

What a singular circumstance—on the 25th of February—eight days before the general election—

—“he had met Mr. Schreiber, the Government Engineer of Railways, who had told him there was no great difficulty in constructing this work, which was destined to make a great railway centre of Quebec and a great Atlantic port. In fact, he said, you may, one and all, regard the work as an accomplished fact. (Tremendous applause).”

The High Commissioner there declared publicly, in the presence of the present leader of this House, and of another member of the Government, that so convinced were he and his colleagues of the necessity of this work, that now, those who were listening to him might consider it as an accomplished fact. When did the Government decide in favour of that important work? I well remember, only four or five years previously, when that work was the subject of an animated discussion in this House. I remember when, on one occasion, a number of hon. gentlemen refused their support to the Administration on a very important issue, but gave it afterwards, and it was admitted in the lobbies and outside that something in the nature of the Quebec bridge was to be the outcome. But as soon as the votes of those hon. gentlemen had been secured, from that time until the 25th of February last, we heard no authoritative utterance on the part of the Government with regard to this work. But suddenly on the 26th February, within eight days of the election we find the pledge given on behalf of the Government, which makes this country responsible—for how much? Has there been any estimate? I ask the Minister of Public Works, who was listening to this speech, whether any estimate of the cost of this public work has ever been made as to how far the public treasury would be taxed to carry out this pledge? Surely the High Commissioner did not speak without the authority of the Minister of Public Works. No doubt the High Commissioner must have consulted him, for the hon. Minister was at his elbow, and, I presume, incited him to make the speech. I would like to know where are the papers to show the cost of this work, for surely an Administration such as we have would not pledge the country to an uncertainty, even to accomplish so necessary a work. Where are the surveys, and plans, and estimates? Or was the statement made by the High Commissioner in the name of the Government absolutely made to deceive, as has been represented? Or was it a statement intended to be carried out? If made to be carried out, surely it was not made hastily, just after a conversation with Mr. Schreiber, but must have been made, in a business way, after more mature consideration. But that was not the only pledge. I am told that this bridge will cost at least \$5,000,000, if it can be built for that. Add that to the \$1,000,000 bonds, and you have \$6,000,000 promised by the High Commissioner. No wonder his promises were popular in that district. Again, he made another promise, which involves a little bagatelle of expenditure of a few more millions. It appears some time previously this House had passed an Act in favour of improving our Atlantic service; but this Government or its predecessors, great in promise, dealing continually in futures, put this statute on the Statute-books, and it has never materialized since. What have become of those Atlantic steamship promises made in 1889? Parliament, in 1889, voted a subsidy of \$500,000 a year for ten years for the

construction of this Atlantic service, but the Government did nothing. They went to sleep upon it, or mismanaged it, or whatever may have been the result, we have had nothing practical done from that day to this, and they never could be induced from that day until the 26th of February last to give their serious attention to the question. But suddenly there was an awakening. Again the Atlantic steamship service was to be utilized, and Sir Charles Tupper, speaking to the electors in the presence of the Minister of Public Works, told them that Sir John Macdonald was so deeply concerned in the development of the Province of Quebec and of the city of Quebec that he had agreed to that \$500,000 subsidy which Parliament voted some years before, and an increase of about \$250,000 a year, or an actual amount of £49,200 sterling, in round numbers \$250,000 a year. I presume for the whole time the original subsidy was granted, or ten years, or in all Sir John Macdonald gave his word the Government would grant \$2,500,000 extra money, without ever having taken the House into his confidence or having had any consultation with the people's representatives in Parliament, or concerning which, in so far as I know, there had never been any action taken by the Administration in Council or otherwise. Nevertheless, eight days before the general elections, Sir Charles Tupper promised the people of Quebec that there would be an extra grant of \$2,500,000 given by the Government. In all, our High Commissioner promised, in that two hour speech, three things: to hand over \$1,000,000 of bonds to the Canadian Pacific Railway; to build a bridge costing \$5,000,000; to increase the subsidy to the Atlantic service, which would help the city of Quebec, by \$2,500,000. He pledged the resources of this country to the extent of \$8,500,000. And for what purpose? Was it for the purposes of the election? Or was it a mere coincidence that an election was about shortly to be held? I do not wonder that the Minister of Justice should shrink from discussing this part of the question. I do not wonder that the other members of the Government shrink from reviewing these wild promises. But the people of Quebec apparently believed in them, because it is said, in the editorial column of the newspaper from which I have quoted, that never before was such applause dealt out to any public speaker: that the people fairly stood on their heads, so great was their excitement. They rose as one man, they surrounded him, and with torches accompanied him to the railway station, and sent him on his way, bringing other gifts to the Maritime Provinces, and illuminated his whole trip down the St. Lawrence with fireworks, until at last he had ceased to be visible. Our High Commissioner, continuing his journey, repeated himself five days later in the Maritime Provinces. On the 5th of March, addressing an audience at Amherst, he said: Now is your opportunity, now is the time when the Maritime Provinces hold the balance of power, to demand what he called justice. It would be interesting to work out what I might call a mathematical problem. If the result of his addressing one meeting in the city of Quebec, is a series of promises to spend \$8,500,000, how many more millions must he have promised to spend during the remainder of his campaign in the Maritime Provinces?

Mr. BEAUSOLEIL. (Translation.) Mr. Speaker, I think it is proper to explain the circumstances