

from Lévis to Montreal is it not competing with both the Grand Trunk Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway? What is the reason that there should be rivalry and competition between government and private roads in the east and not in the west? The people in the maritime provinces are very well satisfied to have the Intercolonial operate there in rivalry with other roads, and I suppose the people of the west would be just as well satisfied to have the Intercolonial operating there in similar rivalry. So far as the question of principle is concerned, I challenge my right hon. friend the Prime Minister or the Postmaster General to point out one single distinction in principle between doing that in eastern Canada and doing the very same thing in western Canada.

But, if my hon. friend the Postmaster General excelled himself when he dealt with the line from Fort William to Winnipeg, he more than excelled himself and everybody else when he came to deal with the prairie section. He adopted the estimate of the Minister of Finance (Hon. Mr. Fielding) who, at page 8586 of 'Hansard,' stated that the aid proposed by the government in the shape of a guarantee for construction of the prairie section not exceeding \$13,000 a mile would cost the country nothing. That is distinctly the basis on which the Minister of Finance proceeded, and it is the basis which has been adopted over and over again by the Postmaster General. But when he deals with my proposal, does he deal with it in the same way? How should he deal with my proposal? My proposal was simply to give to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway similar aid for the prairie section to that which the government propose to give under this Bill. The Postmaster General himself makes that perfectly plain when, at page 9771 of 'Hansard' he says that my proposal is for the same assistance to the Grand Trunk Pacific as the Canadian Northern receive, namely, a guarantee of \$13,000 a mile. But how does he deal with the cost of the guarantee when he desires to make an extravagant estimate of the cost of my proposal? He puts it at \$13,000,000, as against nothing for exactly the same aid under the government's proposal. Let us look at it for a moment. We have the estimate of the Minister of Finance as follows: Eastern section, including interest during construction, will cost \$54,609,676; loss of rental, seven years, \$11,468,030; aid to mountain section, \$2,924,000; Quebec bridge, \$2,000,000. He adds to that for aid to the prairie section under the government's proposal just nothing. So, the total cost of this, including the prairie section according to the estimate of the Minister of Finance, will be \$71,001,706. And the Minister of Finance tells us that the total cost to the country will be less than \$13,000,000, which is just the sum that the Postmaster General estimates will be the cost under my scheme

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax).

of aid to the prairie section alone. And this is the gentleman who desired to make not only a business-like but fair comparison of the cost of the two schemes.

Now, the hon. gentleman (Hon. Sir William Mulock) proceeded to deal with the mountain section. He represented the cost to the country of the mountain section under my scheme at \$30,000,000, that is, for 600 miles at \$50,000 a mile. Of course, I would not deal, even in passing, with the fact that, whereas the Minister of Finance put the length of the mountain section at 480 miles, the Postmaster General adds a trifle of 120 miles to it when he makes an estimate of the cost of the mountain section under my proposal. That was perfectly convenient for him to do, and I do not complain very much about it; it was only a trifle compared with his other exaggerations. He represents me as deliberately adding a cost of \$30,000,000 to that of the scheme which the government proposes. I thought I had made myself perfectly clear with respect to my proposition as to the mountain section, and I believe I did make myself clear to every hon. gentleman in this House and to every man in the country except the Postmaster General. My scheme was this: I said that I believed that, from Edmonton or from some point west of Edmonton to the Pacific coast, there was no necessity for more than one new line. I said the Canadian Northern had as good a right to be regarded as a transcontinental railway as had the Grand Trunk Pacific. Knowing the ways of railway promoters, I apprehended that the Canadian Northern Railway would come to this government for exactly the same aid for a line to the coast as that which was proposed to be given to the Grand Trunk Pacific; and I said that, inasmuch as it seemed to me that only one line was necessary, I would impose on these two companies the obligation of joining their lines at Edmonton or at some point west of Edmonton, and that any aid given by this country for a line west of that point should be for a line to be operated, under independent control if necessary, and used by both these companies as part of their transcontinental lines. I believed, and still believe, that, in making that proposal, I was saving this country the cost of aid to a second transcontinental line. I said further—and I repeat it now—that the government had the whole situation, and will have the whole situation, in its own hands, if it acts wisely. Let us suppose that the two companies cannot come to an understanding for the operation in common of that road from Edmonton or some point near Edmonton to the coast. What will happen? The government, in the first place can refuse to give aid until this understanding has been reached. That is the first part the government has to play. In the next place, if the government sees fit, it might itself build the line from Edmonton or some point west of Edmonton to the coast on condi-