

former times, one of the arguments frequently used by the hon. Minister of Railways against the Georgian Bay Branch was: that there were other existing modes of reaching Lake Superior more direct, and more easily availed of, and which would cost the country nothing. Then the interests of the Province of Quebec were not so much regarded; then it was contended by that hon. gentleman, on behalf of the whole Opposition, that the Georgian Bay Branch was to cause an immense expenditure, that it should not be built at all, but that we should go by way of Toronto up to Collingwood, and so reach the waters of Lake Superior. There never was anything said, either by the present leader of the Opposition or by the leader of the late Government, that would at all justify the extraordinary outburst of the hon. Minister of Railways on that occasion; and, let me say, *en passant*, that that hon. gentleman indulged in some other extraordinary pieces of declamation. I do not know exactly what it was that the hon. leader of the Opposition said, which the hon. Minister of Public Works chose to regard as a basis for all he said about the Irish people in the North-West. I did not hear the hon. member for West Durham raise any objection to the settlement of Irish people in the North-West. I never heard him utter a word that would imply, in the most remote or indistinct way, that Irishmen have not the same rights in this Dominion as men of any other nationality—never a word that would imply that they should be prevented, or discouraged from settling in the North-West; and yet the hon. Minister of Public Works spoke as if the hon. leader of the Opposition had avowed himself as strongly opposed to the settlement of Irishmen in the North-West. What the hon. member did say on that point, if I recollect rightly, was, that there was now some talk of bringing out Irish people to settle in the North-West; that if this monstrous monopoly went into operation those people would find that they had changed the rod for the scorpion, that if they were scourged in Ireland, through rack-rent, they would find themselves more bitterly scourged in the North-West at the hands of this monstrous monopoly. An hon. gentleman, I think the representative of Richmond and Wolfe (Mr. Ivie), took, I think, a very extraordinary course with regard to this question. He treated us to a very large number of figures, some of which he stated to the House were the figures of the hon. member for West Durham, and from these figures he certainly drew some most extraordinary conclusions. Taking a higher estimate made by the hon. member for West Durham for the whole railway, he chose to extract from that a lower estimate for the western portion of the road, and so he obtained a large balance as the price of the central section; and that he chose to say was the estimate of the hon. member for West Durham for the central portion of the railway. I cannot imagine what the hon. member intended to effect by the use of such figures. I certainly am satisfied that he did not persuade any hon. gentleman that the railroad would cost the Syndicate the very large amount which he alleges they will have to expend in order to perform this work. But, Sir, if after all, we come down to the consideration of the contract itself, putting aside all these extraneous matters, and ask ourselves whether we should accept this contract as it stands or not, I think we shall find this question a much more supple one than anyone could suppose who merely heard the statement of the hon. member for Richmond and Wolfe. The Minister of Railways, and other hon. gentlemen, have chosen to say, that this is a better bargain than the one with Sir Hugh Allan. In one point I have shown that it is not so good. But they say Sir Hugh Allan was to get \$30,000,000 in cash, and 50,000,000 acres of land, which, estimating the land at \$1 an acre, would make \$80,000,000; while, under the present contract, we are paying \$28,000,000 in works, \$25,000,000 in cash, and \$25,000,000 in land, making altogether \$78,000,000.

But Sir Hugh Allan was not to get the privilege of selecting the lands where he pleased all over the North-West. As the hon. member for West Durham proved, even if you select all the lands in the fertile belt, these lands more remote from the line cannot have anything like the marketable value of those adjacent to the railway; so that the land to be given to the present Syndicate is much more in value than that represented by the 50,000,000 acres which were to be given to Sir Hugh Allan. The hon. member for West Durham, accepting the value that had been put upon the lands by the leader of the Government, showed that 25,000,000 acres lying next the railway would be worth \$79,000,000, while 25,000,000 acres lying beyond would be worth \$27,500,000. But, Sir, that is not all, for Sir Hugh Allan was bound to take those 50,000,000 acres from all along the line of railroad, from the boundary of the Province of Ontario right through to British Columbia. Under the present contract the Syndicate are virtually allowed to choose land where they please. The present Syndicate are not bound to take any land except they choose, and they can select the very best land along the line of railway, and, therefore, lands that will be of the very greatest value. I think anybody, who knows anything about the lands in other parts of the Dominion, would believe—and it may be reasonably believed that the lands in the North-West are not on the whole different in character—that the 25,000,000 of acres to be selected by the Syndicate, as this Syndicate has a right to select it, will be equal in marketable value to the 50,000,000 acres that Sir Hugh Allan was to receive alongside of the railway. There are other points in Sir Hugh Allan's contract, which, I think, made it a better contract than the present. But it was alleged also that the terms embraced in this contract were very much superior indeed, to those that were offered in the Bill introduced by the late Premier in the Session of 1874. Why, it was said that Mr. Mackenzie offered to give 20,000 acres of land per mile all along the line of the railway, and not only that, but also a large land subsidy for the Georgian Bay Branch, and also a large land subsidy for the Pembina Branch, so that the calculation was that it would amount to 55,000,000 acres of land. The hon. member for West Durham states that the land was worth, according to the Premier's estimate last Session, \$5 an acre. Oh, says the hon. Minister of Public Works, how monstrous it would be to estimate the value of such land at any such rate as that. It applied to the 55,000,000 acres that Mr. Mackenzie was to have given, and which would have amounted to \$275,000,000. And, then, as if he had said something very clever, he was loudly applauded on the other side. Somebody has made a calculation, I think, that it would require a line of railway some 17,000 miles in length to furnish the 55,000,000 acres within the five mile belt A. But, Mr. Chairman, when we come to examine that so much misrepresented and possibly so much misunderstood proposal, we find how superior, in many important particulars, it is to the contract now before the House. It is quite true that Mr. Mackenzie took authority to make such a bargain as that, and to give a company 20,000 acres per mile and \$10,000 in cash subsidy, and, besides, a possible further cash subsidy for which, however, he would have required to receive the approval of Parliament; but the 20,000 acres of land per mile was to be land of fair average quality and not the pick and choice of the whole fertile belt. Hon. gentlemen when upon this subject have, over and over again, spoken of it as if fair average quality meant that the very choicest land was to be the standard; but surely no reasonable or rational interpretation would justify such a conclusion as that the fair average quality would be the fair average quality of land in the country over which the railroad will run, and no other reasonable interpretation could be put upon that