

certainly the most promising city west of Winnipeg. There is no more beautiful place to locate a city. If we give it a fair chance it is sure to become very prosperous in a very short time. It would be disastrous, and make the people feel discontented, if the Government should now alter all its previous plans and views in reference to the construction of this road. I protest against it and hope the Government will not make the change. Even if the present corporation fail to carry out their intention and construct that road, or failed to make their deposit, I cannot see why it should not be built by some other company, and that within the time specified by the conditions. I feel that can be done, and that it will be done, if this company fails to take up and complete the work. It will be a mistake and create discontent to alter the whole of the arrangements and make a new starting point elsewhere than at Brandon.

Mr. TROW. The change contemplated by the Government in my estimation is a proper one. I never could see why the road should start from Brandon simply because they had the Manitoba Southern. I have been in Brandon, probably, as often as my hon. friend, and can speak with as much knowledge of its wants. I am sorry that hon. gentlemen on either side of the House should decry their country. I have been in Portage la Prairie, and I consider it is the garden of that country.

Mr. WOODWORTH. I did not decry the country. I spoke of a certain slough which the hon. member for Marquette knows.

Mr. TROW. I know parties who have been residing there for the last twenty years, and I never heard that malaria was prevalent. It is true that there is want of water communication, but there is no green slime, that my hon. friend pictured out. I am surprised that my hon. friend who has been in that country frequently, should try, as he has done, to keep settlers from going into that great country by making such rash and unguarded statements.

Mr. WOODWORTH. My hon. friend and his friends behind him, ever since I have been in Parliament, have been speaking about the bad land in that country, and because I spoke of a single slough near a little town they think it is a most unpatriotic thing. No doubt, the hon. member for Marquette has listened to the songs of the frogs there day after day and night after night, and he knows all about the slough, and when I mentioned it, behold the hon. member for South Perth (Mr. Trow) lifts his hands in holy horror and says I am decrying the country, but this slough is in a place where nobody can live.

Mr. WATSON. No, no.

Mr. WOODWORTH. Of course the people build their houses on dry land away from this slough, but it extends nearly the whole length of the city of Portage la Prairie. There are two parts of Portage la Prairie, an east and west end, and the slough extends along the side of it at both ends. I know that contractors have been ready to build this road from where the Government stated first by Orders in Council. I stated in the Committee of Railways and Canals that I knew of railway companies who are ready and willing to build this road and start from the city of Brandon. I say they are ready and willing to-night to build this road and start from Brandon, and that being the fact, I do not see why the Government at the last hour should come forward with this proposition. I am surprised, I had no intimation of this departure, and I think it is a very great mistake.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). I am responsible myself for the drafting of the clause, and I had an impression that we had the power under this clause to incorporate a company that would in less than two years, supply that country with railway facilities. It must be remembered that we

are not giving the railway grants to Brandon. I have very pleasant recollections of Brandon and its people, and I would not be willing to do an injury to one or the other; but the grant of land is not given to the city of Brandon, it is for a line running from the district of Rapid City westward, between that point and Battleford. There are no claims on the part of Brandon, no possible claim, or on the part of any other place, and the people cannot be disappointed if the railway does not happen to go that way. There is no suggestion that the railway should go from any other place than Brandon. This road has been asked by the people of the North-West, and they have not yet succeeded in obtaining it. We have had a number of statements made that there were contractors ready to undertake the road; but unfortunately the road has not yet been undertaken, except, so far as regards the first fifty miles, where there was some grading done. All we propose is simply that we shall have alternative powers, so that if we do not find a company really able to give us the assurance that they possess the means to carry out the work, starting from Brandon westward, we shall not be tied up and the people of the North-West deprived for another year of railway facilities, but we shall be able to make arrangements with other people who are able to supply the country with these railway facilities. That is the only question. If what the hon. gentleman said is true—I hope it is true and I have no reason or right to doubt it—that there is a company prepared at once to offer the Government satisfactory security to justify their being incorporated and given the land grant to build the road on the old line, the chances are altogether in favor of such company getting the work, because those are the terms of the charter. But if it should turn out that there is no such company, we simply provide against a contingency by obtaining the right to incorporate another company so as to supply the people of the North-West with those railway facilities. I ought to say with respect to Portage la Prairie, that if the railway is built from the north, it will not go from that town, but about eighty miles west, more likely from Minnedosa. Portage la Prairie will not derive any advantage from it. Brandon will do so, because it will be the point of junction with the Canadian Pacific Railway. But this is not a matter of rivalry between Portage la Prairie and Brandon, but it is simply a question of getting a railway built through that part of the country, and providing those railway facilities which the people have asked for and which Parliament has decided to assist in providing.

Mr. WOODWORTH. Does the hon. Minister deny that the point of junction would be the same at Portage la Prairie, where the Minnedosa and North-Western strikes the Canadian Pacific Railway, as at Brandon? The junction will be just the same. There can be no doubt that the through line of the Canadian Pacific Railway will be reached at Brandon just the same as at Portage.

Mr. WATSON. I desire to contradict some statements made by the hon. member from King's, N. S. (Mr. Woodworth) about the section of country round Portage la Prairie. Every gentleman who has ever travelled through the country knows that the statements made by the hon. member for King's are not true, and that so far as that section of the country is concerned it is one of the finest sections, and is admitted to be so, in the whole North-West.

Section, as amended, agreed to.

Mr. WOODWORTH. Did I understand the hon. Minister to say that if there is a company ready to build this road starting from Brandon it will have that privilege?

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). I do not think the hon. gentleman should ask me to answer the question. Parliament has incorporated a company to build a railway from Brandon