

utterly impossible for those gentlemen to have made it worse in any one particular. I must say it is a question of some considerable wonderment to me how those hon. gentlemen could have been induced to come down and lay this measure before Parliament at all. I have been accused, I need not say how unfairly, of not rating the hon. gentlemen opposite very highly either mentally or morally; but I have always admitted that there were among them at least two or three men of unquestionable ability, even if they were of still more unquestionable unscrupulousness. I say, that I cannot understand on any reasonable hypothesis, how these gentlemen were induced to bring this agreement down. I may say there are three alternatives, or three hypotheses, which present themselves to my mind, and which alone can, it seems to me, account for this most remarkable document. One solution of the difficulty would be that the Ministers had become temporarily demented. I cannot understand, Sir, how any gentlemen, having their experience, their knowledge, knowing, as I must presume they know, something of the past history of this country, could have brought this down if they really were in their sound senses. There is a second hypothesis. Perhaps it might be said of them as a certain lady in Don Juan said of her husband, "They were not so much mad as bad." Recollecting their antecedents and past history, I say we cannot wholly dismiss from our minds the hypothesis that this contract may have been obtained by improper means. Knowing what has happened in the past, we know too well what may possibly have happened now. I do not say that that is my own opinion, but undoubtedly that theory is not one to be lightly dismissed, particularly when from one end of the country to the other we find wise and experienced business men asking themselves whether the name of the Minister of Railways which, I see upon the last page of this document, really means the agent of the party of the first part or the agent of the party the second part thereto. There is a third hypothesis, very ably and eloquently put forward by my hon. friend beside me (Mr. Blake), viz: that this document is introduced because these men, by their own exceeding folly, had rendered themselves utterly helpless to deal with the other parties to this contract. For myself, Sir, I say frankly that I incline to this view. Look at the position in which these hon. gentlemen had placed themselves. They had gone to England; they had made repeated declarations, when in England, that they came in a position to complete the contract on advantageous terms. We were told by their organs, from one end of the country to the other, that when these gentlemen appeared on the scene in London, the Rothschilds, Barings, Glynn's, Mills, and other noted capitalists of England and France, who had money to invest were jostling and crowding at the doors of the Ministers begging and praying for permission to construct the Canadian Pacific Railway. The hon. Minister of Railways was good enough to tell us a good deal of the extraordinarily favorable impression which he and his colleagues had made in England. He was good enough to tell us much respecting that remarkable and most accurate piece of information which the hon. Minister of the Interior had communicated to Lord Beaconsfield, touching the great influx of American settlers from Minnesota, Dakota, Wisconsin and Michigan, who were going into our territories in the North-West, to fill and people those desert plains, as he calls them. But, Sir, I fear that, if the truth were known, the impression produced by that right hon. gentleman and his friends in England was hardly quite so favorable as the lovers of their country could desire. Sir, we know what the London *Economist*, a paper of very high standing, said of the doings of those gentlemen. Here is an extract from the London *Examiner*, a paper also of influence:

"The Dominion Ministers have grossly mismanaged their mission. They have repelled confidence when they ought to have nourished faith. They have created distrust when they should have cultivated hope, and they have been mysterious and fussy at the same time. They have flourished about their object, and have inspired communications that have proved to be misleading. The upshot is that, with the best intentions, perhaps, they have cast no credit on the Canadian Pacific Railway."

That is the account of the great credit which redounded to the Dominion of Canada from the actions and conduct of these hon. gentlemen during their long mission to Europe. I will show them, before I sit down, that their conduct on this side of the Atlantic has in no degree detracted from the opinion formed of them by eminent and impartial persons on the other side of the Atlantic. In this contract, we have the result of the greatest ignorance and incapacity, to say no worse, brought into contact with practical ability and experience. Now, Sir, I do not care which of my three hypotheses you adopt, whether you say that these hon. gentlemen were, as in my first hypothesis, crazy; or, as in my second, bought; or, as in my third, sold. Possibly, there may have been a little of all three. I do not pretend to say that any cash passed between the high contracting parties, but if they do hereafter extend an alms to their Ministerial bondsmen, who can say it has not been well earned. I say, Sir, that this document is not a bargain, but a capitulation, and a capitulation without the honors of war, the terms of which were dictated to those hon. gentlemen by the agent of the the Syndicate. Now, let me be understood distinctly. I attach no blame whatever to the gentlemen of the Syndicate for their part in this transaction. Quite the contrary. They have shown themselves most capable business men, and I wish to heaven the interests of Canada had been half as well served by our agents as the interests of the Syndicate were by theirs. Of the Bill itself, I find it difficult to speak with patience. Like my hon. friend I regard it as simply a monument of folly. I say that, in this Bill, every lesson which ought to have been drawn from the past experience of the United States has been deliberately disregarded; that every lesson which ought to have been drawn from the past history of this country, whether as exemplified, by the dealings with land questions in a great part of Lower Canada, or in the Province of New Brunswick, or Prince Edward Island, or the Province of Ontario, has been set at naught. What have we done? We have bought out, at a considerable cost, one great monopoly, and at a hundred fold greater cost we are about to create another and far more dangerous monopoly. Every reasonable protection which the history of late events in the United States have taught us, appears to have been deliberately neglected; every danger which we ought to have taken care to avoid seems to have been invited; every clause appears to have been drawn against us; and it is quite apparent, from what happened the other day, that the Minister who brought down the document did not even take the trouble to compare the clauses which he cited. I say, that the price which we are called upon to pay to these gentlemen for the task they have undertaken, is a most extravagant price, when we take into consideration the present actual value of the lands they are about to receive. I say, further, that a very large amount of this expenditure is utterly useless, and will be rendered still more useless by certain extraordinary provisions of this contract, to which I shall, before I sit down, call your special attention. I say that they have taken no care whatever, as we did, to ensure that those lands should be sold at moderate terms to actual settlers; that they have delivered the whole of the North-West, tied hand and foot, to this Company; that they evade altogether the most important question of rates to which my hon. friend most properly called attention; that they have weighted us down with a most tremendous future obligation, which will cost, not one, but hundreds of millions