

M. P. Davis evidently thought that time lost was doubly gained so he held these contracts for a year. (Reading):

It is not of to-morrow, but of this day, of this hour, of this minute—Heaven grant that it is not too late.

And no man echoed that sentiment more fervently than Mr. M. P. Davis, when he got his \$750,000 for nothing.

But that is not all. In the same debate Sir Wilfrid said:

It has been stated and restated in all possible tones from the faintest wail to the indignant protest, that we are launching into railway construction of gigantic magnitude through a country of which we know absolutely nothing and without taking the usual elementary precautions of having a previous exploration. I say again there is not a shadow of truth in this charge as I shall show later on.

But I have to say this more, that we have a wealth of information on the subject; we have more information on this scheme than ever was possessed by former governments when they decided upon the Intercolonial or the Canadian Pacific railway.

But I shall be asked what about the Rocky mountains? My answer in regard to the Rocky mountains is: that we have mountains of information, we have mountains of books, pamphlets and reports from traders, from explorers and from engineers.

Any one who to-day would care to look into the reports now accumulated in the Archives or the Railway Department will know that country just as well as he will know his own home.

That is what Sir Wilfrid said. But what did Mr. Blair say? Mr. Blair, the man who was at the head of the department, the man who knew what he was talking about; Mr. Blair the man who was not consulted when this contract was entered into or when the Government was committed to it, because he did know what he was talking about; Mr. Blair who resigned from the Government because he would not commit himself to this foolish expenditure without the necessary information. And what did Mr. Blair say?

He was not in favour of impetuously rushing into the construction of the Transcontinental railway above Quebec through an unknown country to Winnipeg and the West until we knew something about it, until we had the fullest possible information about it.

So that we have the late Government representing themselves in this position: We know all about that railway, we know all about that country, we know it as well as we know our own homes; we have had engineers out there, we have taken the necessary borings, we know the kind of material; whether rock, hard pan, clay or common excavation; we know all about it, we have mountains of information, and we tell you, knowing that, that this railway

[Mr. Middlebro.]

will cost, according to the usual subsidy requirements, with a grade of one per cent and a curvature of not more than ten per cent, \$49,132,000.

But, said Mr. John Charlton, when we are going to build a Transcontinental railway that kind of a railway will not do. It is all right enough on the ordinary subsidized railway to require grades of one per cent and a curvature not exceeding ten per cent, but we want a first-class railway, we want a railway with a grade of .04 per cent and 4 per cent maximum curves. That is the kind of railway Mr. Charlton speaking in this House said he wanted, and that is the kind of railway that the then Minister of Finance, after revising his estimate and adding twenty-five per cent, said he would give the people. What did Mr. Fielding say?

I propose to add 25 per cent to my first estimate of the cost of construction of the eastern division, and to add 25 per cent to the present value of seven years' interest on that portion of the road. This is equivalent to an advance on the cost of \$21,000 to \$31,000 a mile on one part and from \$25,000 to \$35,000 for another part. That is a pretty liberal estimate and ought to build the kind of road called for by the hon. member for Norfolk.

Referring to the late Mr. John Charlton. That was a road with a .04 per cent grade and a four per cent curvature. So we were there informed by the late Government that that was intended by them, and in the same year, after the Amending Act of 1904 was passed we find that the instructions given to the engineers bear out this idea. The report of Mr. Lumsden, June 30, 1905, is contained in the report of the Railway Commission for the year before, that is from June, 1904, to June, 1905. The instructions therein were as follows:

District engineers were furnished with printed instructions for their guidance and for that of the engineers in charge of parties under them, giving full particulars as to their various duties. They were also instructed to adhere to grades not exceeding 0.4 per cent adverse eastbound or 0.5 per cent adverse westbound although in regard to the last mentioned it was changed to 6 per cent in one or two exceptional cases, the maximum curvature being limited to 4 degrees.

I point that out for this purpose. The hon. member for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham) devoted eighteen columns of 'Hansard' for the purpose of proving that they had a .04 per cent gradient and a four per cent curvature on the National Transcontinental railway and therefore his assumption was that it cost more than it would have otherwise cost; when, as a matter of fact, we were promised in the