

that country is greater now than it was before. I can tell the hon. gentleman there is a very great and intelligent interest all over Canada, particularly in Ontario, felt in this question. There is hardly a single county, township or concession in Ontario, in which you will not find several men who have themselves travelled over the North-West, who have an interest in the North-West, who have friends or relatives there, and who are keenly alive to the dangers with which this measure threatens them. Hon. Ministers, I must say, have very little personal knowledge on this question. I am not going to condemn hon. Ministers for this, for even when they go, in their ministerial capacity, into a country, they find it difficult to obtain accurate information. I know what are the conditions under which a Minister visits this part of the Dominion. I know he is overwhelmed with business, is surrounded everywhere by persons whose interest it is often to prevent him obtaining correct information as to the real interests of the country; but that ought to be a cause for proceeding with greater caution than these hon. gentlemen have shown in their proceedings. I regret to see the hon. Minister of the Interior has not been in the House on either occasion when hon. gentlemen on this side were discussing this question at length. We can understand that the hon. gentleman may have shirked the severe castigation to which it was the duty of my hon. friend (Mr. Blake) to submit his bantling; but he is hardly treating his party and the country fairly in not being here to listen to, to answer if he can, the objections which were taken by my hon. friend, and those which may be taken by myself, or other hon. members, against the scheme for which, in his double capacity as Minister of the Interior and leader of the Government, he is mainly responsible. In one respect, I am bound to admit I have a high opinion of the capacity of that hon. gentleman, namely as a politician; but, however able and intelligent he may be, it must be remembered that he himself is absolutely without any personal knowledge whatever on this subject. Unless I am greatly misinformed, he has never been beyond the confines of Canada in that direction. I am quite sure he has never been in the North-West country, the country over which he at present presides. Sir, before I close I desire to call attention to one or two of the attempted replies which have been made to points taken by my hon. friend. I see that the Minister of Public Works attempted to make a strong ground of objection to my hon. friend, that whereas a year or two ago he told us that \$120,000,000 would, in all probability, be the cost of the construction of the road now about to be built by the Syndicate. It appears by the figures submitted by the hon. Minister of Railways, that \$78,000,000 will be sufficient. I take objection to that statement on two grounds. First of all, I say there is an enormous under-rating of the value of the land about to be given, and that the true cost, at any rate, taking the very lowest estimate, will be \$103,000,000 and not \$78,000,000. But, I say, the hon. Minister of Public Works must know quite well that my hon. friend's estimate was based on the idea that we were to construct a first-class road in every respect, not a road degraded to the standard provided for in the present contract. There is no fair common ground of comparison between these two hon. gentlemen's statements, and no fair ground of reproach to my hon. friend that he should estimate for a first-class road an amount considerably higher than what the Minister of Works now estimates for a road so seriously degraded as the one to which he refers. Sir, I had intended making some reference to the Minister of the Interior, but as he is not in his place in the House, I shall defer the remarks which I had intended to have made with regard to him until a more fortunate occasion. But I desire to say this. We ask for delay now. We know perfectly well what was the

result of the decision of the House at the time of the bargain for the original construction of the Pacific Railway. I ask the members of this House, Mr. Chairman, to recall to mind the repeated protests which were presented by members of this House—not merely from the Opposition benches, but from members holding an independent position—the entreaties which were preferred by us, that time should be taken to obtain information, to ascertain what the people thought of this question. Sir, we were compelled to rush blind-fold into that bargain; we found ourselves as we find ourselves now, hampered at all points, for the reason that no time was given, no due precautions were taken, in completing that bargain of 1871. Our task would be child's play if we were not fettered by the obligations we then so recklessly incurred. There is every indication that there will be a repetition of that same folly now; that indeed there will be even worse than that folly committed. I recall the warnings which were given then—by Sir Alexander Galt, by myself, that were given—to do him justice—I regret that he is not in his seat—by the member for Halton (Mr. Macdougall); the warnings that were given by the late lamented Sandfield Macdonald. And I might recall the doom which, two years later, in 1873, overtook the men who treated with scorn the warnings we had uttered. I think the country is likely to repeat its vengeance, and that if these gentlemen do not take great care, the doom which overtook them in 1873 will be visited upon them in 1883. And, Sir, I might, with your permission, recall one remark which I heard drop from your own lips, whether in this House or on the public platform I cannot now remember, but it made a deep impression upon my mind. You were at that time, if you will allow me to say so, rather a political babe, but from babes and sucklings, according to the opinion of some wisemen, wisdom is elicited which their later and ripper utterances do not always confirm. At any rate the remark you made was, that you believed that contounded—I think that was the word you used—Pacific Railway was likely to be the death of half a dozen Ministers before it was done with. I fear you will prove a pretty true prophet in making that prediction. We see the same men on the eve of committing the same error, the same crime I must call it; and I believe that if they persist in this, if they will force their followers—as I believe, with regard to a good many of them, against their better judgment—without delay, without reasonable discussion, without communication with their constituents, without attempting to ascertain what the true opinion of the people of this country is—if they force them to vote for their folly—force them again, as they did before, they will rush upon the fate which awaits them so soon as the people have an opportunity of pronouncing their opinion at the polls.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The House having treated me with so much indulgence when I addressed them at such great length the other day, I shall not, at this stage of the debate, interpose myself at any length before those hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House who intend to speak upon the subject now under consideration. But I rise for the purpose of noticing a remark with which the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat opened his observations. I know, Sir, that I am within the judgment of the House when I assert at once that the hon. gentleman was obliged, by reading the remarks that fell from me on a recent occasion, to convict himself of having attempted to place a gross misconstruction upon those remarks. I am in the judgment of the House when I say that that hon. gentleman finds himself in a position in which, unable to deal with this great question in a manner and spirit which the discussion of so great a question requires, he finds it desirable to turn aside into gross and unmanly personalities directed against myself. My hon. friend the Minister of Finance says it is his nature and that he cannot