

that want of courage, that cravenness of spirit, which shrank from committing the people of Canada with three and a-half millions of people to undertaking within ten years to build this work, a work from which France or Austria would have shrunk, as I judge from the hon. gentleman's statement, that calculating spirit which induced us to come to the conclusion that it was impossible to realise the policy of hon. gentlemen of building it without an increase of taxation—whatever justification or palliation there might have been for those errors of judgment which the Secretary of State thinks we committed in 1872, but of which we are not at all ashamed to-day, and which we are quite prepared to reiterate to-day, and at all times, to which we point as proofs of our prescience and judgment, and as indicating our superiority in those ingredients of statesmanship to hon. gentlemen opposite—whatever palliation there might have been for errors of judgment and cravenness of spirit in 1872, there was none for our course in 1876, 1877 and 1878. In those years there was a confession of folly and incapacity, said the hon. gentleman. The hon. member for East York (Mr. Mackenzie), at the very commencement of his Administration, having come back to this House with a victory at the polls, upon a Canadian Pacific Railway policy which he had submitted to the people, which he had submitted in his speeches and Address, and in regard to which he had received the endorsement of the people, proposed his Canadian Pacific Railway Act. In that Act he proposed a re-enactment of the resolution and preamble of the former Bill, and repeated the declaration in these terms. I translate from the French :

"Considering that by the legislation of the present Session, with a view to fulfil the obligations of the Dominion, the Customs taxation has been raised to a figure much higher than that which existed at the period of the said resolution, and considering it is fitting to take measures for the execution of the said work as rapidly as it can be accomplished, without further raising the Customs taxation, etc."

His proposal then was to adhere to the view that the rate of taxation should not be raised, at all events, beyond the figure to which it had been raised by existing legislation, and that the road should be built after that fashion. An hon. member near, reminds me that the House was unanimous in sustaining those propositions. Then we were not wrong in 1874. I go further, namely, to the years of which the hon. gentleman has spoken. The hon. gentleman said—I took it down—that there was no room for doubt in 1876; and then he said, there was a confession of folly and incapacity because my hon. friend did not grapple with the work and did not do a great deal more than he did do, or propose a great deal more than he did propose. Sir, on the 7th April, 1876, the year in which the hon. gentleman says we demonstrated our incapacity to grapple with this subject, a motion was made to annex to the vote for the expenses of the Canadian Pacific Railway for the year these words :

"While granting this sum, this House desires to record its view that the arrangements for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway should be such as the resources of the country will permit, without increasing the existing rates of taxation."

So we find that once again, after all the negotiations which had taken place with British Columbia, after the discussions about the failure of the Carnarvon terms, when the question came clearly before Parliament, Parliament was called upon to decide whether they would adhere to the view that the arrangements, whatever they were, were to be limited by this condition, as to taxation, and Parliament did adhere to that view. It adhered to it, Sir, not by the ordinary party majority of my hon. friend from East York (Mr. Mackenzie)—he had 149 votes for that proposal. There were but ten who voted against it, and amongst those who voted for it, I will read a few names, for the edification of the Secretary of State, to whom this appears to be not merely ancient history, but history so ancient that he has but very obscurely learned it. Here are some of the names: Baby, shortly afterwards a member of

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the Government of the hon. gentleman, and since elevated to the bench; Costigan, shortly afterwards a member of the Government, and who with a slight interval of twenty-four hours, has ever since, continued a member of the Government and still graces the Cabinet by his presence; Desjardins—a well known and prominent supporter of hon. gentlemen opposite; Kirkpatrick—now Speaker of this House; Langevin—shortly afterwards and still a Minister; Masson—shortly afterwards a Minister, and now Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec; Mousseau—shortly afterwards a Minister, and now a judge—they seem to go up, these Ministers from Quebec; Ouimet—a firm and persistent supporter of hon. gentlemen, whether in or out of No. 8; Plumb, an ardent supporter of hon. gentlemen—rejected by the people, and elevated to the Senate; Robitaille—formerly a member of the Administration, and upon their regaining power, resuming his seat as a member of the Administration, and who having fitted, as so many of these Lower Canadian Ministers have done, became Lieutenant-Governor, and is now a member of the Senate; Rouleau—promoted to the Table. I will not go further, but I say, for the benefit of the hon. gentleman's colleague, the acting Minister of Railways, that he was amongst the ten who voted against the resolution.

Mr. McCALLUM. You raised the taxes afterwards; you did not carry that out.

Mr. BLAKE. The duties were raised, I think, to 17½ per cent. before that.

M. LANDERKIN. Two years.

Mr. BLAKE. At least a year before that time. We made no obligation that the duties should not be raised for any purpose; the resolution of the House of Commons was that the arrangements for the Canadian Pacific Railway should be such as that they should not interfere with the existing rates of taxation. Now, Sir, I think you will see that in the year 1876 there was a tolerably unanimous opinion in Parliament, and, at any rate, I hardly think that the successor of these many distinguished gentlemen from Quebec, who comes late from his Province, to fill the place of the worthy men who have gone up higher—I do not think that he is very well entitled to declare that the policy of my hon. friend from East York was a policy of confessed failure and incapacity, in the face of that resolution, assented to by all these gentlemen, which was its governing feature. He wanted, Sir, honestly to abide by the terms which hon. gentlemen opposite had professed to the country they would comply with, and he was determined to adhere to those terms, so far as he could. Then the Secretary of State, dealing with this ancient history still further, and, as it seemed to me, rather gleaning some of his information at second hand—in short, if I must say it, a good deal of what he gave us reminded me of some articles I formerly read in *La Minerve*—gleaning a good deal of this information at second hand, criticised severely the policy of my hon. friend from East York in building the railway from Fort William to Winnipeg, and not proceeding at that time with the construction of the line on the north shore of Lake Superior; and he also criticised our action in not proceeding vigorously in British Columbia. Why, Sir, I can point to another resolution during the time of my hon. friend's Premiership, moved by Mr. De Cosmos, formerly a member of this House, pressing for the construction in British Columbia, which was opposed, not merely by the vote, but by the speeches of hon. gentlemen opposite, including the present First Minister, who thought that it was premature, that it was unreasonable pressure, that the circumstances had changed, and that construction was not to be hurried in that way. And with reference to the north shore of Lake Superior, I can point to the fact that when these gentlemen resumed office and propounded the Cana-