

the Canada Atlantic Railway as part of the Intercolonial. And the former member for Hants, in a long and exhaustive letter published in the Morning 'Chronicle' of Halifax, dealt in a very able way with the future of the Intercolonial and its unfortunate condition of piling up a considerable deficit while not acquiring any portion of the western traffic. I have not his words before me but I think I can state with exactness what he said in that letter. He said: We want to have the Intercolonial reach up to the great lakes of Canada and acquire a portion of the great western traffic which is rapidly increasing. Then he added: 'If any gentleman in this country knows of any better way to accomplish that than by acquiring the Canada Atlantic, it will be in order for him to take the floor.' So, I have pointed out to my hon. friend that two important members of his party in the maritime provinces, one since elevated to the bench of Nova Scotia and the other elevated to the very important position of Minister of Railways, besides Hon. Mr. Blair, formerly Minister of Railways, were of opinion that it is absolutely essential to the success and prosperity of the Intercolonial and to the development of the maritime ports to extend the Intercolonial to Parry Sound and to extend it by means of the Canada Atlantic Railway. My hon. friend (Mr. E. M. Macdonald) says we have nothing to do with that matter under this Bill. I say we have a great deal to do with it under this Bill. I do not blame my hon. friend for placing, as he appears to do, the question of the corporation far above the interests of the country—

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman (Mr. R. L. Borden) has no right to draw any such inferences from what I said.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Then the hon. gentleman did not intend that—

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. I said nothing that would warrant the hon. gentleman in imputing to me any such opinion.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I do not agree with my hon. friend in regard to that. I certainly got that impression from his words—that certainly was the direction of his argument, as I understood him. But he says that is not what he meant, and I accept his disclaimer. At any rate, we on this side must look at the question, not so much from the point of view of the interests of the Grand Trunk Railway, or the interests of the Canada Atlantic Railway, but from the point of view of the whole country. How will that interest be affected by the Bill? That my hon. friend will ask me, of course, is a very proper question, and one which, taking the stand I do, I am bound to answer. From my point of view the interests of the country as a whole demand that the government shall ac-

quire the Canada Atlantic—not acquire running rights over it, but acquire the railway—and reach out for a portion of the traffic of the great west, which some of the hon. gentlemen on the other side at least have been saying is necessary for the future success of the Intercolonial. Surely my hon. friend will not say that that policy will not be affected by the passage of this Bill. He surely does not pretend that in the same session parliament shall authorize the Grand Trunk Railway to acquire the whole capital stock of the Canada Atlantic Railway—which I understand is in only a few hands—and so make that railway part of its great system, and, in the next breath, declare that it will expropriate the Canada Atlantic and make it a part of the Intercolonial? I have heard the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) ask that legislation be allowed to stand over for much less reason than we suggest in this case to-night. Why, the thing is inconceivable—to give the Grand Trunk Railway power to acquire the stock of this road with a view to making it part of its great system, and then to pass a Bill which shall have the effect of declaring that that action was absolutely meaningless and nonsensical. My hon. friend will surely not take that position. Yet there is no other position for him to take, unless he acquiesces in the view we adopt.

I am speaking on the matter at some length in order to place our position correctly in the mind of my hon. friend, who seems to think that we have some set purpose of defeating this Bill, and that we can accomplish everything we desire by permitting this Bill to pass without further discussion and simply deal with what I think he will regard as an important question, in the government Bill about to be introduced. My hon. friend has referred to our policy with regard to the Canada Atlantic. Well we have made it pretty plain, I think, during last session and the session before. I frankly avowed in this House on both occasions that I thought it would be in the interest of this country to extend the Intercolonial to the shores of the Georgian bay. I went further than that, but it is sufficient for my present purpose to call attention to the fact that I did take that position, and I do not recede from it now. I did not commit myself absolutely to effecting that extension by means of the Canada Atlantic. I said that upon certain data which I presented to this House with regard to the earning power of the Canada Atlantic, I believed so far as I was able to obtain information, that it would be a good thing for the country to acquire that road; but I said if the government, after due examination, should come to the conclusion that the Intercolonial could be extended to the shores of the Georgian bay by some better means, I would be prepared to acquiesce in that conclusion if it commended itself to my