

from the beginning of that report to the end it clearly appears that they were unable to substantiate a single charge of dishonest or improper conduct on the part of the National Transcontinental Railway Commission. Although that Commission of Inquiry cost a great deal of money, I think the money was well spent; because it showed that one great public work at any rate, had been constructed in Canada without any graft or improper conduct. The hon. gentleman should have stopped to think a little before he made that attack on the National Transcontinental Railway Commission. If the hon. gentleman can point to any undertaking—not one as great as the National Transcontinental railway—but any undertaking of that character at all, which has been conducted under Conservative auspices, about which a commission of inquiry could not find something improper, then I am quite prepared to accept his view.

Hon. Mr. GORDON—I was under the impression that the gentleman who represents the constituency with the unpronounceable name, having taken over a week to prepare his speech on this subject, was going to give us a reason why the railway from Cochrane to Quebec should have been operated this season. That was the question I thought he was going to answer to-day. He has not given us any facts or figures to prove that the railway should have been operated this winter, other than to say that we have there a road which he considers to be the best in the world, a railway some 200 miles shorter between Winnipeg and Quebec than the Canadian Pacific railway. For these two reasons it is a railway which could be operated by a company to pay handsome dividends even this winter, because if the facts are as he stated then the railway in question would take all the trade which the Canadian Pacific railway has obtained this winter between the coast and Quebec. I venture to say—and I say it without fear of being contradicted by any gentleman who knows anything about railway operations in this House, or any gentleman from the West—that if that railroad were being operated to-day it would not pay for the coal which it would use. Imagine a train leaving Winnipeg to-day and going down to Quebec, on a line where there is not one single solitary feeder, except at Port Arthur over the Superior road—and even that would be a branch from which they could not expect

to receive any freight. It has but that one feeder—and it should not be considered a feeder—and the Timiskaming and Northern Ontario railway which also cannot be considered a feeder for anything going east. I am sure, if hon. gentlemen think over the situation, after the explanation which my hon. friend has given us with regard to the character of the country through which the road runs, they will agree with me. He informed us candidly, I think, that between Amos and as far as he went on the road—Bell river?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—Bell river.

Hon. Mr. GORDON—There were only a few hundred settlers, and that being the case it is easy for any person to see that there would be practically no local trade whatever. One of the things he said with regard to the pulp wood, which he thought should have been transported this winter by this railway, was this: that the railway would transport that pulp wood to the St. Maurice, and then it would be floated down that stream. I have too much respect for my hon. friend as a business man to think he is sincere in putting that proposition forward, because he knows, even better than I do, that there are millions of cords of pulp wood on the St. Maurice yet, and he knows, even better than I do, that to-day the only business which can stand up is the business which can be done at a profit. No person is going to buy that pulp wood, no person is going to try to take out pulp wood, out of which a living profit cannot be made for the man who is taking it out. Therefore that dissipates his argument with regard to that.

Hon. Mr. DAVID—Did the hon. senator for Lauzon (Hon. Mr. Bolduc) not say in his great speech that the Government was to operate the road? How does the hon. gentleman from Nipissing (Hon. Mr. Gordon) reconcile what he says with what the hon. gentleman from Lauzon said?

Hon. Mr. GORDON—I heard what the hon. gentleman said as well as my hon. friend heard it, and that is all I know about it. I do not know whether the Government intend to operate it or whether they do not, but I would like to ask my hon. friend this question: if by operating this road all the trade could be taken away from the Canadian Pacific railway, and money could be made out of the operation of it, why have the Grand Trunk railway not taken over