

freight and every passenger that is carried. But that is not all, Sir. It brings the Pictou coal fields into nearer communication with Canada, and gives them in distance an advantage of forty-five miles over that they now enjoy, in competing with the Springhill coal fields, which at present monopolise, to a great extent, the supply of the Intercolonial Railway and of these upper Provinces. I say, Sir, if there ever was a case presented to Parliament in which the interests—not of a section or of a small portion of the country, but the interests of the whole of this country—were involved, it was in that proposal to aid in the construction of those seventy-five miles of railway. The hon. gentleman says I was very confident that this company with a very high-sounding name, would be able to accomplish the work. Well, Sir, I was very sanguine. I took the trouble to go to New York with Mr. Schrieber, the Chief Engineer. I availed myself of every means in my power to satisfy myself that the company, with Dr. Green, president of the great Union Telegraph Company of the United States, at its head, would be able and were prepared to carry the work through. I do not profess to be infallible, but I do not expect the hon. gentleman to suppose that, when I make a statement of that kind, I make it on any other than the best information I can give, or to suppose that I am making any other than a candid statement to the House of what I then believed. This company proposed to carry on a grand scheme of communication, intersecting Newfoundland. They had already made a contract for a line across that island, and this was a portion of the scheme for which they were prepared to make a contract. They did make a contract, and I must say, in justice to the company, that the mode in which they expended some \$200,000 or \$300,000 of their own money, shows that they did it in good faith, and that they intended to complete the line. The contract enabled them to draw a subsidy of \$3,200 per mile, on the completion of every ten miles, but they have never drawn a dollar of that subsidy, for, instead of building it in such a way as to be able to avail themselves of the subsidy, they expended between \$200,000 and \$300,000 of their own money—they say the larger sum—in such a way as not to entitle them to a dollar of the subsidy. They failed in carrying out that great enterprise in which they were engaged; they were unable to obtain the means of carrying it forward, and they stopped work, leaving some \$150,000 due to the sub-contractors which they owed to the men who furnished the labor, the food and the materials which had gone into the line. Under these circumstances, the Government of Canada, feeling that this work must be completed at some time, as the Minister of Railways has said, that it was too important not to be carried out, if it could not be carried out by the company—and they were a long time in making the arrangements in France and England, endeavoring to negotiate the bonds, and professing that they would be able at an early date to carry to completion—my hon. friend the Minister of Railways felt that it was right, as no portion of the subsidy had been drawn, to ask the House to allow him to appropriate \$150,000 of the subsidy for the company to pay the contractors and the laborers. Not only that, but before I left I came before Parliament again and, after the failure of the company to go on, I obtained a large additional subsidy from this House for the purpose of completing this very road. The House placed in the hands of the Government power, not only to pay \$3,200 a mile, but on a full statement of the case to Parliament they authorised the Government to agree to pay \$3,200 per mile for the eighty miles in Cape Breton, they authorised this House to give eighty miles of completed railway and its equipment, and the sum of \$30,000 a year for fifteen years, for the completion of the road from Oxford to Louisburg and Sydney in Cape Breton. Now, I think if there ever was a case in which the Government had the assurance that they were carrying

out in good faith the views and opinions of this Parliament to provide for the construction of a road, it was under the circumstances I have stated. The hon. gentleman knows that Parliament at its last Session provided for the construction of eighty miles of road from Sydney, in the Island of Cape Breton, through to the Strait of Canso, as a Government work, as a portion of the Intercolonial Railway. The hon. gentleman knows that Parliament purchased from the company the road from New Glasgow to the Strait of Canso, and he knows that these seventy-five miles between New Glasgow and Oxford Junction would interpose—provided the company were to take it up and complete it on any terms—would interpose a company in the line of Government railway, extending from Quebec on the one side to Louisburg on the other. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman what he would think of a proposal to have a company on the Canadian Pacific Railway, between Ottawa and Pembroke, and whether he thinks that would be likely to promote either the interests of the public or the interests of the road. I would like to ask him whether he thinks that interposing a company between Prescott on the Grand Trunk Railway and some point seventy-five miles up towards Toronto—another independent company—would be for the benefit either of the company or of the public. He would at once say no: that at any cost and hazard, under these circumstances, the company must secure this link which would break their connection. So, the Government, in order to be consistent, in order to consider its own interests, the advantage to the road and the advantage to the public, must take into their hands this portion of the road from Oxford to New Glasgow. The hon. gentleman wants to know why that was not stated to Parliament. Well, Sir, there were difficulties in the way. When the money was paid the Government took over a mortgage, which had been given to the sub-contractors, for the sum of \$150,000. That mortgage turned out to be not a legally and duly executed instrument. The company denied the right of their agent to execute it, and so important did the Government of Nova Scotia consider this road, that at once, as the hon. member for Pictou (Mr. Tupper) has said, a resolution was passed unanimously by the Assembly of that Province, to entitle the Government of Canada to sell under the mortgage for the money which had been expended for labor to the amount of \$150,000. I give these facts to show that in the Province of Nova Scotia, as the senior member for Halifax has said, there are no two questions as to the importance and value of this road. When the hon. member for West Bruce (Mr. Blake) takes exception to this, I think he ought to rely on the statement of a former colleague of his own who sits behind him, and who says that he is extremely glad that the Government have taken steps to make this section of the road between Oxford Junction and New Glasgow a portion of the Intercolonial Railway. Well, Sir, the Government were met with a further difficulty. The company served an injunction, stopped the sale and stopped the Government of Canada from getting possession of this work and putting them in position to ask Parliament for the necessary means of completing it; and when I came out here last summer, when I had not the most remote idea of occupying a seat in this Parliament again, feeling a deep interest in this road, and regarding its importance to Nova Scotia and to the whole of this country—for there is not a portion of Canada that has not an interest in securing this connection with the great coal fields of Pictou—I went to my hon. friend the Minister of Railways and asked him what step he proposed to take. He said: "We are taking the necessary steps as fast as we can, but we are prevented by the courts." I said: "Now that you have undertaken to build the road in Cape Breton as a Government work, it will be absolutely necessary to make it a portion of the Intercolonial Railway;" and my hon. friend assured me that although he did not know what view