

this measure, ask him whether or not the voluntary proposal of these very gentlemen themselves would have been of assistance to parliament when we were considering, during this very session, the time which should be allowed to this company for building the line in the west? Five years was their own offer. And it was the term fixed by the original contract as brought down by the government. Yet, in considering the extension to eight years agreed to by the government, after the contract as originally made had been ratified by parliament, my right hon. friend thinks we would not have been assisted in the discussion in parliament by knowing that five years was the very term proposed by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company itself. The document proceeds:

7th. That all the work shall be subject to the inspection and approval of the chief engineer of the government.

Again we have exactly the terms of this contract as brought down by the government last year. And, in the face of this paragraph my right hon. friend says that this proposal has no relation to the contract brought down by the government. The next paragraph is as follows:

8th. That in order to provide for connection with the Atlantic sea-board all the year round and through an all-British territory route, your petitioners will be prepared to enter into an arrangement with the government for an interchange of traffic, or other satisfactory agreement, with the Intercolonial Railway at Montreal, or to consider such other proposal as the government may submit.

It was in respect of that eighth paragraph that the government made the principal change in the proposal of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company. Instead of doing what is here proposed the government build, and lease to the Grand Trunk Pacific, the line from North Bay to Quebec. But, would it not have been well that parliament, when discussing the advisability of building that line, should have had before it, as it was entitled to have, this proposition of the Grand Trunk Pacific? Surely my right hon. friend will see that that eighth paragraph is itself an alternative proposition which ought, in all fairness—and in all honour, I will say—to have been submitted to parliament before this went through. The document proceeds:

9th. That your petitioners would have the advantage of all the eastern connections, in Ontario and Quebec, of the Grand Trunk Railway, and by this means on the completion of the transcontinental line there would be established and opened up a complete system from ocean to ocean.

That is not a proposal, but only an argument. It is, however, an argument which the right hon. gentleman and members of his government and speakers on that side

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.

made the most of in forcing this measure through. The petition then proceeds:

10th. That the conditions referred to in clause 4, upon which your petitioners would undertake the carrying out of the proposed work, may be set forth as follows:—

(a.) That the Dominion government will grant a cash subsidy to your petitioners of \$6,400 per mile of railway, and in addition 5,000 acres of land per mile.

(b.) That the payment for the carriage of the mails shall be calculated on the same basis as provided for under the contract made with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

(c.) That rails and materials of every kind used in the construction of the railway—if dutiable—shall be admitted free, if such material cannot be obtained in Canada upon equally favourable terms.

(d.) That the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and all stations and station grounds, work shops, buildings, yards and other property, rolling stock and appurtenances required and used for the construction and working thereof, and the capital stock of the company, shall be for ever free from taxation by the Dominion or by any province hereafter to be established or by any municipal corporation therein; and the lands of the company in the Northwest Territories (until they are either sold or occupied) shall also be free from such taxation, for twenty years after the grant thereof from the Crown.

Your petitioners ask that your government will give the prayer of this petition their early and most earnest consideration.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

On behalf of the petitioners,

GEO. A. COX,
CHAS. M. HAYS,
WM. WAINWRIGHT.

Now, my right hon. friend says that the return ordered by this motion of my hon. friend from Hamilton (Mr. Barker) will include everything in possession of the government. I believe it should include proposals, if there are any such proposals, from any other promoters, or any other body of men desirous of undertaking the contract for the building of this railroad. I do not know whether there were any such proposals; I have no information whether any such proposals have been made; but I think that if there are any, whether marked confidential or not, the government ought to bring them down and place them before parliament. But perhaps I should qualify that by saying, in the first place, that the government should not receive such proposals as confidential. If they have received any in that way they should ask the consent of the persons who made the proposals to bring them down. And, if these persons do not consent to the bringing down of these documents, I have only to recite the authority of my right hon. friend himself as to the course which should be followed. He told us last year in speaking on the Alaskan Boundary question, that he would ask the authority of the British government to bring down a series of con-