

way will be constructed in these provinces. Is that an unreasonable request? I do not think it is, and I do not wonder that as the people come to understand this matter, information which the newspapers with their splendid facilities and enterprise, are circulating throughout the country, that we are besieged day after day with petitions from the electors saying something must be done by this government to furnish information before they pledge the people of this country to an expenditure of at least one hundred millions of dollars.

I move the resolution which I read, seconded by Mr. McGowan, and I would earnestly hope—although perhaps it would be too much to say I expect—that the government will lay before parliament such information as will enable the electorate of this country to vote intelligently when they are asked to authorize the expenditure of so many millions of dollars.

Mr. A. E. KEMP (East Toronto). I desire to say one word in reference to this resolution, which appears to me to be one of the most reasonable that has been placed before the House in connection with this transcontinental railway project. The resolution asks that the information obtained by the government from time to time in regard to the surveys and estimates of cost shall be placed before this House. It is evident that this railway cannot be built before the House meets again; the surveys and the reports of the engineers cannot be completed before that time. Is it not, therefore, as reasonable a proposition as ever was made in this House that the information thus obtained should be placed before the House before we pass final judgment? The government, perhaps, might not then be disposed to adhere to what they had stated in regard to building a first-class railway, with one-half or four-tenth per cent grades through this country in order to carry the products of the west to the seaboard in a more economical way than by the existing routes. This country, under such circumstances, would not be under any obligation to the Grand Trunk Pacific, because parliament would have an opportunity to say whether the road shall be constructed or not. The only reports that have been placed before this House are reports of geologists, who were not instructed to investigate the regions through which they travelled for the purpose of building a modern railway, and I submit that their report is of no value when it comes to building a modern up-to-date railway. We have absolutely no information before the House from first-class competent engineers as to the suitability of that country for the building of a railway for the purpose for which this is being built. I would not have spoken on this resolution, but I wished to ask the Prime Minister a question. I read to him the other day a report from

one of the Toronto newspapers that the Grand Trunk Railway themselves were making surveys between Winnipeg and the Quebec boundary. The right hon. gentleman will remember the contents of the article to which I am now referring. I asked, why did not the government make the surveys for this government road, instead of the Grand Trunk Pacific, and also asked why it was that the information obtained by these surveyors was given to the press before it was submitted to this House. I think the Prime Minister would have replied to me the other day were it not that the chairman called 'carried,' and the resolution was hurried through. Surely the Prime Minister can give the information to the House now.

The PRIME MINISTER. What is the question?

Mr. KEMP. The question was in reference to the surveys. I will again read what was said by the Toronto 'News':

The Grand Trunk has been exploring the country. Its officials to-day are in possession of their own surveyors' reports. These reports cover the country from Winnipeg to Lake Abitibi. These reports state that from Winnipeg to the eastern border of New Ontario a grade of four-tenths of one per cent—about twenty-one feet to the mile—is perfectly practicable. The standard of the best wheat-carrying railways of the United States can be attained.

More than that, the fall of almost every grade is to the east. This is an immense advantage, for it means that the road will practically run down hill from Winnipeg for the thousand mile stretch in eastern Manitoba and New Ontario.

This is a splendid start. For the first thousand miles at least the trains will roll down a continuous gentle slope. Extraordinary economy of operation should be practicable. The limit to the size of the trains will be the number of cars which a single crew can handle, rather than the hauling power of the engine. We must insist on equally good grades all the way through Quebec. It may prove the case that the height of land in Quebec will make an up hill grade necessary. The ideal road would be down hill every foot of the way from prairie to ocean. The ideal seems to be assured for one thousand of the fourteen hundred miles.

I wish to know why the Grand Trunk are making these surveys, and if they are going to be accepted by the government?

The PRIME MINISTER. The hon. gentleman asks me, if it is true that the Grand Trunk Pacific are making surveys?

Mr. KEMP. On the government line?

The PRIME MINISTER. Between Lake Abitibi and Winnipeg. The hon. gentleman also asks, if the government will avail of these surveys. I understand that the Grand Trunk have been making surveys since last fall; that they started when they first thought of this Grand Trunk Pacific scheme. I do not know for a fact whe-