

Dominion. And mark you, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Annapolis (Mr. Wade) says that the first fight for the extension eastward was put up last year when the Grand Trunk Pacific Bill was before the railway committee. It is then to the hon. gentleman from Annapolis and to those associated with him in the fight for the extension of the road eastward that we are to give the credit for the extension to Moncton. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Wade), therefore, not only slanders the members from the maritime provinces who sit on this side of the House, but, evidently without meaning it, he robs his leader the Prime Minister of the honour and the credit and the distinction of being the originator of this second ocean to ocean railway. We know now that it is the member for Annapolis (Mr. Wade) and his fellow-Liberals from the maritime provinces to whom we are indebted for the paternity of this scheme; we know now that it is they who conceived this second ocean to ocean railway, and we know that the Prime Minister is sailing under false colours and is being presented in a false light to the people when to him is attributed the credit of being the father of this scheme. After the modest declaration that has been made by the hon. gentleman (Mr. Wade), it is only fair and just to suggest that the halo which now surrounds the head of the Prime Minister in connection with this project should be transferred to the head of the member for Annapolis (Mr. Wade), because it is to him and not to the Prime Minister that the country owes this second transcontinental railway.

We were told last year that it was treason to Canada to suggest that reasonable delay should take place in the prosecution of this work, even until some definite information could be obtained as to the character of the country through which this railway may run and the amount of the expenditure that will be required. We were told that time was the very essence of the contract, and that any one who suggested a moment's delay was antagonistic to the interests of the Dominion. Well, Sir, this parliament, so far as it could, bound the people of Canada to the contract which was entered into between the Grand Trunk Pacific Company and the government. The government of Canada were given *carte blanche*; and let me ask you, Mr. Speaker, and let me ask any hon. member in this House, what action have the government taken since October last to prove that they were in earnest, or that the matter was as urgent as they represented it to be? Six months of the most valuable period of the year have been allowed to lapse, and yet, when the House is called to ratify the amended contract made with the Grand Trunk, the ministry have not been able to lay one particle of new information before us respecting the region through which the railway may run, or respecting the expenditures that will be necessary to

carry it to completion. Last year we were told that we had mountains of information at our disposal.

In the speech which he delivered in introducing the measure eight or nine months ago, the premier told us we had mountains of information available. That speech was reprinted in very handsome pamphlet form, illustrated with subheads, and under the head of 'complete information' was repeated the statement made last year as to the steps taken 150 or 200 years ago to find a passage to the Pacific Ocean:

Samuel de Champlain devoted years to the task in the hope of finding a passage to the sea. Robert Cavalier de La Salle lost his life in the attempt. Another man, LaVerendrye, took an overland journey to reach it by exploring the prairies, and his two sons, on the 1st January, 1743, were the first Europeans to cast eyes upon the Rocky Mountains. LaVerendrye himself lost his life like Robert Cavalier de La Salle in the attempt to get to the Pacific ocean. After the country had passed under the sovereignty of the British Crown the task was resumed by Scotch traders established in Montreal, and in 1793, Alexander Mackenzie was the first white man to reach the Pacific ocean across the mountains by the overland journey. Many private individuals subsequently attempted and performed the same feat. The last of them was Captain Butler, of the British army, who in the winter of 1872 crossed the continent from Fort à-la-Corne at the forks of the Saskatchewan by way of the Peace river to the Pacific ocean.

This is some of the information we find immediately under the subheading of 'complete information.' This was given to us by the Prime Minister last session; but notwithstanding the urgency of the work from a national standpoint, what have the Prime Minister and his associates done since then to give the people of Canada further enlightenment on a matter of such vital importance? In introducing the resolution containing the amendments we are now discussing, the Prime Minister a few days ago made reference to an expedition which went from Tadousac to Hudson's Bay more than 200 years ago. The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) ransacked the library, poured over the ponderous tomes of the volumes of the Jesuit Relations, turned back the pages of history more than two centuries, and discovered in the 56th volume of these Relations that Rev. Father Albanel started on an expedition in August 1671, from the Saguenay River up to Hudson's Bay. Of what particular value is that information to us? Can we form a more intelligent opinion as to the wisdom or unwisdom of building this Transcontinental Railway over the route proposed because of this additional information which has been vouchsafed to us? What advantage is it to us to be told that:

On the 23rd and 24th of June we found a less mountainous region. Its atmosphere is much milder, and its fields are beautiful; and the soil would bear abundantly and be capable of sup-

Mr. CLARKE.