

try this bargain will entail on it, that for the sake of the country Parliament, which has the undoubted right to pass in freedom on this subject, may reject or modify this contract as it pleases, has nothing else to do than save the country's resources and secure the building of the proposed railway for a smaller sum of money? Will the hon. gentleman controvert that proposition? My right hon. friend is estopped from controverting it. My right hon. friend spoke with respect to the Canadian Pacific Railway contract, and in his speech he made a statement which I think it worth while to place on the "Hansard" of this House. It was as follows:—

It is stated that the offer is not seriously made, that it is a political dodge got up by the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, if the Opposition have organized this scheme they will have still another claim to the gratitude of the country, for whatever may have been the motives that induced these capitalists to make the Government this new offer, these motives are of little consequence, provided that we obtain the result, and the result is that the new company now offers more advantageous terms than those we have now before us.

It is stated that the offer is not serious. But there is a very simple means of ascertaining the fact, and that is to put these capitalists to the test. They are ready to deposit the money and give all the security the Government may require.

I fling the words of the right hon. gentleman before him to-night. I tell him he has an offer under his hands from capitalists of undoubted ability, to build this road for 1,000,000 acres, instead of 4,000,000 acres and over, and to build this road and the Pyramid Harbour route and Dalton trail route, to boot, both of them, for little less than one-half of the land subsidy to be given to Mackenzie & Mann for building 150 miles of tramway. Will the hon. gentleman try to crawl out of accepting that offer because "it is a political dodge got up by the Opposition?" Let him take his own words, which I quote to him, where he says, "If the Opposition have organized this scheme, they will have still another claim to the gratitude of the country, because they will have got the work carried out at a saving of cost to the country." Does the right hon. gentleman take the ground, that Mr. Hamilton Smith and his associates are not responsible men and able to build the road? I quote his words to him: "Put these capitalists to the test." That is what he said before; but put them to the test, not by a private telegram, the answer to which the right hon. gentleman made public, by a telegram which he himself promised to lay before the House, when he knew as well as he knows to-night the nature of the telegram, for he himself sent it, and which, the next day, he refused to give to the House, thereby doing gross injustice to a gentleman whom he should have treated as a gentleman, and degrading the dignity and

standing of a Minister of the Crown in this Parliament. Let the hon. gentleman, instead of sending winding and tortuous telegrams that he dare not produce to the House, let him put the matter to the test and telegraph London to know whether Hamilton Smith and his associates are men of means and men of worth, able to put this contract through, and I vouch he will get an answer that will set that matter at rest. What will the Prime Minister do? Will he eat his words as he has eaten them time after time; eat his words until his bad faith is becoming a byword in this country? What pledge of public policy has he made that he has not gone back on? And even a pledge that he makes across the floor of this House, knowing well every condition of it, when he wakes up the next day he comes in and repudiates and says, that though he breaks his word he will keep his honour in his own charge.

Sir, I have one word more to say and though I may reiterate something I have said before, I shall put on record once more my protest against alienating the rich alluvial placer grounds of the Yukon to any two men, or to any monopoly of men in this country. I want to affirm that, that is the heritage of the common people of this country and should be kept for the common people. By the common people I mean the people of worth and substance in the rural districts, our artisans in the towns, all that class of men who though they have not large capital have the hearts and the brawn which makes Canada strong and gives her a guarantee of the future. I put on record my protest against this departure from the settled principle of every Anglo-Saxon mining country in the world, as well as an outrage upon the rights of this country. If these gentlemen opposite succeed in putting this through and settling their monopolists at work, the harvest that will be reaped will be a harvest full of sorrow and of retribution to them.

Mr. GIBSON. Oh.

Mr. FOSTER. The hon. gentlemen laugh; irresponsible men are noted for laughing, irresponsible men have nothing but a sneer or a laugh, but the right hon. gentleman who leads this Government does not laugh just now. On his shoulders rest two weights. One is the dignity and interests of the country which he sometimes forgets, but which we call to his mind, and the other is that long stream of pap-hunters and patronage-seekers in his own party which renders every hour of his life a bitterness and which is ageing him fast as he sits in this House. I leave the hon. member for Lincoln to put himself in whichever of these classes he pleases; but the man who sneers and laughs when his country's best and richest portion is given away to contractors, is a man who can feel very little of the responsibilities of the situation.