

The Government subsequently declared that this expression was designed to indicate that they were not intending to attempt to transcend the taxation resolution. It is contended that they could do so, and that they did in fact so bind the country by their action, although Parliament never confirmed it. I altogether deny that the executive Government has any general or implied authority of a nature so extensive; but were it otherwise, no such authority could be implied in the face of a distinct determination by Parliament in an adverse sense; nor can any case be imagined in which there could be a more decisive declaration by Parliament of its policy that there should be no increase of taxation for the building of this Railway; and consequently a more clear limitation upon any such supposed implied executive powers as are suggested. The Minister says that under the Carnarvon terms there was an agreement to build the Island Railway, by which \$4,000,000 were added to the cost of the whole; but he seems to have forgotten that his own Government in 1873 had come to the determination that the terminus of the Railway should be at Esquimalt, and this determination, if adhered to, necessarily involved the construction of the Island Railway, and indeed of other far more extensive and costly works. I had taken occasion in the fall of 1874 to declare my individual views on the subject of the Pacific Railway. I then stated that I thought the fulfilment of the agreement with British Columbia impossible; that unless she chose to be reasonable and to agree to a relaxation of the terms, I saw no hope of performing them; and that, if she insisted on secession, as the consequence of the non-fulfilment of the terms of Union, I, for one, was prepared to say, "let her go," rather than ruin the country in the attempt to perform the impossible. I have never changed that opinion, and each succeeding year has strengthened my view as to the wisdom and soundness of such a decision. During the Session of 1875, when the Carnarvon correspondence was brought down, I did, as the hon. gentleman says, ask the leader of the then Government whether he proposed to invite the sanction of Parliament to the arrangement. He replied that he did not propose to invite the

action of Parliament directly, but that he would rely on Parliament to enable him to carry it out. Well, that answer of itself indicated that the assent of Parliament was essential. Will anyone seriously contend that the Executive Government of this country could, not merely without the authority of Parliament, but in spite of the anti-taxation resolution, make an agreement which would of itself bind the country to build the Island Railway, to expend not less than \$2,000,000 a year on construction in the mainland, and to finish the road by 1890? It was, however, soon made apparent that the action of Parliament was necessary in order to carry out the Carnarvon terms. A Bill was of necessity brought in to authorise the construction of the Island Railway, one of the most important parts of those terms. I opposed that Bill because I believed that the Island Railway was not a judicious undertaking, and also, and chiefly because it was part of the Carnarvon Terms, which I did not believe were such as could be fully carried out consistently with the taxation resolution, to which I for one was determined to adhere. The Bill succeeded in this House, but it failed in the Senate, and the result was that the sanction of Parliament was refused to that essential part of the Carnarvon terms. At the close of that Session then the whole question was open. The arrangement had failed. Parliament had declined to authorise an essential part of the terms; fulfilment of the terms had thus become impossible, and it became necessary to reconsider the whole matter. I believe that everyone to-day concurs in this result; at any rate I do not observe that the Government now proposes to build the Island Railway. Shortly after the close of the Session I entered the Administration upon a distinct understanding in reference to the Pacific Railway. That understanding was that the Carnarvon terms having failed by reason of the action of Parliament, a moderate money compensation should be offered to the Province for past and future delays in the construction of the Pacific Railway; that it was always the understanding of the Government and that it should be distinctly stated, that any pledge for fixed expenditure, or for a time limit, was subject to the taxation resolu-