

THE PACIFIC RAILWAY DEBATE.

HON. SIR CHARLES TUPPER'S SPEECH.

On Thursday, April the 15th, 1880, on motion to go into Committee of Supply,

Sir CHARLES TUPPER rose and said :—Mr. Speaker,—I had intended to submit to the House the resolutions respecting the Canadian Pacific Railway, required by the circumstances that have occurred during the period at which the resolutions were carried, last session, and the present time, but I do not intend to pursue that course because it might be thought more convenient, that, as arranged, the honorable member for West Durham (Mr. Blake), should have an opportunity, upon the conclusion of my statement, of making the motion, of which he has given notice, and which he would be precluded from doing, if I were to submit at this moment the resolutions I shall, at a later period, ask the House to concur in. On rising to address the House, on one of the most important questions that can engage its attention, I propose, on the present, as on the last occasion on which I addressed the House on this subject last session, to avoid in the fair and candid criticism to which I shall be obliged to subject the proceedings and policy of the honorable gentleman opposite, the use of a single remark, in the least degree calculated to turn the current of this debate from the channel in which it is desirable it should run. I feel that if there is any question that could be brought under the consideration of the House, that it is requisite to deal with in the calmest, most dispassionate and judicial manner, it is the great question of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It will be, however, necessary, in the somewhat changed attitude of honorable gentlemen opposite, as foreshadowed by the promised resolution of the member for West Durham, that I should as briefly as is possible describe the position that, in my judgment, the two parties in this House occupy in relation to this question. The House will remember, that when this Government was in power, in 1871, and British Columbia was brought into the Confederation, it was decided that we should grapple with the great question of the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, by which all the various provinces would be brought into more rapid and easy communication. When in a position to submit a formal proposition to the House, in 1872, by which it was hoped to accomplish the construction of that work, the Government submitted a proposal to grant \$30,000,000 and 50,000,000 acres of land in order to cover the expenditure connected with it. At the time that policy was resolved upon, a resolution, in order to meet the apprehension which existed in and out of the House, as to the very serious responsibility the Government was about to incur, was proposed and carried, and it became