day since 1870, when this trans-continental railway could not have been commenced on the Pacific coast. It could go on at this moment if the hon. gentleman desired it. British Columbia had contended for the immediate construction of the railway, but last year had made an arrangement with the Imperial Government to give this Government one year's delay. This year had passed, eighteen months had elapsed, and what had they done?

Mr. MASSON: Nothing.

Mr. DeCOSMOS: Probably they did not wish to do anything. When that twelve months' time had been given to the Government, it was intended that they would not merely define the route, but would commence the work this year, and yet it was held by the hon. the Premier that in order to commence any work we must wait until next Session of Parliament. Nothing in the shape of fulfilling the obligation on the part of this Government had been done, with the exception of an honest attempt, he believed, to build a portion by sending out rails to British Columbia. He would not occupy the time of the House any longer except to state on behalf of the people whom he had the honour to represent, and other members from British Columbia could put in their protest on behalf of the people they represented, that they wanted that railway commenced this year, and if any further surveys were necessary to be made, let them be made.

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