

—that is the completion of the Transcontinental Railway from Moncton to Port Simpson, which is an event we all know that is very far in the future—it will have become apparent that this Transcontinental Railway was urgently needed.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—That was not the way parliament was approached last year. We were told then that this enterprise would not wait—that it was urgently needed. I will just read the words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier when he introduced the Bill in the House of Commons last year :

We consider that it is the duty of all those who sit within these walls by the will of the people, to provide immediate means, whereby the products of these new settlers may find an exit to the ocean at the least possible cost; and whereby likewise a market may be found in this new region for those who toil in the forest, in the fields, in the mines, in the shops of the older provinces. Such is our duty, it is immediate and imperative. It is not for to-morrow, but of this day, of this hour, of this minute. Heaven grant that it is not already too late. Heaven grant that whilst we tarry and dispute the trade of Canada is not deviated to other channels.

Now, hon. gentlemen come to parliament and venture to prophesy that before this railway is completed its urgent necessity will have become apparent. It is not apparent to-day, according to their own admission, and hence all this hysterical talk of the Premier last year, about time not waiting, evaporates into thin air. We are told that modifications of this contract are to be submitted to parliament. I do not propose to discuss those modifications now. The contract is already before us, and we will have ample opportunity to discuss the changes in detail at a later stage in this session. I do not propose to discuss them now; it would be only anticipating what will be more appropriately said later on; but I have to point out to the House in connection with the extract I have read from the speech that one of the modifications of this contract is to extend the time for the completion of the road from five to eight years—that is the completion of the western division from Winnipeg to the Pacific ocean. Notwithstanding all those hysterical utterances of last session, about time not waiting, about the danger of our not taking time at the flood and losing all the fortune that would accrue to us, and the immediate necessity of going forward at the earliest possible

moment to obtain this new means of transport between the east and the west—in the face of all that, one of the modifications of the contract which is now proposed is to give another three years for the completion of that western division—not the entire line. It is clearly set forth in this contract that the eastern division need not be completed as soon as the western division. The Canadian Pacific Railway was completed from Callendar to Vancouver, an accomplishment much greater than the building of this entire Transcontinental Railway, and infinitely more so than the building of a road from Winnipeg over the prairies and through the comparatively easy mountain passes of the Peace river. The Canadian Pacific Railway was a much heavier undertaking than the whole line of the Transcontinental Railway considering the difficulties of access to the country at that time and the other great difficulties that pioneer railways had to encounter which will be unknown to those who now build, yet here we have the government of Canada deliberately extending the time to this company for the building of the prairie section, and the comparatively easy mountain section, giving them eight years to accomplish the work, or three years more than the Canadian Pacific Railway required for the construction of their whole line from Callendar to the Pacific ocean. This is not very consistent with the hysterical observations of the Premier last year, about time not waiting and the responsibility which would rest upon the parliament of Canada if we did not proceed immediately and provide this outlet for the people of Western Canada. The eulogy which the government bestow in the speech on this Transcontinental Railway scheme of theirs and which my hon. friend the mover of the address reiterated in his observations to-day, and which were so warmly and strongly applauded by hon. gentlemen opposite, are I think entirely beyond the mark, and furthermore they are inconsistent, and very inconsistent, with some other doings of the government since parliament rose. I refer to the action of the government in appointing as their chief railway expert the Hon. A. G. Blair, at a salary of \$10,000 per annum, and it is known that Mr. Blair holds very different opinions with regard to the value of the Transcontinental