

## OPPOSITION M.P.'S SLOW TO PERCEIVE.

It should not be lost sight of, because it is very important, that the Opposition displayed great eagerness in the end to show their desire for the construction of another line from ocean to ocean. One after another of them got up and made motions and moved amendments, calling for the construction of another transcontinental railway. They made it clear in every possible way that they were not opposed to such a road, but they desire to express disapproval of particular features of the scheme. So conscious were they of the general public desire for the construction of such a road, that the leader of the Opposition brought down a scheme of his own, creating something which he called a transcontinental railway. He resented the statements made by the Minister of Finance, in the House of Commons, page 3575 of Hansard, 1904, where he is on record as saying:

The honorable gentleman speaks to me as having expressed an opinion against another transcontinental line. I am not aware of having expressed any such opinion.

But the Conservative leader did, at first, oppose another. On page 12623 of Hansard, 1903, he said:

I did not propose the immediate construction of another transcontinental line.

This makes it quite clear that the Conservatives eventually realized the extent of the public demand for the immediate construction of a new transcontinental railway. Mr. Borden's alternative scheme will be described later on. The members of the Opposition in the end confined themselves to criticising the details of the measure. The principle of it they openly agreed with. One of the details, and an important one, about which there was possibly the most discussion in Parliament, was the question of route, and even as to that, the Hon. John Haggart, Conservative ex-Minister of Railways and Canals, is of record in the House of Commons, Hansard, 1903, as saying that he approved of the northerly route between Winnipeg and Quebec outlined in the Government scheme. (p. 12680.) Now, these are the facts: that the Conservative leader agreed that there should be a new transcontinental railway; that his lieutenant, Mr. Haggart, agreed that the road outlined in the Government scheme was the proper one. The way the scheme should be financed was really the only other important question left, and we know the Opposition got so juggling with figures as to confuse the public mind. These three things—the road itself, the route, and the finances—being out of the way, there remained only a number of details, any one of which might, perhaps, have been different to what it was in the contract, and any one of which might have been made worse by a change.

## HON. A. G. BLAIR AND OTHERS.

In the parliamentary session of 1902, the Government's attention was sharply called, by western members, to the need of increased facilities for transportation. The motion for correspondence on the subject was made by Dr. Douglas, Liberal member for East Assiniboia. Although the matter was pressed upon the Government mostly by Liberal members from the west, there was agreement by the Conservative members as well. Mr. Boyd, Conservative member for Macdonald, called upon the Government to propound a policy that would go so far as to build another railway in the west, while Mr. Roche, Conservative member for Marquette, said: "Population is flowing into that country, and every year we are bound to require additional facilities, because our crops will be increased each year. To-day we find this condition of affairs: not only are the terminal elevators at the head of navigation full, but so is every elevator in Manitoba and the Northwest. Every elevator, floating warehouse, every place where grain can be stored, is full. And not only that, but we find at each little station, not only along the main line but along the branch lines, are piles of grain in bags standing out exposed to the weather for months past."