

I believe that when he found it his duty to resign as a minister of the cabinet he was conscientious and that he felt he was doing his duty to the people of this country.

Some eight months ago, before the meeting of parliament, a meeting of the electors of West Prince was held in the town of Tignish, and they unanimously passed a resolution congratulating the ex-Minister of Railways (Hon. Mr. Blair) on what he had done for the opening up of that part of the country, and especially for running two trains a day between Summerside and Tignish. I desire to convey to the hon. gentleman (Hon. Mr. Blair) the thanks of that meeting, and at the same time I trust that the acting Minister of Railways (Hon. Mr. Fielding) will continue the good work initiated by the ex-Minister (Hon. Mr. Blair). Now, Mr. Speaker, I desire to say that, before the government undertakes such a large and expensive project as is included in this Bill, proper surveys should be made, and estimates of cost should be obtained and we should not have to rely on explorations made 25 or 50 years ago for another purpose altogether. I am in favour of opening up our country, but I do believe that while we have in the North-west 150,000,000 acres of the most fertile lands in the world awaiting settlement, it is a mistake to throw away the money of the people of Canada on such an undertaking as this.

Mr. J. D. REID (Grenville). Had it not been for the member for Westmoreland (Mr. Emmerson) and the member for Bellechasse (Mr. Talbot) prolonging this debate this Bill would have passed the House before one o'clock. I have a question to put to the Prime Minister, which has not yet been answered so far as I know. It is reported that the reason why the Winnipeg-Moncton section is tacked on to this project by the government, is, because the member for Victoria, N.B., (Hon. Mr. Costigan) is interested in a railway from Quebec to Edmundston, part of which has been built, and that pressure has been put upon the Prime Minister to absorb that line of railway. It is also reported that the Quebec Bridge is to be absorbed, and that the government intend bringing down a subsidy of some \$4,000,000 for that Bridge Company, of which Mr. Parent, Prime Minister of Quebec, is the president. In addition to that, there is the Trans-Canada Railway from Quebec to Winnipeg, of which Mr. Parent is also president, and that also is to be absorbed by the government, and these parties are to receive a large amount for their charters. Perhaps the Prime Minister could give us some information as to these rumours.

The PRIME MINISTER (Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier). I have no objection at all to answering my hon. friend. Although we do not share all ideas in common perhaps the hon. gentleman (Mr. Reid) will

Mr. HACKETT.

take a piece of advice from me, and that is, that he will do well not to be too credulous, and especially not to credit reports which are without even a semblance of foundation or common sense. The member for Victoria (Hon. Mr. Costigan) is, I believe, interested with other parties, in a charter for a railway over the territory which will be traversed by the government line from Moncton to Quebec. His charter which I think had some value some few months ago, will in consequence have no value whatever to-day. As to the rumour that the Prime Minister of Quebec is president of a transcontinental railway company to which some subsidies are to be given; this is the first information I have had on that. I am not aware that the Premier of Quebec is interested in any such road, and at all events the government has no such intention, nor has it received any application with regard to it. There is a company known as the Trans-Canada, which had a charter, and wanted to build a railway practically over the same ground which is to be covered by the railway contemplated by this Bill. As to the Quebec Bridge Company, there is an application for further aid to that company. It was assisted by the government some two or three years ago, and there is an application for further aid.

Mr. REID (Grenville). That bridge would be absorbed by the new road?

The PRIME MINISTER. Well, legislation will be necessary on that subject.

Mr. G. W. FOWLER (King's, N.B.). I would not have spoken further in connection with this Bill, were it not that the member for Westmoreland (Mr. Emmerson) has I am told attempted to cast a reflection upon the members for New Brunswick—especially those who sit on this side of the House—by saying that they were not doing their duty to their province in opposing this railway.

Mr. EMMERSON. If the hon. gentleman understood that, he certainly was misinformed. Those who heard me will acquit me of having made any reflection whatever upon any hon. member from New Brunswick or any other province.

Mr. FOWLER. I am very glad to hear from the hon. gentleman's own lips that he did not make any such statement, but I am informed that what he said was that he was surprised at their antipathy against that section of the country between Moncton and Quebec. If the hon. gentleman uttered these words he cast a reflection upon the gentlemen who are opposing this Bill, because he insinuated that they had an antipathy, not against the railway itself, but against that section of the country between Moncton and Quebec. I do not know how else his language can be construed. Speaking for myself—and in this respect I can speak for