

Bill now before the House. The discussion has been conducted most ably on both sides of the House; and while I think the hon. gentlemen who have presented their case from the Government point of view have had the advantage, I am not so illiberal as to imitate the example of the hon. member for Lambton, by saying that I can see no merit, no argument, or no virtue, in anything that was said on the other side of the House upon this question. The subject has also been very fully discussed in the country. During the recess we had nothing else to talk about except this Pacific Railway measure, and the people have considered it fully, and I am satisfied that although there was some reluctance on the part of the Government at the time to grant an intermission, that the longer that intermission was, and the more the question has been discussed in the House and before the country, the stronger does the Government stand in the hearts of the people with reference to it. Now, Sir, it cannot be said that this is a new question. It cannot be said that it was sprung upon the country, when the papers were laid on the Table of the House on the 10th of December last, because we all know that since the days of Confederation the question of a great national trans-continental railway has been a matter that has been considered and thought about by all statesmen. It was considered then that Confederation would not be an accomplished fact until all British North America was united and in one Dominion. It was known then that in order to keep that Confederation intact, the Atlantic Ocean must be bound to the Pacific Ocean by an unbroken chain of railway on Canadian soil. This was the aspiration of all statesmen of that day, both Liberal and Conservative, and there has not been a Government from that time until the present that has not had its Canadian Pacific Railway policy. I do not intend to take up the time of the House by showing how the patriotic efforts of the right hon. gentleman who now leads the Government, were frustrated when he brought down his first great scheme for the purpose of carrying out this idea. But, Sir, I will say that when the history of this country comes to be written by an impartial hand, and by one who will have naught of party hatred, but who will aspire to be an honest historian, I venture to say that there will appear amongst the names of those arch tricksters, who so successfully carried out their fell purposes, the name of one who has not yet had his fair share of the ignominy, which has so far been placed upon those who took no less the desperate part, but who played the character with less disguise. When it was first announced last autumn that a bargain was likely to be made by the Government with a Syndicate, it was received with the greatest satisfaction by all parties. Men felt as if they were relieved of a burden which might some day or other crush them. They felt further that if that road, after it was constructed, could be worked and carried on without the assistance of Government, a great boon would be granted to this country. I am satisfied that is the opinion of the people at large still. If it were not for the party exigencies that are now prevailing, that would be the all but unanimous opinion of the people of this country. Now, Sir, we know that almost as soon as the contract could be read after it was placed upon the Table, the members of the Opposition began to find fault with it and endeavored to pull it to pieces. The first thing we heard was that after a caucus was held, a manifesto was to be issued to the whole people that would carry consternation into the ranks of the Conservative party, and that it was to be the banner under which the hon. gentlemen opposite were to march gloriously to power. The country waited with bated breath. The people knew the mountain was in labor and expected that something would be brought forth. But what was it? I hold in my hand what certainly cannot be called anything of more importance than a mouse. I hold a document which instead

of being a great manifesto to the people of this country has dwindled down to the insignificance of a memorandum, a poor bantling that has no father. It was supposed this great manifesto would be signed and sealed by the leaders of that great party. It was to be their confession of faith on this question. But when it was produced it had no known father, it was not even signed by a Reform member of the House of Commons, but simply was said to be by a member of the House of Commons. I can understand why those hon. gentlemen did not wish to reveal the authorship of this document. I felt when I saw it that they would probably be ashamed of it in a short time, and that they wished to be in a position, on some future day, to say: "Why, there is no evidence that it came from the Reform side of the House. It is from a member of the House of Commons. It is some wretched Tory who has produced this document." I do not think I was very far wrong when we consider the policy those hon. gentlemen pursued in 1873 by stealing letters, and doing other disreputable things that ought hardly to be mentioned under the light of the sun. They were not satisfied to issue this document as coming from themselves, but in order to give it an air of respectability they palmed it off upon the people as coming from a member of this side of the House. I hold in my hand a copy on which is printed at the top: "With Thomas Robertson's compliments." It is unnecessary for me to say that I had nothing to do with its production. It is a well-known fact that there is another hon. gentleman in this House whose name is "Thomas Robertson." I have no fault to find with that hon. gentleman issuing that document under his auspices and under his name, if he would only give it a distinctive mark and not be ashamed to say that he came from Shelburne. What I do complain of is that it has been sent to numbers of my constituents. Hon. gentlemen no doubt considered it a joke; but when I tell him that the crime of forgery was committed in sending it, they may consider the matter more serious. I have in my hand two of the wrappers which were sent to the city of Hamilton—and I suppose I could have obtained a dozen—and I find that my initials are forged on the wrappers. I merely mention this circumstance to show that hon. gentlemen opposite are only pursuing that contemptible and ungentlemanly practice they indulged in in 1872 and 1873. These documents were addressed to political friends of mine in the city of Hamilton, and the wrappers are franked with the initials "T. R., M.P." Now, there is no other gentleman in this House except my hon. friend from Shelburne who has these initials, and that hon. gentleman has declared to me that he knew nothing of the matter, and that the writing was not his. I therefore acquit him of the act, but some hon. gentleman on that side of the House, I have no doubt, committed the forgery and is responsible for it. It is not extraordinary that these hon. gentlemen smile at and glory in this matter, it is quite in accord with this mode of party warfare. They were never guilty of a statesmanlike act in their lives, as the country well knows and has punished them for; but this business is of a piece with their pernicious acts. It is a great misfortune that this country is placed in a position so unlike that of any other country, because I believe every country under the sun can boast of her children being patriots; but I deny that that spirit is to be found in the hearts of hon. gentlemen opposite. Anything for them so long as they get place and power, and after they do get it they have not the capacity to govern the country as statesmen should govern it. They derided the National Policy, and told us it was going to ruin the country, and they have been doing everything they could to make the people believe that. They have not succeeded, but unfortunately their papers, their speeches and their vile insinuations are carried across the Atlantic, and gentlemen of capital and enterprise who would have come here