

purposes. I say that the management of that Intercolonial Railway is not honest or these results would never be produced. When you find that after that road has been opened for thirteen or fourteen years, after you had all possible opportunities for developing its traffic, when you find that year after year a million or more than a million is demanded for so-called capital account, when you find with all this that that railway is not only not able to produce one single cent in return of interest but that you have to charge on your own showing \$363,000 a year dead loss, I say, Sir, that speaks louder than any man can speak as to the value of political roads and of the value to the country of running them for political purposes. As if to make the matter worse the hon. gentleman alluded to-night, and other gentlemen have alluded elsewhere to the wisdom, the good policy and the sagacity the Government are displaying—while the Intercolonial Railway is a dead loss on our hands to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars—in having taken hundreds of thousands of other dollars out of the public chest to construct a short line to compete with the Intercolonial Railway, and to cut the Intercolonial Railway's throat and to add still more to the burdens of the taxpayers—the people of Canada. Sir, the hon. gentleman spoke, and I dare say correctly enough, of what may be called our ascertained liabilities, for railroad subsidies, for canals, for public works of various kinds; but the hon. gentleman did not dwell on the chance of our having made upon us a heavy demand for further railway subsidies. Now, Sir, I have never wavered or flinched from saying that although in certain individual instances good might come from this system of railway subsidies, the thing is vicious and wrong in itself, unless they be granted for purposes of the clearest general utility to the entire Dominion; but I tell the hon. gentleman this: let him not deceive himself, let him not deceive this House, by imagining that he and his colleagues can, at their own supreme will and pleasure, give subsidies for railways to this supporter or that supporter, and then turn around and say to the people of Canada: Now that we have glutted our own supporters, now that we have paid these men for the assistance they have given us, we are going to shut down, and you other constituencies and other Provinces and other portions of this Dominion who could not be bought or whom it was not worth our while to buy, shall have nothing because we do not see fit to continue the system any longer. Sir, that cannot be. There may be good reasons for putting a stop to the system, but it does not lie in the hon. gentleman to say that they can put a stop to it without a good deal better reason than they have yet given. We have heard nothing of another question, which is the subject of an arbitration that may involve many millions, between the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the Government of this country, and in connection with which, if I am informed aright, judging from the proportions the lawyers' bills have assumed, a very heavy bill may have to be paid sooner or later. Nor did the hon. gentleman allude to the fact, which cannot be lost sight of in a financial statement, that we have given a guarantee to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and that we may have to pay the interest on some \$15,000,000 for fifty years. Nor did he allude to the fact that almost every Province of this Dominion has claims on the general treasury as yet unsettled. Sir, I shall have something to say on that subject before I close; but meanwhile, let me point out that for all these things, be they right or wrong, wise or foolish, the policy of these hon. gentlemen is responsible. If there be a difficulty or a danger or a heavy contingent liability, it is to their policy and that alone that the people of Canada owe it that besides our heavy ascertained liabilities there are immense contingent liabilities which no man can wisely overlook in estimating the future. And now, Sir, I have a word or two further to say. I am for a moment going to pass from the financial side of the question,

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

to consider the mode in which the money we have to spend is got from the people, and I have to say this—and now is the time to say it, because now, if ever, should the grievances of the people be stated in no unhesitating sound: I say there is one feature of this protective tariff which is daily and hourly growing into more odious prominence, and that is the complete subjection of this Government to certain combines in this country, to certain manufacturing establishments in this country, and certain friends of theirs who, on emergency, can come down with their cheques for \$5,000 or \$10,000 or it may be \$20,000, whenever the money can do most good to their friends, the Government. Now, Sir, is it not enough that these same combines should be able to exact 35 per cent., as most of them can, from the people of this country? Is it not enough that they have the legal means of exaction, but are we to permit that the Minister of Customs, or, for aught I know, a mere understrapper of the Minister of Customs, shall arbitrarily and tyrannically add half as much more to the taxes the people have to pay? Sir, this is a growing abuse. I have cases now in my mind, in which distinguished manufacturers in this country have gone to the agents of a combine, and have said to them: We will give you the price of this article in cash in the United States, and add to it the cost of the freight, add the whole Canadian duty, besides if you will give us goods at these rates; and they have been refused; and they have then brought the goods in from the United States, paid the cash price in the United States, paid the freight and have been prepared to pay the honest duty or the duty the Government ought to have levied; and yet at the instance of these identical combines the Government of Canada, or the Customs Department of the Government, arbitrarily and tyrannically added 50 per cent. to the true valuation of those articles, and compelled those men to pay 50 per cent. more than the law intended they should. Sir, we shall have something to say on this matter, please heaven, before the House rises, and, therefore, I shall confine my present remarks regarding it to a very few words. But I say that the thing to which I allude is one of the most monstrous features of the Customs Act as it now exists. We gave the Minister of Customs this power to be used in extreme emergencies to prevent fraud, and that power is now being used to commit fraud. If there were nothing more to condemn this system, the judgment recently pronounced in a certain well known case, by the highest tribunal in the land, the tendency it exhibits to encourage a system of blackmail and partiality to political supporters, and to foster the greatest political corruption besides, ought to be enough to condemn this feature of the protective tariff in the eyes of an honest man. It is the natural and inevitable fruit of a high protective system, and it does this threefold wrong. First of all it wrongs the revenue, because its effect is to force people into subjection to the combines, and the Government gets no duty on what would otherwise be imported; secondly, it is an injury to the manufacturers of the best class; and thirdly, as the manufactures pass the charge on to the consumers, the whole body of the consumers likewise suffer from this infamous wrong. For that wrong there is no genuine redress save taking away the power these men have abused. Sir, there was one good point in the hon. gentleman's statement. For the first time for many years, the Minister of Finance declares that he is not going to add a fresh batch of oppressive taxes to the burthens of the people of this country. Well, Sir, we will wait until this House rises before we rejoice too much in that announcement; but in the meantime, as the hon. gentleman was good enough to give us a list of the taxes which wealthy men pay in this country, I will give him a list of the taxes which poor men pay on articles of daily and hourly use which are necessary to all of them. In the first place, Sir,