

so then we were deceived by the press, by the *Canadian News* among others, for it was plainly stated that that was the sum and the impression was confirmed by the fact that Mr. Fleming had estimated that amount as necessary, and our own experience of the estimates and cost of railways gave us no reason to think it could not be built for less. We are blamed for remonstrating against the guarantee,—we were willing to remonstrate against anything and everything to save the interests which were entrusted to us. Would I sell the liberties of my country for a few miles of railroad, even if half the trade of the world were to come over it? Would I say to my constituents “you have elected me, I respect you for your intelligence, but you are not competent to express an opinion on a matter that will sweep away your revenues and place unlimited powers of taxation in a body which you cannot control?” I was going to say that for all the roads in the world I would not consent to that, and we therefore thought it right to use every means to destroy the scheme, and as the road is said to be an essential part of it, and a necessity for Canada, we could take the chances for the future until she came to her senses, and there is no doubt that ere long she would have had to come to us and asked us to build our share. There was another reason, for our suggesting that a guarantee for the larger sum should not be given,—one of the most powerful influences at work in favor of Confederation is the organization known as the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada, whose chairman, Watkins, made the statement in the House of Commons that the measure had been discussed at every polling booth in Nova Scotia. It is the interest of that company to increase the value of their road from Quebec to Riviere du Loup, and more especially to secure the expenditure of the three millions, and get the entire line into their hands. We were apprehensive that the same system of jobbing which extracted ten millions of money from British capitalists some years ago would be repeated over again, and we thought it only right and proper to give a word of caution to the British people.

There was another reason for my action also, and I mention it in the hearing of gentlemen who have known for years the opinions which I held in respect to this railway,—that was that the road, passing through a harsh and forbidding country, having grades too steep for a large and profitable traffic, would not bring to us the advantages that have been promised. There was no reason to believe that a large amount of traffic would be brought to the harbor of Halifax and if we had had any doubts upon that point, Mr. Fleming's report, made after 10 or 12 routes had been explored, shows that the Intercolonial Railway might be tapped at Danville and the traffic diverted by the North American and European line which could carry more cheaply, because the snow does not fall so deeply on its track, while the grades were lighter, and the distance between Montreal and Halifax considerably less. When I read that report, and found further that at St. John and not at Halifax the trade was likely to centre, I must confess that my interest in the Intercolonial Railway was

largely abated. I trust therefore that I have answered the hon. gentleman's banter upon this point.

I was in England for several months and had an opportunity during that time of discussing the measure with able and intelligent men, and down to the hour I left, whenever I had a chance of stating the actual state of affairs in Nova Scotia, when I told them that at the only three elections held since the scheme was mooted the measure had been condemned, and when I claimed for our people the right to speak on it, I did not find one who did not say, “you are right and your people should have the privilege you claim for them.” That I believe would have been the feeling of the House of Commons but for the misrepresentations of such men as Mr. Watkins who knows the Colonies well, and who is almost as familiar with the state of public opinion in the Provinces as with the Grand Trunk Railway Company, of which he is the Chairman and Managing Director.

I do not wonder, sir, when such men as Mr. Watkins and Sir John Pakington made the statements which came from their lips to a body of gentlemen utterly ignorant of the facts of the case, that the House was misled. But there is time enough yet to avert this great wrong if members would do their duty to-night, and claim for their constituencies the right they should possess. The tidings would be wafted across the Atlantic with lightning speed that the action of the gentlemen professing to represent Nova Scotia in the Delegation had been condemned, the measure would be postponed, and our country would be saved. (Cheers.)

Speech of Mr. Blanchard.

Mr. BLANCHARD said: The observations I have to make on this question will be compressed into a very small compass, and shall be chiefly confined to the point which has been brought before the house by the hon. member for Guysborough. I think the constitutional point connected with this amendment has been so thoroughly discussed by those who preceded me that I need not dwell on it at any length—in fact that I need not touch it all. I shall not refer to the remarks of the hon. member for East Halifax, except that when I heard the hon. member drop the unfortunate observation “that it was easier to buy a majority of the members of this house than a majority of the electors” it grated harshly upon my ears. I am glad that the hon. member subsequently withdrew so unwarrantable an insinuation. I think it came with an exceedingly ill grace from the hon. member to make any insinuation against any member of this house of which he claims to be the father. I think it proper to state in my place that I look upon this Legislature as much above corruption as any Legislature that I have ever heard of, and every hon. member composing it as much above corruption as the hon. gentleman himself; and it will not do for him to say to this house or any future one that it could be approached with bribes; or that there is any government who would dare to “buy” gentlemen with the object of effecting some purpose. Such a charge could not be supported for an instant in this house. Gentlemen in it, I am glad to say, have proved themselves above the influence of