

and perhaps up to some time in the future; that railway companies, on their own basis, of their own means, cannot construct railways; but when a great province like Ontario is constructing a road the idea of a grant to Ontario is something that I cannot believe hon. members will sustain for one moment. I for one am opposed to it.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—I like fair debate and I like fair legislation. A very plain question was put to the government by the hon. gentleman from Lacombe (Hon. Mr. Talbot), and he was given a very plain answer. The question was that in view of the fact that parliament is about to vote a bonus or free gift of over \$2,000,000 to Ontario on behalf of a certain railroad, if that railroad would thereby, as a consequence, come under the Railway Commission. The leader of the government in this House immediately stated that it would not. That was his first answer. Then the right hon. leader of the opposition said: 'But the work is declared to be of national advantage to Canada.' Then the hon. leader of the government said: 'Well, if that be the case, I presume it will have to come under the commission.' Are we passing legislation and laws on presumption? Even with the hon. leader, able man as he is, too able, his presumptions do not amount to anything. We want our laws in black and white. He has not given an answer. I think this is slipshod legislation. The hon. leader of the government is from the west. He appealed to this House to grant to the poor province of Ontario a bonus, a free gift over \$6,400 per mile on nearly 300 miles. Does the hon. leader of the government know the condition of things in the province of Ontario? Does he not know that Ontario never piled up one dollar of debt on behalf of railways? Is he not aware of that fact?

Is he not aware of the fact that the entire provincial debt of the province of Quebec was due to subsidizing railways almost to the extent of \$33,000,000, while the province of Ontario never piled up one dollar of debt on behalf of its railway system—never as long as the Liberals were in power? Now my hon. friend makes a plea

Hon. Mr. EDWARDS.

to us to grant to this rich province a bonus for a road which is paying actually, according to the hon. member from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Jaffray), large dividends. The government must take many of us here as people who know nothing, as long as they have friends to serve, but I am not one of that kind. I know something of the history of the country, and when the hon. gentleman makes an appeal of that kind to the House I do not know whether he does so for want of respect—it cannot be want of respect, because the hon. member is too much of a gentleman for that—but it is not according to the facts and not according to the necessities of the situation. The province of Ontario is not entitled to one cent on this road. It has made a paying investment and is not in the same position as Prince Edward Island. There is neither necessity nor justification for the expenditure. The Ontario government has been amply justified in the construction of the road by the large returns they are getting from it. As the hon. member from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Jaffray) said, if that railway were sold to-day it would bring a good profit to the province. All these measures which have been brought down in the past ten days have but one object and purpose in view, that is to fatten the fund of the Conservative party for the next general election, two or three years from this. All their donations out of the national treasury have been made to their friends in the several provinces, and I have never seen, in the history of the British Empire or the history of Canada, where a Liberal majority has helped a Tory minority to carry their measures. The hon. leader of the government may be proud of his work. He is meek when it suits his purpose and he uses the iron hand in the velvet glove when necessary. He is a most astute politician. He has pulled the wool over the eyes of the senators, just as he did in the case of the hon. member from Russell (Hon. Mr. Edwards) who has admitted that he voted for a most improper measure, simply because the leader of the House made out that the people of Prince Edward Island were paupers. Now he sets up Prince Edward Island against New Brunswick, and says: 'If you vote \$100,000