

Well, Sir, we took strong exception to this policy and that exception was formulated in an amendment which I myself moved from the opposition benches and which was in these words :

In the opinion of this House, additional surveys are requisite in order to a sound decision for the short line railway, and it would be premature to adopt any line before further surveys have been made.

The surveys which had been made had not been complete. The line was simply surveyed in a portion of the province of Quebec and very little in the province of New Brunswick. We therefore demanded before the policy was adopted to run that line of railway across the state of Maine, that new surveys should be made so that we might come to a better understanding of the question and arrive at a more proper decision. Again, I am sorry to say, this motion was voted down and the policy was adopted of building the short line of railway across the state of Maine. Now, Sir, it has been more or less in the air for the last twenty years that the government of Sir John Macdonald assented very reluctantly to the policy of building the short line of railway across the state of Maine. There has been a tradition in the air for a great many years that that policy was imposed upon the government by a gentleman who was then a very powerful member of the administration. As to that, however, I have nothing to say. Whatever may have been the reason, the policy was adopted of building the short line of railway across the state of Maine. Now, Sir, in the resolution which I have just read to the House, I want at this moment to call attention to a particular phase of it.

The resolution called for a line of railway connecting Montreal with the harbours of St. John and Halifax, via Sherbrooke, Moosehead, Lake Mattawamkeag, Harvey, Fredericton and Salisbury. It was supposed that these words, Harvey, Fredericton and Salisbury has been inserted in order to give a shorter route to Halifax. I ventured at the time, in the speech which I delivered in support of my motion, to point out that these words seemed to be an after-thought. I did not believe that they were genuine. I supposed that they were a blind, and I expressed my opinion accordingly. The suspicion to which I gave expression called for an answer from the government which was given by Sir Hector Langevin, and it was in these words :

Well, I am sure the hon. gentleman will be pleased to hear the declaration which the government makes through me, that in the arrangements to be made with the company to build the railway, to take advantage of this vote of money, of \$250,000 during twenty years, the government will take care to secure the completion of the railway, not only to Mattawamkeag, but also to Salisbury, and if that is not secured, there will be no subsidy given. We must act in good faith ; the faith of parliament

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is pledged, and we must take care that that money is employed as parliament wishes.

These were very strong words; but it turned out afterwards that my suspicions were correct, and that these words were introduced simply as a blind, because this promise, which was made solemnly on the floor of parliament, and to which the faith of parliament was pledged, never was implemented; and the line through Harvey, Salisbury and Fredericton has not been built to this day. Whatever may have been the reasons which militated against the government implementing that promise so solemnly made—made with all the sacredness which ought to attach not only to the word of the government, but to the word of parliament—whatever may have been those reasons, I do not know; but some years later (it took four or five years to complete the line by way of Sherbrooke and Mattawamkeag), about the time that road was completed, in the session of 1889, Sir John Macdonald, under the strong pressure which was brought to bear upon him by the parties whose interest it was to have this railway built from Harvey to Fredericton and Salisbury, introduced into this House a resolution to the following effect :

That it is expedient that a railway should be constructed as a government work, between a point of junction on the New Brunswick Railway, at or near Harvey, in the province of New Brunswick and a point of junction with the Intercolonial Railway at or near Salisbury, in the said province, or somewhere between Salisbury and Moncton, and that the sum of \$500,000 be granted towards the construction of the said railway.

This was another effort to implement the solemn promise which had been made on the floor of parliament. That Bill passed this House. The resolution was introduced, adopted, and put in the shape of a Bill, which was sent to the Senate. But that happened in the Senate which rarely happened in those days; the Senate rejected the Bill thus solemnly introduced by the government. Whatever may have been the reasons, whatever may have been the whispers in the ears of senators, whatever may have been the influences which caused the Senate thus to rebel against the policy of the government, it is not for me to say; I have no particulars on this point to offer. But certain it is that in the following year a company was formed, known as the St. Lawrence and Maritime Provinces Railway Company, which tradition says was acting under a tacit understanding between the Grand Trunk Railway Company and the government of Sir John Macdonald for the construction of a line of railway from the town of Edmundston to Moncton. If that railway had been built, it would have provided a shorter line of communication by way of Halifax, Moncton, Edmundston, and Rivière du Loup. The line was surveyed, and I have the report of the engineer in charge,