

capable of supporting millions, such an expenditure was most injudicious. If we hope to carry out the great works indispensably necessary to the Dominion, how, he would ask, could we hope to do so without a wise and judicious regard for the public expenditure.

HON. MR. SCOTT said the Government had no objection to the motion. He did not, however, propose to discuss the Government policy, in connection with the Pacific Railway, on this motion, as it had been thoroughly discussed already. The scheme of a mixed land and water means of communication between Canada and the Pacific coast was thoroughly discussed at the last general election, the Hon. Premier in his speech at Sarnia having, he (Mr. Scott) believed, explained the Ministerial policy on the subject. It was with a view to avoiding an enormous expenditure in the construction of an all land line that the Government decided upon utilizing the vast bodies of water between western Ontario and the Pacific slope. The hon. mover opposite was quite aware that the policy of the late Administration was, to commence the railway on a point south-east of Nipissing, and build along the shore of that lake, and along the north shores of Huron and Superior, and that this was a very inhospitable region, probably the very worst for agriculturists, although, perhaps, possessing minerals in abundance. A railway through this section would, certainly, prove very costly. The present Government did not, therefore, desire to carry a railway through this region. They rather felt it their duty to husband the country's means and resources, by utilising, instead, the stretches of water. They also considered it desirable, however, to construct a branch to Georgian Bay, to give access to that important point, to the railways to the south and east, to enable them to avail themselves of the advantages of the Ministerial policy. The Government, consequently, took power under the Pacific Act, to build those 85 miles between Nipissing and Georgian Bay, intending, moreover, to have this and the branch from Fort Garry to Pembina constructed immediately. It was then supposed

they could have the surveys completed and all the preliminaries arranged for proceeding with those lines before the present session. However, very serious delays had occurred as to the Georgian Bay branch, the advertisements for tenders for the construction of which appearing only a short time before the opening of Parliament. Under these circumstances the Government decided the tenders submitted should fall within the spirit of the Pacific Railway Act. Though they were not bound to come to Parliament, and ask its approval of any action by them in this matter, being desirous of dealing with it in the spirit of that Act, they desired that, as no contract had been given out for the Georgian Bay branch, they should submit the tenders and contracts to the House of Commons this session (hear, hear.) Government would adopt the lowest tender if the contractors could present sufficient security for constructing the road speedily and satisfactorily. He (Mr. Scott) was rather surprised that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Alexander) should have indulged in the comments uttered, hailing, as he did, from Ontario. He, doubtless, knew that the region to be intersected was about the best in that province not yet filled up—that it possessed the most available lands, and if the surveyors could be believed, was capable of maintaining millions. The country was well timbered, well watered, and, altogether, presented great attractions to settlers. Till opened up, it was quite impossible to attract settlers to it. But this was simply a subsidiary idea in connection with the subject. He thought the hon. gentleman's criticisms came with a very bad grace under all the circumstances. He stated there were other railways in Ontario going northward to Georgian Bay; but if he took the map he would find that, so far as the whole eastern portion of the Dominion was concerned, the route proposed by the Government was really the shortest, the most direct from it to the Bay, and from the latter to the Ottawa; and it was admitted the construction of this road, with the subsidy to be granted a railway from Renfrew, or Pembroke, to Nipissing, would give direct communication with Lake Hu-