

## A QUARTER OF A MILLION SQUANDERED.

The Pacific Railway Act, section 12, provides that works in connection with the Railway "shall be let out by contracts offered to public competition," but in defiance of this, Mackenzie on May 11, 1875, sent Hugh Sutherland, the defeated Grit candidate of East Simcoe, up to commence the Fort Francis Lock as part of the Pacific Railway, *without contract, without estimates, without a proper plan*, without a report of a Pacific Railway engineer recommending it, *but in the face of a report from Mr. Mortimer in which he distinctly condemns it*, saying, "I think the lake facilities at the Shebandowan end, even "improved, would hardly justify the expense of putting in "locks!" (Pacific Railway Report 1877, p. 212.) Every elector should read the record of this stupendous folly given in Sessional Paper 88, 1877, and the report of evidence before Senate Committee, and he will stand amazed at the reckless blundering of the Premier! Sutherland was sent up without plans or estimates; on 24th July, over two months after he has gone up, Mr. Hazlewood, engineer, is instructed to go up "with all possible despatch," and ascertain "*whether or no the labors of Mr. Sutherland are in the right direction!*" August 2nd, months after the work has been commenced, the plans are only in preparation! In the fall of 1876, a year and a half after the work has been going on, G. F. Baillairge, another engineer, is sent up, and from his report of Dec. 26, 1876, it appears that although the lock is being constructed 7 feet deep, the navigation below only averages from 5 to 7 feet, and above is only  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet! In the spring of 1877, Sutherland got orders to reduce depth to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet, but he was already a foot lower, and he had to make it  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ! (Evidence p. 25.) The wildness of the Premier's undertaking can be imagined when it is understood that he proposed to carry freight to Manitoba by a short piece of railway from Thunder Bay, then through these "water stretches" *over nine portages*, (where it would have to be handled twice at each,) and then another short railway at Selkirk; and that Fort Frances Lock *only overcomes one of these portages!* Shortly after the Lock was commenced, the Premier changed the line of railway to run about *ninety or a hundred miles north of Fort Frances*, which renders the utilization of the water stretches practically impossible! (See evidence of Capt. Dick and others.) The lock will cost at least a quarter of a million, and is on the Rainy River, *the boundary between Canada and the States*. If improvements are needed, Americans should do their share, but our "practi-

31 Day

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