

first is the magnitude of the difficulties attendant upon the Quebec to Moncton extension. The idea, every one knows, was an afterthought. No reader of these columns need be told again of the impracticability of the proposed air-line from Edmundston to Moncton. It may be that a route with 4-10 of 1 per cent grades may be procured from Quebec to Edmundston; that is a point upon which we are without trustworthy information, but upon which we are apprehensive. It is possible that a line of suitably high class may be located down the valley of the St. John river. In that event, the port of St. John would be the logical terminus of the railway. The whole of this portion of the government's scheme has a strongly political and insincere look. Our suspicions are increased by the manner in which the government fights shy of accepting the situation, nervously avoids favouring either St. John or Halifax, and insists upon conducting the railway, over great national obstacles, to the neutral point of Moncton. The national duty on our hands is the increasing of the western outlet. Our energy for the moment should be concentrated on that object. A Quebec-Edmundston-Fredericton-Moncton extension could hardly cost less than from twelve to fourteen million dollars. At the present juncture we can spend the money to better advantage.

And further down he said :

By abandoning, or at least postponing the New Brunswick extension a saving of fully twelve millions would be made. It would pay the country to save twelve or fourteen millions on the eastern extension, and to invest that and ten or twelve millions more on the westward extension of the Intercolonial. Such a course would admirably supplement the present scheme of the government. The country could afford the ten or twelve millions extra expenditure. It would be an expenditure which might transform a doubtful investment of seventy millions into a paying investment of ninety millions.

Thus the editor of the 'News' believes that this investment of \$70,000,000 is a doubtful investment, and suggests the abandonment of the eastern extremity of this line. He might have gone further, as I shall show. The ex-Minister of Railways and Canals (Hon. Mr. Blair), in his speech on this subject, made the remarkable statement that freight could be carried over the Intercolonial from Montreal to St. John in heavier trains and in shorter time than over the Canadian Pacific Railway line through Maine. I will quote what the hon. gentleman said on this point :

We were called upon on the Intercolonial Railway to carry these cattle from the west, because as I have said they could not go by the Canadian Pacific Railway, we carried them, and what did we succeed in doing when we carried them? The city of St. John is 259 miles further away from Montreal by the Intercolonial Railway than by the Canadian Pacific Railway; yet, we hauled double as many cars to a train load over the Intercolonial Railway by reason

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of its good condition and level, easy grades, and we hauled them in less time than the Canadian Pacific Railway could haul their cattle trains over their own line 259 miles shorter in distance. That is a fact, and therefore I say that we can with good reason claim that the Intercolonial Railway can hold its own against the competition of any other railway which may be constructed in New Brunswick, except the railway which will run from Rivière du Loup directly down the valley of St. John to the city of St. John, which, of course, has very much more favourable grades than those on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the Intercolonial can do this, I would like to know why we are building this branch. We can hardly expect that it will give cheaper rates than the road we already have; in fact, the evidence goes to show that we cannot have as good a road. It is true, it will be a few miles shorter, but if there is any other reason why it should be built, let us know it. If it is to be built for colonization purposes, or for local commercial purposes, let us know it. But as a part of a transcontinental line, we clearly do not need it. The editor of the 'News' advises the Premier to abandon that part of the line. This editor is not going to allow the question of the bonding privileges to stand in his way, nor the question of building a transcontinental line every inch of it on Canadian soil. He is ready to sweep away the ornamental features of the policy and come down to what is really necessary in the interest of the country.

Now, Sir, I oppose this project because this road from Quebec to Winnipeg is not needed at present and has not been asked for by the country. Most of the gentlemen who defend this part of the contract say that this line would be useful for colonization purposes. I venture to say that, even if that road were built to-day and trains were running over it loaded with immigrants, not a single immigrant, for years to come, would leave the train and settle this side of the prairies. The tide of immigration is going to the west for the next twenty years, and until the end of that time, this road will not be needed for colonization purposes. There may be timber in that country. I do not intend to argue the point whether the land is good or not. I have no doubt there is good land as well as bad land, but I am very much under the impression that there is very much