

than ours? We have been told that that section of country between North Bay and Fort William has cost at least \$60,000 a mile and in parts \$80,000 a mile. I think my hon. friend from Macdonald (Mr. Boyd) said that portions of that section had cost \$80,000 per mile. He proposes that we should acquire that line, and what does he propose that we should do with it. He does not propose that we should use it at once but that we should spend more money to improve it. Is that a proposition which will commend itself to any intelligent electors—that we should acquire that railway, and after acquiring it for heaven knows how much, we should at once put more money into it in order to make it acceptable? We know the character of that country. It is all rocky. Between Sudbury and Fort William it is granite. You would have to bore into that granite and spend perhaps \$50,000 and more per mile in order to make the road more acceptable. Is there any advantage in such a scheme over the one we proposed, namely, that we should build a road ourselves? My hon. friend did not give us any figures. In that he was very wise. He was judiciously vague and would not take any responsibility for any details. And I say that, in point of smallness of expenditure, it is impossible to show that this scheme would be superior to ours, while, in every other way it is inferior. It is inferior to our scheme, for instance, because the character of the country through which the road proposed by my hon. friend would run is so inferior to that of the country through which the road as proposed by us would run. On the north shore of Lake Superior you have nothing but bleak rock. It is impossible to raise even a potato or a turnip in that section of the country—it is nothing but rock and water and is absolutely barren; whereas, we have abundance of evidence to show that the proposed route for this road is through a fertile country with abundance of timber. But that is not all. My hon. friend has shown a great deal of concern as to the trade going to maritime province ports. He shed a tear the other day over the idea that, under our scheme, the trade would probably go to Portland. But that is only his hypothesis. That the trade under his scheme would go to Portland is not hypothesis, but certainty. The communication between the east and the west, under my hon. friend's scheme would be by the line between North Bay and Fort William. But when you get the traffic from the west to North Bay, you have only the existing roads, the Grand Trunk and the Canadian Pacific Railway. That being so, the traffic must go to Montreal in summer and to Portland in winter. By our scheme we have the intention and the possibility of bringing this trade to the maritime provinces—and we believe we have the certainty as well. These are some of the reasons which make the scheme of my hon. friend absolutely impracticable.

But I must say that my hon. friend deserves some gratitude at our hands, because he has paid the tribute of admiration—involuntarily I admit—to our scheme. I know that, in his speech, he condemned our scheme in toto. But, having condemned it in toto, he accepted it piecemeal. The hon. gentleman in speaking afforded a curious psychological study. It was a case of the contest of conscience with party exigencies. Party exigencies said: You must condemn the scheme. And he condemned it. But my hon. friend is a lawyer, and a good lawyer. He has had experience of course, with the recalcitrant witness, the witness who would swear a certain version of the facts which my hon. friend thought not in accordance with the probabilities of the case. And he would proceed to examine that witness. He would not take issue with him at once, would not contradict him flatly, but would proceed gently to get an admission upon a minor point, then another, and another, until he had a statement of the facts as he conceived them to have been. Such a struggle as that did conscience carry on, quite apparent to those who had the pleasure of listening to the hon. gentleman. The recalcitrant witness, party exigencies, gave a total condemnation of the scheme. But after this witness had proceeded, conscience spoke in the heart of my hon. friend—for I believe he is a man of conscience as well as a man of common sense—and conscience fortified by common sense spoke: You have condemned the whole scheme, but don't you think you have gone a little too far; don't you think there is some merit in the scheme? For instance, you have condemned absolutely the Moncton line. Don't you think the Moncton line is a necessity. Don't you think we must have another road between the maritime provinces and the west? That the trade of the country cannot be confined to a single line between the western prairies, Ontario, Quebec and the maritime provinces? And the unwilling witness answers: Yes, I admit that; I might build that—yes, I would build that road between Moncton and the west; but I would do it only as part of the Intercolonial. I might quote the remarks of my hon. friend to prove that I have not misunderstood what he said, but perhaps it would be better to pass on. Having secured this admission, conscience proceeded with the cross-examination. Well—said conscience—don't you think that, after all, this section of road in the northern part of Quebec and Ontario must be built some time and that it ought to be built? Yes, was the answer. I think that that line of railway ought to be built, but I would build it as a colonization road. Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not care very much whether it is built as a colonization road or as a through road provided it is built. Then conscience goes on: Surely that is not all; you must know that it is imperative at this moment that we should have another means of communication by rail between the