

and a very able speech in this House, upon the resolution for admitting British Columbia into the Union and constructing the Canadian Pacific Railway; and at that time, when he was more judge than politician, when his mind was judicial, when he had not become contaminated with the struggle for power or demoralised by it, he made a declaration as to the obligation which rested upon Canada and upon the statesmen and people of Canada by the arrangement with British Columbia. He said:

"The man who would vote for this proposition with the secret intention, not to sink the last dollar, if necessary, to fulfil the obligations thus contracted, was a dishonest man. If the obligation be now incurred, then we will be bound by the highest sense of honor to fulfil it at whatever sacrifice. If we were not prepared to do that, then we were not worthy to have national existence, and national existence would be not worth having. This was not a mere measure for the construction of a railway, which could be repealed at any time if necessary, but, if once passed, is irrevocable."

I had not the honor of a seat in Parliament at that time, but I well remember reading the hon. gentleman's speech and the principles laid down in the extract I have read, and thinking then, as I do now, that they correctly and fairly stated the obligation which rested upon the Government and the people of Canada, under the arrangement which was made with British Columbia to construct the Canadian Pacific Railway, I believe that the hon. gentleman was right when he said that the man who voted for that proposition, with the secret intention not to sink the last dollar, if necessary, to fulfil the obligation thus contracted, was a dishonest man, and that if the obligation was once incurred, as it was incurred, then the country would be bound by the highest sense of honor to fulfil it. Well, Sir, the Bill was passed, the obligation was incurred and the Dominion of Canada, its public men on both sides, whether they voted for or against it, were bound to fulfil that obligation which the hon. gentlemen then described. And moreover, as he very truly and ably said, the obligation was irrevocable, and was binding upon all political parties. Sir, with reference to a great national obligation of this kind, an obligation which is not merely a measure to build a railway, as the hon. gentleman says, the respective duties of the Government and the Opposition in one respect are precisely the same. The Administration, it is true, has to take the responsibility of proposing the ways and means by which to fulfil the great national obligation, but the leader and the members of the Opposition are bound, by the same obligation, to give assistance to those ways and means, unless they can show sufficient and tangible reasons to the contrary. They are certainly bound not to offer factious opposition. I look upon the obligation the hon. gentleman described in much the same light that I would look upon the obligation of the Opposition and their leader in the case of an invasion of the country by a foreign enemy, or in the case of a war like that in our North-West. If I am right, if the obligation and duties of the hon. gentleman who leads this Opposition, with respect to this railway, are analogous to his duties in the case of an invasion of Canada by a foreign enemy, what would be said of the political party or of its leader, that had advised a surrender to the enemy, that discouraged enlistment, that had extolled the bravery of the enemy, that had magnified the strength of the enemy, that had encouraged him by reports that we were starving, poor and without resources, unable to pay our debts, much less any future loan; who refused to assist, and, in every case, opposed everything the Government proposed? Sir, I undertake to say that in the case of an invasion by a foreign enemy the leader of an Opposition who would advise surrender, and who would give aid in every possible way to the enemy, would be called unpatriotic, and could not be said to be assisting in the fulfilment of an obligation to which the country was bound by the highest sense of honor. Sir, I undertake to say that the hon. member has advised a

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surrender to the enemy. He advised a surrender to the enemy in the matter of the Canadian Pacific Railway, by endeavoring, with all his power, with all his influence and eloquence, in the House, on the platform, in the press and in the country, to prevent the construction of anything that could be called a Canadian Pacific Railway. I undertake to say, and the experience of the last few months has proved it, that a railway which began in Chicago and ended at Calgary would not be a Canadian Pacific Railway. I undertake to say that the scheme which the hon. gentleman still owns—though somewhat timidly, more timidly this Session than ever before—which he still calls his policy, and which was to build the prairie section, leaving the ends unbuilt—I say that scheme was not a Canadian Pacific Railway. By advising that course, I contend he advised a surrender to the enemy. He has not only done all he could to prevent the fulfilment of an obligation to which, in his own language, he was bound by the highest sense of honor, but he has discouraged enlistment—to continue the analogy. And how? By depreciating the value of the lands in the North-West and along the line of railway, by saying that it is bad land, and that you could have got better land by going somewhere else, by depreciating the country generally, and the character of the railway, by exaggerating the cost, by minimising the business to be done, by exaggerating the operating expenses, by discouraging immigration, by encouraging emigration, by understating the amount of immigration and overstating the exodus—in all these particulars the hon. gentleman has discouraged enlistment. And, Sir, he has extolled the bravery of the enemy, he has magnified his strength, by praising the United States, by praising their lands, their climate, their land regulations, their railway facilities, their trade policy, their land policy—in every possible way giving the impression to intending immigrants that the States of the Union were preferable to our own North-West. He has encouraged the enemy further, by declaring that Canada is poor, that our people are discontented, that they are leaving the country; that taxation is enormous and burdensome; that our debt is enormous; that we are unable to borrow further; that our credit will be ruined, and that the obligations we were assuming were far beyond our capacity. Sir, I undertake to say, on my responsibility as a member of this House, that so far as I have been able to gather from his speeches on this subject, he has, in every possible way, hindered, and in no way assisted, the fulfilment of an obligation which he, in common with all other Canadians, was bound by the highest sense of honor to fulfil. Sir, it may be said that a parliamentary Opposition may, in time of war, fairly criticise the methods of defence adopted by the Administration; and that the leader of an Opposition has a right to criticise the means taken by the Administration to fulfil a national obligation to complete a Canadian Pacific Railway. I admit that; but it seems strange to me that the Government of the right hon. Premier, if it were as bad and incompetent as the hon. gentleman thinks, should by any chance have been always wrong. And yet, unless the leader of the Government has been always wrong with reference to this enterprise, then the leader of the Opposition has sometimes been guilty of factious opposition, because, Sir, without any exception that I have been able to discover, he has always opposed everything that has been proposed with reference to this railway, its construction or completion. He opposed the construction of a railway altogether; he has opposed it by depreciating the value of the land; by depreciating the value of the country; by exaggerating the cost of the road; by minimising the business that would be done; by exaggerating the operating expenses; by discouraging immigration and by encouraging emigration; by praising Dakota, Texas and Kansas, and by exaggerating the depression in trade. These are not honest criticisms of the means taken by the Administration; but these are per-