

ever engaged the attention of the people of this country Mr. Chairman, it is instructive, and it is interesting, too, to observe the rather remarkable difference in tone and mode of treatment in a great measure adopted by those two hon. gentlemen. I allow much for the difference in character between these two ornaments of the Ministry, but the fact is that, whereas, when the hon. the Minister of Railways brought this measure before us, three days ago, no words were too strong, no language too glowing, to describe the prize which the happy people of Canada were about to obtain; although we were told that this was absolutely and in itself the best possible bargain that could be made—and, if he had only inserted the words “for the contractors,” I would wholly agree with him—although that hon. gentleman, with all the force of language and all the volume of voice for which he is remarkable, enforced upon us that we were the most happy people under the sun, not merely to enjoy such a Government, but to have an opportunity of ratifying such a measure; although he told us—and the hon. the Minister of Public Works, perhaps, has borrowed a little from his hon. colleague—that it was the proudest moment of his life when he came to lay this measure before us; although he told us, if I understood him aright, that the fact of his being a prominent party in conducting this negotiation would enable him to leave a substantial legacy to his children after him, and, perhaps, it may be so—

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The hon. gentleman stands in this House, Mr. Chairman, making a statement which he knows is as utterly at variance with that which I made as it is possible for language to convey. I am astonished that even that hon. gentleman should be willing so to lower himself.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. I take the opportunity of saying that we are not dealing with men whose characters and antecedents in managing Pacific contracts are not wholly unknown to us. The hon. gentleman must stand here and must bear to be reminded of all those circumstances which attended the inception of a former Pacific Railway contract, and I am strictly in my order and in my right in referring to them. What he said was that: “If he had no other bequest to leave to his children, this would be the proudest legacy he could desire to leave.” If I am to understand, Sir, that it is not a substantial legacy, but merely a legacy of fame, I admit the correction; I am sorry for my mistake, and I am sorry for the poor children. However, Sir, one hon. gentleman tells us that this is a wise plan, carefully matured, carefully considered, deeply studied, with the aid of my hon. friend from Argenteuil (Mr. Abbott). The other hon. gentleman insinuates that, after all, it was rather a necessity forced upon the Ministry, that it was a question of compromise, a matter of give and take. If the compromise, if the give and take, had been fairly apportioned, I would not object, but this has been wholly and entirely a question of concession and grant from the people of Canada to the gentlemen of the Pacific Railway Syndicate. We must swallow it whole; we must swallow it without notice, without that due information which my hon. friend demanded and had a right to obtain; and why? The reason is, Sir, lest the people of Canada might come too soon and too early to a conviction that their rights were being trampled on and their property was sold. But, Sir, whence the difference in tone between these two hon. gentlemen? Why is it they talk in this depreciating style of a bargain on Friday, which, on Tuesday, was lauded to the skies. What has happened in the interval to cause this wonderful change? Well, Sir, this has happened. My hon. friend beside me (Mr. Blake) has addressed to this House winged words, which have gone abroad, from one end of this country to the other, and

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which are now going abroad from one end of this country to the other, and, following up his argument, he has shown the House how grossly ignorant, how grossly incompetent, how grossly unaware of meaning of very important clauses contained in the construction of this contract, is the hon. the Minister of Railways, in whose especial charge it was. Now, there were certain matters which the hon. Minister of Public Works was called upon to show. He was called upon to show why the construction of the Sault branch, at the present time, would not answer all the ends of Canada, and particularly of Quebec. He was called upon to justify the extraordinary monopoly which, by this contract, he proposed to give. He was called upon to show why, if we ever desired to free ourselves from the monstrous bargain we are entering into, we should be asked to pay such an enormous ransom. He was called on to show how the Government, containing men of such experience and knowledge of public affairs, could have perpetrated the extraordinary error to which my hon. friend alluded. On not one of these points could we get any distinct or accurate information as to his views or those of his Government. It was almost as hard to find out his real opinion on these points as to find out what had become of that mysterious \$32,000 of which he became possessed at the time of the last Pacific contract. I can very well understand that these gentlemen do not like to be reminded of the crime which eight years ago hurled them from power, although it is appropriate to this discussion to show the mode and manner in which the last Pacific contract was managed; but as it appears to be unpopular with the intelligent and virtuous supporters of hon. gentlemen opposite, I shall not waste the time of the House in reviving it. The hon. Minister of Railways said that, looking at this matter as he did, he was surprised that members on this side of the House should oppose this contract. Looking at it on party grounds, and in his anxiety for the welfare of the Liberal party, he has most earnestly advised us to preserve a judicious reticence in treating this question. He was so anxious that the Liberal party should not put themselves absolutely in the wrong, that he advised us to let this measure pass with the merest perfunctory criticism. Now, Sir, for once in my life I wholly agree with the hon. gentleman. Were it possible for me to regard this from a purely party standpoint, and were it possible to treat this not as a question involving the interests of Canada, but simply as involving the interests of the Liberal party, I would quite agree with the hon. Minister of Railways and would say: let this measure pass; let the country understand what it is these men are about to inflict upon it. This Bill, to us, would be a real election bonanza. I have no doubt that some, at any rate, of these gentlemen may expect to find it an election bonanza in quite another sense. But, Sir, I say that this Bill, in every clause, every important feature, appears to me to have been so drawn as to offend every honest instinct, every wholesome prejudice, of every important class from one end of the Dominion to the other. I do not care whether you appeal to the farmer, the merchant, the trader, or to the judgment of the advanced political thinker, each and all will, from his own standpoint, find that there is enough, and more than enough, to induce him to condemn the agreement to the uttermost. We have land monopolies and railway monopolies, and, more, we have, to all intents and purposes, the control of four-fifths of the territory of the North-West handed over to a corporation which, if not directly hostile, has at any rate conflicting interests with ours. This is to be done with a country which, for geographical reasons, it would be extremely difficult for the people of Canada to retain in the Dominion if any serious disaffection should occur there. We have been asked to give a careful and attentive perusal to this remarkable document. Well, Sir, within the last few days I have done the best in my power to give it a careful perusal, and I have arisen from that perusal with the firm conviction that it would be