

believed last year it could be done, by \$11,000,000. But it is not a new thing to relieve a railway company of taxation. I will read a telegram which will show what has been done by the United States with reference to the Northern Pacific Railway. The General Manager of that road telegraphs, under date of the 15th December of this year, as follows:—

“Eight of way, 400 feet wide, and all improvements thereon, exempt from taxation under charter.”

So that the Northern Pacific Railway, is exempt from taxation, not for a width of 100 feet, as is the Canadian Pacific Railway, but for a width of 400 feet. In the United States they were not afraid of that. They knew perfectly well that the Northern Pacific Railway was not a road inimical to the country and the people; that it was for their good and use, and that, therefore, they should put that road on a proper footing for all time; they knew it would be a great highway of the country, and should be dealt with liberally. We expect that our country, which is great in many ways, will be as great in certain respects as the United States; and we want a good and great railway, and also to put it on a proper footing, so as to prevent its owners coming back to us and saying: “You starve us to death, and we want more money.”

Mr. CASGRAIN. We have the guarantee.

Mr. LANGEVIN. We have the guarantee no doubt; but, perhaps, the hon. gentleman would prefer to see them come to ask for better terms. I am not of that opinion, nor is the Government.

Mr. BLAKE. They could not find better terms.

Mr. LANGEVIN. The hon. gentleman thinks we could do better; he says the terms are too good for the Syndicate. In what way are they? He says: “You have no sufficient guarantee for the eastern section; how will you build it: you are giving too much for the prairie section.” I will show the hon. gentleman presently that that portion of the railway was alluded to by him last year, as well as this, and that there is a very notable difference between the two allusions; and that if Ministers may change their estimates from one Session to another in the way of reduction, the leader of the Opposition can change his policy *in toto*, with regard to the eastern section.

Mr. POPE (Compton). He is not responsible for what he said last year.

Mr. LANGEVIN. The next point the hon. gentleman alluded to was this: he says we have exempted the lands of the Company from taxation for 20 years. Well, in the same way as he finds fault with our scheme by saying we are giving too much money away, I reply to him, if the lands are to be taxed, you must consider at once what would be the result. The Company which has stated to the Government that the amount of money and lands required by them is only a *quid pro quo* for the work they undertake, and the working of the railway will say, if we tax their lands: “You must come to our relief; we have not money enough. It will take ten years to build the road, and, till completed, we can have only a certain number of emigrants yearly; and until it is in operation, after ten years, we cannot derive the benefits necessary as compensation for its construction. So, if you tax our lands, you will have to give us more money.” If we were to revert to the scheme of last year, and to that of hon. gentlemen opposite, what would be the result? We should have to tax the people to the extent of \$78,000,000 or \$88,000,000 on the estimates of last year. The lands would be in our hands, and only those sold would be taxed by the municipalities. Therefore, there will be no more taxation under the present scheme than if the Government were to build the road. Why should we compel the Company to sacrifice every acre of their lands in order to avoid taxation?

You must see that their interest is to settle these lands. They would not be so blind as to retain them long for future enhancement. The value or price of an acre is not the point so much looked to as the benefit the railway must derive from the settlement of the lands, and the carriage of produce to market. We have seen that the Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway Company sold their lands at, say, \$5 an acre, but with the condition that if the settler put under cultivation so many acres within a year, the price should be reduced to \$2 or \$2.50, showing the Company considered its main advantage lay not in the first price of the land, but in its settlement and cultivation. This Syndicate will have the same interest in selling their lands for early settlement. Every settler should be taxed as well as every other inhabitant of the country. Why not? Besides, this railway is not to be built for Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Ontario, or any other Province particularly, although the trade of the North-West will come down by it to all. But the great, immediate advantage of the road will be to the settlers in the North-West; and, whilst we are giving our millions to build it, and paying interest on the amount, why should not those settlers contribute something to it? What will their contributions amount to? It will be the difference between the taxation of a few acres in the municipality and the amount they would have to pay for those lands being free of taxation. That would not be for all time, but only for the first twenty years, until the lands are sold. For the first few years the settlers cannot suffer, because they would naturally try to settle on the lands in the immediate neighborhood of the railway; and, therefore, those lands would be sold lot by lot. The Government, having the alternate blocks, would be too glad to sell land also, and all the settlers would find them out very shortly. Very little land, after a little time, would remain unoccupied in the municipalities, and, therefore, the settlers would not suffer. Any man desiring land may have it there. He has only to say: “I require this lot of land,” to have it; and every settler that goes into that country and settles there will write home to his friends and bring them out. Therefore, in a very short time the parish or municipality will be settled and the exemption of taxation on these lands will not be felt, because really, the lands remaining to be sold will remain there only until the settlement can be extended in that direction, so that, after those twenty years, what will remain exempt from taxation will be just the 100 feet in width on the length of the municipality. I think the roads in the North-West are about 100 feet wide. Is it worth considering in the settlement of that country, that 100 feet in width on the length of the municipality should be exempt from taxation? I think that is a very small contribution on the part of the settlers towards the building of the railway. I am sure if we were to ask the people of any portion of old Canada that is deprived of railway communication: “Will you consent to have a railway on condition that you will neither tax the track of that railway nor the stations?” they would be only too glad to have the railway; but because the Government brings this scheme forward, hon. gentlemen opposite object to it. I have not made the calculation out, which, perhaps, some of my hon. friends who will follow me, will make, as to how many acres, 100 feet in width, on the length of a municipality, will make. It will be a very small amount, and that will be the only exemption in the whole township. Besides that, if some of these lands remain unoccupied and unsold, the neighbors will take care to make of these lands pasture grounds. But the hon. leader of the Opposition will say: “Oh the Company will take precious care to make those settlers, who use these lands as pasture grounds, pay a certain amount every year.” In that case, these lands will, at once, be subject to taxation, and, therefore, there is no fear of these lands remaining, even two or three years, without