

Under the returns which have been brought down to the House, we remain in blessed ignorance of what is doing, or even what is expected to be done, by the company on that very important section of the road running from Callander station to Port Moody. The returns brought down contain a number of details, which, I suppose, are accurate in a sense, but they do not show in the least what is the amount of traffic, what is the condition of the road along the 2,400 or 2,500 miles which form the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. I do not think the House could be asked to pronounce on that important question in more utter and sublime ignorance of the traffic and condition of the 2,400 miles than we are in. We have obtained some information as to what are the receipts and expenditures over the Canadian Pacific Railway system, covering the Ontario and Quebec lines, the lines they have acquired from the Province of Quebec and the lines in western Ontario; but as to the present condition, the present prospects of the main line, we positively know nothing—at all events, we know nothing on this side of the House; the Government may be better informed. We were told, when the railway was in process of construction, that one reason for giving those extraordinary bonuses was that it was going to be a very difficult thing, and a very costly thing to work the main line; and as the House, I hope, will meet within seven or eight months, in January, or at least in February next, it will be utterly impossible for the Government to have had the experience of even a single year's working of the whole line of the railway. I must say that I think, before we are asked to consider the present proposal, the Government should place us in the position, or cause the company to place us in the position, of having fuller details about the main line of railway than we now possess. I do not know whether the Government have them, but certainly the House is not in possession of any of those details.

Mr. McLELAN. I gave the House an estimate that had been prepared by the engineers of the cost of completing the line on the central and eastern sections. I have not obtained full figures respecting the working of the road upon each particular section. The company and the Government thought it desirable that in the public interest there should be at as early a date as possible a final settlement, or, as the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake) called it, a final finality, between Parliament and the company; and we concluded to ask Parliament to give us power that, when the road shall have been completed and in good running order, and we are satisfied that it will be continued to be operated, we shall have power, without coming to Parliament, without raising a Canadian Pacific Railway discussion in the House, to release those bonds. It will, no doubt, be desirable in the interests of the company to do so to enable them to raise money upon the land that remains to them. They represent that with that extent of road on their hands and in order to complete the connections, it will be desirable, in their interest and in the interest of the country, that they should be able to raise a considerable amount of money. On all railways when contracts are considered to be completed and the road to be in perfect running order, there are always additions to be made and additional amounts expended on capital account. There is hardly a road on this continent but where there is a continual increase of capital account for the purpose of extending and improving the road, the rolling stock and connections, and the Canadian Pacific Railway will, no doubt, desire, indeed they will be compelled, in order to keep up with the progress of the railways of the continent, to raise a very large amount to complete the connections and continue the road in perfect order. It will be desirable for them as well as for the country that the company should have the means of raising

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

money upon the lands on the best terms. After the road has been completed, after it is in perfect running order, to the entire satisfaction of the public and the Government, it is desirable at the earliest possible day that the company should be released as regards those bonds, because so long as they remain on the road after it is in perfect running order and satisfactory to the public, they will be considered by capitalists and investors as showing that there is still a dread on the part of the Government that the whole thing may collapse and break down. If it is possible to obtain some figures before the final stage, I will submit them; I have not got them at present.

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman seems to think that it is bad policy now to retain the security which it was good policy to obtain originally. A great deal was said when the contract was made of the circumstance that the Government was going to have good security for the road being completed and operated. The hon. gentleman's statement now is that as soon as the Government are satisfied that the road is in running order the security should be released.

Mr. McLELAN. And that it will continue.

Mr. BLAKE. How are we going to be satisfied that it is to be continued? Is it to be by the result of one year's traffic? I do not believe the hon. gentleman is going to wait for the year's traffic. He says it might be better for the company and the country too, to place the question of releasing the security in the hands of the Government, in order to prevent another Canadian Pacific Railway discussion in Parliament. I call the attention of hon. gentlemen to one of the motives which the Minister offers as a reason for this action—that it would be better to prevent another Canadian Pacific Railway discussion in Parliament, which would be necessary if the question had to be decided by Parliament—and so, in order to prevent Parliament from discharging its duty and coming to the conclusion upon that which at present belongs to it, that it is better that Parliament should abdicate its functions and place them in the hands of the Government, where the Canadian Pacific Railway discussion will take place between the thirteen or fourteen gentlemen representing the Government—not in open day, not with the benefit of publicity, but in secret conclave, and under the sanction of an oath as to the silence and secrecy which is to prevail in those deliberations. That is the alternative which the hon. gentleman presents to Parliament as superior to the exercise by them of their proper functions. Now, there should be no inconvenience to a Canadian Pacific Railway discussion on this question in Parliament, if it were not that the hon. gentleman thought it was possible that the Government might propose to deal with the power which is to be handed to it, on grounds which would not be agreeable to Parliament or to the public. Then the hon. gentleman says it is well to do it at once. It is well to do it as soon as possible, after the road is thoroughly completed, after the road is throughout equipped and opened—as soon as we are satisfied that they are going to continue. Now, when we made the contract we said: We are going to assure the continuance of the operation of this road, so far as security goes, by taking a security of \$5,000,000. Now the hon. gentleman says, in effect, I propose to alter that—to abandon that proposition. Well, this is not a novel view on the part of the company. They took this view, and presented it to the hon. gentleman, somewhat in the terms he has used to-day, two or three years ago. In their statement they told him it was damaging to the prospects of the company, that the country should continue to retain the security for the operation which the country had stipulated for, and they asked the Government to agree that the security should be surren-