

# PACIFIC RAILWAY QUESTION.

GENTLE READER,—I would ask you to suspend your judgment on this question till you shall have examined the evidence. If to get at the truth on every subject which we investigate be not our object, we do ourselves, mentally and morally, a great wrong. The people of Canada have no interest in having one man or class of men at the head of the Government of the country. To them A is the same as B. Their chief interest is in a wise administration of its affairs, which means the application of the accepted principles of a sound policy. The present actors will soon strut their little round and pass off the scene; but Canada, glorious Canada, will remain. Influenced, no doubt, we all are by personal friendships and political associations, but these should be made second to the great object which every patriot has—the good of his country.

He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him—Prov. 18, 17.

On the second of April Mr. LUCIUS SETH HUNTINGTON, in his place in the House of Commons, moved for a Committee of seven members to inquire into certain grave charges which he then made against the Ministry of Sir JOHN MACDONALD in reference to the Pacific Railway contract; this motion being considered one of want of confidence was voted down by the ministerialists by a majority of twenty-five. The next day Sir JOHN gave notice that he would move for a Committee of five members to inquire into Mr. HUNTINGTON's charges; this motion was carried on the eighth April by a majority of thirty-three. A bill, first suggested by the Opposition, to empower the Committee to take evidence on oath, was passed against the warning of Sir JOHN MACDONALD, who said: "There was very great danger that if they passed a bill of this nature it would be disallowed in England as beyond our jurisdiction," but he offered, at the same time, "to issue a Royal Commission addressed to the gentlemen forming the Committee, which would confer upon them all the powers given to the Committee by the House of Commons, including the

"examination of witnesses under oath,"—that is, the Commission would have all the powers of a Committee of the House, with the additional power of taking evidence on oath. This Committee met on the fifth of May and adjourned to the first week in July in consequence of the absence in Europe of Sir GEORGE CARTIER, Sir HUGH ALLAN, and Mr. ABBOTT, the chief amongst the accused. On the meeting of the Committee on the second of July in Montreal, the Chairman read a letter from the Minister of Justice notifying him of what the Committee knew before, that the Oaths Bill had been disallowed by the Imperial authorities. Sir JOHN repeated the offer he had made on the floor of the House, to advise the Governor-General to issue a Royal Commission to the five gentlemen forming the Committee, but Messrs. DORION and BLAKE declined this offer, as the *London Times* (15 Aug. 1873) says: "First, on the plausible ground that it would be proper to wait till the House of Commons met again, and secondly, on a ground which can only be characterised as absurd, that as Royal Commissioners their decisions and proceedings would be subject to the supervision and control of the Executive." And this with Sir JOHN's offer before them that the