

year, we have less right to make allowances now, because, in the meantime, they have had the opportunity of learning a good deal about the matter. My hon. friend from Cumberland (Mr. Logan) last year took a good deal of pains to collect testimony as to the long-standing public opinion in the maritime provinces with regard to that road, and I may have occasion to allude to part of that evidence before I conclude. I say we can make allowances for the hon. gentlemen from Ontario and the west so far as last year was concerned, but not so much this year. But I confess that I have great difficulty in making allowance for my hon. friends opposite who come from the eastern provinces. They ought to have known better; and, unless they are very much less intelligent than I take them to be—for I know that they are intelligent, able, capable men—I am bound to believe that they do know better. But when they sit quietly in their places and allow hon. gentlemen on their own side to create the impression that this road from Quebec to Moncton is an unheard of enterprise, a thing which nobody wanted and nobody believed in, then, they do not do justice to their own part of the Dominion. Why, Sir, for very many years, as far back at least as 1889, we have had an agitation in the lower provinces for the construction of a short line or railway from Quebec to Moncton. Yet, the hon. gentlemen opposite would talk as if it were something that nobody had ever heard of, a wild scheme which recently entered into the imagination of some crazy persons. Down the maritime provinces, the newspapers, the boards of trade and all the ordinary avenues through which we receive expressions of public opinion have over and over again called attention to the desirability of this road. But my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) seems to think that it is a bad scheme, that there is no good in it whatever. I notice that in the earlier stages of this discussion he was willing to do something in the west. He was willing to build over the prairies, to build in some shape across to the Pacific; but, when it came to this section, Quebec to Moncton, all he would agree to do would be to give a gracious consent to inquire into the question whether there was any merit in the scheme. And, in the omnibus amendment he moved some time ago there was no reference to the Moncton road. I think that is a very strange proceeding on the part of my hon. friend. He was ready to build through the west, through the mountains—anywhere but in the maritime provinces. I do not think that is a fair position for him to take. I do not think he should allow his friends from Ontario to drive him into such a position.

OPPOSITION LEADER CALLED TO ACCOUNT.

My hon. friend said that he would be good enough to kindly enquire—I do not know when, but some time in the distant and uncertain future, after he has built over the prairie and through the rockies—he would take time to inquire whether there was any merit in the Moncton scheme. And, if he could make up his mind that we were to build the Moncton section, it must be as part of the Intercolonial Railway.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Hear, hear.

Mr. FIELDING. The hon. gentlemen (Mr. R. L. Borden) says 'hear, hear.' I dissent from that plan emphatically. In the name of the people of the maritime provinces, as far as I know their opinion, and so far as I have the right to say anything for them, I say we do not want the Moncton road as a part of the Intercolonial. I tell the hon. gentleman that, as part of the Intercolonial, it would be a local road and only a local road. I tell him we want to have that Moncton extension in the hands of a great company which controls the traffic of the far west and can bring that traffic down to the sea. I tell my hon. friend that a mere connection between two railways running into the same station does not create a command of traffic. We extended the Intercolonial from Levis to Montreal, and in that we did a good thing. It was a good scheme on its merits to extend the road to the great commercial centre of Canada; and I believe that, irrespective of anything which may happen with regard to through traffic it is a good thing. But those gentlemen, if there were any, who expected that this would exert a great influence in obtaining control of traffic from the west must be disappointed. It has not been the means of obtaining control of traffic from the west, and it cannot be. Does the hon. gentleman imagine that if the Canadian Pacific