

six minutes to this most important Bill, and he asks the members of this House to form an opinion and to criticise a measure which is to come up at a later period. Now the Minister of Finance also dwells on the statement made by the hon. member for Lanark, the ex-Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Haggart), and takes credit to himself because he finds that the ex-minister does not quite agree with some hon. gentlemen on this side of the House as to what ought to be the policy with reference to the extension of the Intercolonial. I would like to read for the benefit of my hon. friend what one of his colleagues in this House said on this question, and I think that people are inclined to hold a minister of the Crown much more responsible for his views than a private member, because they understand that he expresses the views of the government. The late Minister of Railways and Canals, when certain legislation was up for discussion in this House, said :

Now, my own view would be that if we wanted to pass railway legislation, if we wanted to do something of advantage for the transportation of the country, if we wanted to secure to our Canadian seaports the transportation of western products, we would have extended the Intercolonial to Georgian bay by acquiring the Canada Atlantic.

That is the view of Mr. Blair when holding the portfolio of Minister of Railways in this government. Previous to this expression of opinion by Mr. Blair, we had the present Minister of Railways and Canals, then a private member, using this language, and I want to put both these gentlemen on record because I think they will offset the statement made by the Minister of Finance with regard to the remark made by my hon. friend from Lanark. The Minister of Railways and Canals, who was then a private member, used this language :

If the terms of confederation are to be carried out in their entirety, that the Intercolonial Railway shall be extended, it shall crawl further west year after year until possibly it shall extend to the granaries of the west and our seaports shall be the ports whence sail the rich products of the great western country. We hear much from hon. members who represent the western constituencies complaining of the exorbitant freight charges of the railway companies in the west. Complaint after complaint has been made, not merely in this House, but before the committees of this House. If there is to be remedy applied, one that will be apt and effective, that remedy will be found in the extension of the government system of railways into that western country, so that the government may control freight rates in the west in the same way as it now controls freight rates in the eastern section of Canada.

I wish to put these two items on record to show that as a private member of this House the hon. gentleman entertained views entirely different from what the hon. gen-

tleman entertains now and yet, knowing that to be the case that hon. gentleman has been made Minister of Railways and Canals. After all the statements that have been made in this House for seven long years in praise of the large sums of money expended on the Intercolonial Railway they have now turned completely around and are going to render the \$70,000,000 we spent on the Intercolonial Railway less valuable to the people of this country by reason of their policy on the transportation question. I say, Sir, that the people of this country having expended a large sum on the government railways and having extended that system to Montreal, it is more than should be expected of the people of this country that they should accept this arrangement. If it is necessary that to make it a success it should be extended to the Georgian bay, I believe that would be in the interests of the people of this country, and I believe it would tend to lessen the large deficit we are bound to have from year to year unless something is done towards extending the Intercolonial Railway to the Georgian bay and the wheat fields of the west. I have heard what the ex-Minister of Railways and Canals has said, I mean the hon. gentleman from Lanark (Mr. Haggart), and I for one do not agree with his statement of action in regard to the extension of the government railway to the Georgian bay. As far as running powers over the Canada Atlantic are concerned, any man who knows anything about railway transportation at all knows perfectly well that the company owning the railway and granting running rights to another railway has a very unfair advantage over the company asking running rights over that railway and for that reason, I for one, am not satisfied with the legislation which is being introduced to-day; neither am I satisfied with the legislation which was introduced the other day and which is likely to be discussed in a little while from now, because I think the government is doing something they ought not to do in granting this legislation to the Grand Trunk Railway instead of acquiring the Canada Atlantic themselves in order to hold and manipulate the transportation lines in such a way as will benefit the Intercolonial Railway.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read the first time.

RESCUE OF CREW OF SCHOONER 'JAMES W.'

On the orders of the Day being called,

Mr. A. A. McLEAN (Queen's, P.E.I.).
Mr. Speaker, I have been requested to bring to the notice of the First Minister the fact that in the month of February, 1904, in the Atlantic ocean the captain and crew of the Canadian schooner 'James W.' were rescued by the officers of the steamship 'Dur-