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#### FORT FRANCES LOCK.

##### MOTION FOR RETURN.

MR. PLUMB, in moving for copies of all correspondence, papers, vouchers, and reports, connected with the construction of Fort Frances Lock, said: In moving the Resolution which I am about to submit to the consideration of the House, I beg leave to remark that, when the hon. leader of the late Government propounded his Pacific Railway policy, he undertook to utilise the famous water stretches between Fort William and Selkirk, including the navigation of Rainy Lake and Rainy River, to which he proposed to gain access from Port Savanne, by means of several small lakes and seven or eight intervening portages, varying in length from a few rods to three or four miles. Over the portages we were to have tramways, and the scheme involved the construction of the far-famed Fort Frances Lock, at the foot of Rainy Lake, which was to be built by day labour, under the careful and economical supervision of a faithful ally of the hon. gentleman. The policy referred to was a fruitful theme of discussion during the political campaign which preceded the downfall of the late Government. My hon. friend from Lambton (Mr. Mackenzie), in addressing, during that campaign, large audiences in Ontario, would expatiate eloquently on the subject of the advantages which would accrue to the country from the opening of that chain of navigation west of Fort William, by the construction of the Fort Frances Lock, which, he said, would, with other improvements, overcome the ascent and descent of the 400 feet between Port Savanne and Rainy Lake, and permit of the navigation of swift rivers of little depth, for the accommodation of the vast traffic of the North-West, while they were completing, for the purposes of feeding this valuable line, the two ends of the Railway from

MR. BOWELL.

Fort William to Selkirk, at a cost of \$10,000,000. The hon. gentleman stated that those two ends would be built for half the cost of the Intercolonial; that he had entered into the necessary contracts which would secure that economy that all Governments aimed at, but which it was reserved for the Reform Government, of which he was the head, alone to succeed in achieving. He assured us that more elaborate surveys had been made of the most difficult parts of the route of this portion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, than of the Intercolonial, and that he would accomplish the great engineering feat of constructing it for \$24,500 a mile, and to furnish it with the means of accommodating through traffic, he proposed to construct the Fort Frances Lock. In the first place the scheme was on a very large scale, but there was no definite working plan adopted, and the hon. gentleman discovered very soon that there were serious obstructions in the way of it, and that while he intended to have seven feet depth on the mitre sills of his double lock, there were obstructions in the lake and river adjacent, which made him at length recede from his proposition, and he at last, as we understand, authorised a change to four feet depth of mitre sills. He made these remarks in his speech to the electors at Forest, at a great public demonstration, on the 29th of June, 1877:

“You have seen the accusation that I have been spending a great deal of money on the Fort Frances Locks. Those not acquainted with the geographical description of the country from Fort William to Selkirk will not understand my plan, as developed in my election speech at Sarnia, and my plan now in regard to the Pacific Railway was that it was impossible to carry out the bargain which the late Government had improvidently and improperly made with British Columbia—made apparently with no other object than to be in a position to let enormous contracts, and get enormous sums from the contractors, wherewith to corrupt the public of this country. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)”

One may wonder whether Sefton, Ward and Co., Purcell and Ryan, Oliver Davidson and Co., the excellent but brittle Mr. Glass, and others of that stamp, were among the hearers and cheerers of the last sentence. He goes on to say:

“One object was to keep that promise as far as it could be kept consistently with our means, but we had determined on no account to tax the bulk of this Dominion for the mere