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THE INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY.

Brief Sketch of the History of one of the Great Public Works of Canada.

Some months ago the sale of the Intercolonial railway to a company was seriously urged by a representative journal of the central west. For many years the representatives of Ontario in the House of Commons have been opposed to further expenditures on capital account for this great highway between the provinces, and it was only when the party whip was vigorously cracked that these gentlemen consented to necessary appropriations. This opposition to the Intercolonial is not confined to any particular party. It had an existence in 1878 and was continued all during the conservative regime, and when the liberals came into power the same sentiment prevailed and was only overcome by the universal demand from the Maritime Provinces supported by Hon. A. G. Blair, then Minister of Railways, who urged that the Intercolonial be not only sustained but improved. So fearsome of criticism under this head had the conservative

government become that the Intercolonial was literally starved, and had the same policy prevailed from 1896 until now, as ruled for six or seven years previous the Intercolonial would have become a second class road by this time. It was the determined stand taken by Mr. Blair in the caucus of his own party that rendered possible the great improvements made in the Intercolonial since 1896, and they have been manifold.

That there have been mistakes made in the management of the Intercolonial no one will question, but similar mistakes have been made in the management of every railroad on the continent, and they are likely to continue until the end of time, or while man is fallible. To begin with the location of the road was a mistake, and to the original blunder is due the lack of success of the Intercolonial from a commercial standpoint. Another blunder was made in fixing the freight and passenger schedules so low