

that the hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Mackenzie) had not had time to go over the ground. Had the hon. gentleman, with his practical knowledge and his acquaintance with railway matters, had an opportunity of going through the country, I believe the result would have been very different; we would have had a much shorter line between Thunder Bay and Winnipeg, but unfortunately the thing has been done and it cannot now be helped. The hon. member for Lambton, in speaking of Nepigon and Thunder Bay, said he moved the terminus to Thunder Bay because he thought it was a better and more convenient place and possessed more advantages. The hon. gentleman is perfectly right. Nepigon Bay remains frozen for a very long period in spring, while Thunder Bay opens early. I will not now refer to the question of the Kaministiquia or Prince Arthur's Landing as harbors, as that matter has been very much discussed before. All I can say is that if the line as originally laid down and contemplated to Sturgeon Falls had been followed, taking advantage of the water navigation between that place and the Lake of the Woods in the meantime, 20,000 people who have gone to Minnesota would have now been in Manitoba. The line would have been open much earlier, and it would have been possible to pass through immigrants, and we would not have lost the immense number of valuable settlers who, because they were compelled to pass through Minnesota and saw beautiful and fertile land in that State, were attracted to settle there. There is one very remarkable circumstance in connection with all these old surveys and explorations, and that is, that the practical men who now control the Pacific Railway have not adopted one single yard of these expensive lines, but have laid out lines for themselves which are very much better than those formerly selected. In regard to the change of the location of the Pacific Railway from Callander Station westward, I think it is a very important thing for that portion of the country which I have the honor to represent that the Company have decided to keep near the shores of Lake Huron and Lake Superior. For 600 miles the line will pass within easy distance of the shore, and the result will be that every river valley along that immense distance will be opened up for settlement. It has long been believed that this great region, bordering on the great lakes, known as Algoma, was barren and rocky and unfit for settlement; but recent events have shown that this is not the case. The fact is, there are very large areas in Algoma which are fit for settlement, and they are being rapidly occupied. The Census of 1871 showed a population of 7,018 in the whole district, more than half of whom were Indians, while the last Census has shown a population of close on 21,000 in Algoma proper—I mean Algoma south of the height of land. That is a very large increase in ten years, but I believe it is only the beginning of what we shall see in the future. With this railway passing along the coast and opening up every river valley, the large areas of agricultural land and the minerals which abound in that extensive district, including iron, copper, silver, lead, and I believe gold, will all be developed. The progress of settlement has been very much retarded of late for the want of roads. I received a number of petitions this winter from the people on the Island of Manitoulin, complaining that the mails were delayed and very irregular. These I sent in to the Government. But how is it possible to have the mail matter of 12,000 people, amounting to over half a ton a week, delivered regularly when there are no roads, not even between Parry Sound and the shore opposite Manitoulin Island, and the mails have to be carried on men's backs or in dog sleighs, as they used to be years ago. This difficulty, however, will be overcome by this railway, and we shall soon see that this very much abused district of Algoma is fitted to support a very large population. I remember six or seven years ago reading an article in a prominent news-

paper published in Toronto which called attention to the fact that wheat had actually been grown on the north coast of Lake Huron. Why, there is not a better country in the world for wheat growing than the north coast of Lake Huron; the climate is quite as good or a great deal better than the climate of the North-West Territories, where population is now pouring in. I merely mention this to show that this change of route of the Pacific Railway, the cost of which will be borne by the lands of the North-West and will not be a burden on Ontario, will have the result of opening up that magnificent country for settlement.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, it is with reluctance that I rise to prolong the present debate. Had the hon. Minister of Railways chosen to confine himself, as he very well might, and I think wisely had done at this stage of the Session, to an explanation of his policy and his proceedings with respect to the Canadian Pacific Railway, but a short discussion need have taken place; but that hon. gentleman, for reasons best known to himself, chose to incorporate with his statement a series of attacks upon a very considerable number of the Opposition, and among others he chose to draw attention to certain statements made by me in my capacity of Finance Minister in former years, and also to draw attention to a motion which I had the honor to put in your hands about a year ago. Sir, the whole object of that hon. gentleman was clear enough; he wanted, by a series of misrepresentations—the public having probably forgotten to a very great extent the circumstances of our connection with the Pacific Railway, and fortunately for that hon. gentleman and his colleagues, having also apparently forgotten some of the circumstances of their early connection with the Pacific Railway—his desire was, I say, to misrepresent our action with respect to that great work to the utmost of his power. Now, Sir, as my hon. friend beside me (Mr. Blake) and my hon. friend from Lambton have most truly said, there is no party, there never was a party, in this country who have more right to say than the Reform party of Canada, that for generations back, long before that hon. gentleman knew anything or was in any way connected with the politics of the country, it was the object and the earnest desire not merely of the leaders, but of the whole Liberal party, to obtain the control of that great region and throw it open to settlement. For many years the Reform party had seen with great regret that numbers of the people were seeking homes in the United States; and of all men, living or dead, no man deserves the thanks of the country, more than the late Hon. George Brown for the steady and persistent energy and eloquence with which he, not merely through the great organ of public opinion he controlled, but by word of mouth, and in his place, both inside and out of this House, directed continually the attention of men of all ranks and classes in Canada to the value of that prairie region and of the extreme desirability of obtaining it. And if I were to believe the hon. member for Halton (Mr. McDougall)—whom I do not see in his place—it was with the greatest difficulty, he says, that he succeeded in spurring up his negligent colleagues to take any steps for acquiring that property. Why, to quote from memory from that valuable tract which the hon. gentleman on his return from the North-West composed, but which is not, unfortunately, as easy of access as I could wish, I think his words were these: That on the day when the Government of Canada consummated the folly, he called it, of throwing eight millions of dollars into the sea in connection with the Intercolonial Railway, he moved a resolution in the Council binding the Government to make or take the necessary steps for securing the North-West Territory. And after, at the instigation of that gentleman, as he states, the Government were stirred up to take those steps, and had succeeded in obtaining the cession, so far as the Hudson's Bay Company could give it,