

are the representatives, ought to know something of such a great scheme as this. The hon. gentleman says that I, while at the head of the late Administration, gave no premonitory indications of the measure I was about to introduce. If the hon. gentleman looks at my address to the electors of Lambton, he will find that the scheme is laid down there in great detail, and he will find, if he looks at the votes, that he himself practically approved of that scheme when it was brought here. We made no delay in bringing in our measure, but we only brought it in after it had been discussed for weeks by the press of the country. I listened with a great deal of interest to the hon. gentleman to learn whether he would confirm or reject the rumor that I heard in a very influential quarter that we were expected to decide this matter before Christmas. The hon. gentleman did not choose to do so. If he has forgotten it, I will be glad to give way to him now to tell us whether it is his deliberate purpose to give this House but ten days in which to agree to a measure upon pain of being punished by not having a holiday.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I will tell the hon. gentleman that, with the assistance of the majority of this House, such is the intention of the Government, for the reason given in the Speech. It is important that if this policy is to be carried out, it should be carried out at once. Immigration very much depends upon it. The company cannot organize, nor take any step to bring out emigrants before the contract is ratified. They have only got January, February and March to prepare the work in. Emigrants will be here in May, and it is of very great importance, if Parliament is going to adopt the arrangement, that it should do so with all convenient speed. We consider it of so much importance that we shall ask the House to take it into early and earnest consideration; and to remain here with as short a Christmas interval as possible until it is passed.

Mr. MACKENZIE. Of course I can tell the hon. gentleman at once that, so far as I am concerned, if his measure is a right one, a just one, I shall not only offer no opposition, but I will help him through with it. But if his measure, as I fear it will, be what it ought not to be, then I want time to discuss it, and I shall probably occupy some little time in doing so, because I consider it is my duty as a representative of the people to discuss a measure fraught with such great consequences to the country as this is. But, Sir, if these gentlemen who are now in such a desperate hurry to bring out emigrants, had so much confidence two months ago that everything was right and that they could go ahead safely upon the assurance that the hon. gentleman opposite could give them, how is it that they are in such a hurry now?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. They have confidence enough to spend their own money, but not confidence enough to make statements to the whole of the population of Europe.

Mr. MACKENZIE. The hon. gentleman is always a little too sanguine about his immigration schemes. We have had two statements from him during the last two Sessions, and both of them were so very inaccurate as predictions that I am afraid we cannot pay much attention to mere speculative opinions advanced at the present time. These opinions are valuable only in so far as we see ground for hoping that they may be realized. What is wanted in the North-West I will not enter upon to-night, because I mean to discuss that pretty fully from information I have. I have merely to say that no immigration scheme that can be devised in connection with the railroad, or otherwise, can be successful so long as the present system is carried on by the Department of which the hon. gentleman is the head; I do not say who is to blame for the matter; that I will discuss on another occasion. The hon. gentleman says it is preposterous and ridiculous to have witnesses dragged before a Committee of this House in order to give information, such as it is now sought to obtain, I presume, by the commission appointed by

the hon. gentleman opposite to investigate the Pacific Railway contracts. Well, it is very late to discuss that now, because the hon. gentleman and his immediate friends behind him have been promoting arrangements of this kind every year for the last five years, and prosecuting inquiries in the Senate, where they had an absolute majority the whole time, in the most exhaustive—I will not say unfair, because the reports will show that—in the most exhaustive manner. So it was in regard to this House, both before the honorable gentleman took office, and since, and it is, surely, a most extraordinary position to take, that the Government is not to allow this House to express an opinion, or to attempt to collate facts. That must be done, it seems, after this, by a Royal Commission, and we may express our opinion upon it, if we like, after that is all done. Now, I have only to say that if that is the honorable gentleman's idea of a Commission, it is wholly different from mine. I admit that the Government may appoint a Commission to do certain things. The scope of such Commission is laid down pretty fully and fairly in May's Parliamentary Practice, and there it is confined to a certain line. But this Commission has been examining Ministers, and other parties upon the policy of Government, upon the route of the Pacific Railway, even upon matters which they can have no knowledge of, and no business to inquire into. Now, what we wanted to know was where the Commission obtained any instructions to do this, or if there were instructions apart from the commission which seems to authorize those gentlemen to do what Parliament, I presume, will never sanction. I can hardly believe that gentlemen on the other side of the House will set aside their own dignity, to use their present phrase, and the independence and privileges of Parliament in order to have certain friends of the Government appointed upon a Commission to do things which they have no right to do. That is the position the matter is in. I merely mention these few things as matters that seem to come prominently before the House since the hon. gentleman spoke. I also had some expectation that the hon. gentleman would have answered the statement of my hon. friend respecting emigration from Canada. The hon. the Finance Minister denied the statement published from official documents in the United States. The hon. gentleman was horrified, to use his own words, while in Eastern Townships two years ago to find that so many Canadians went to the United States. The hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake) gave a list of figures for the last ten years, including the last season, and the hon. gentleman opposite did not venture to challenge the accuracy of any of those statements.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes, I did; I stated that the hon. gentleman was altogether wrong, and I instanced it as one of the inconveniences of discussing these things now.

Mr. MACKENZIE. I am speaking of the emigration from Canada.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. It is the same thing exactly.

Mr. MACKENZIE. Oh, no, it is not the same thing precisely, one was going and the other coming. That matter will no doubt be brought up again, because the honorable gentleman must have an opportunity to verify his statements, and show how it was that he was horrified a few years ago when we were in power at a thing that ought to terrify him now if he was horrified then.

Mr. POPE (Compton). I rise to correct a wrong impression which may go to the country and may be drawn from the speech of the hon. member for Durham, in respect to emigration. Undoubtedly it has done a great injury to the cause of emigration, on the other side of the water, to publish such reports as that there were 17,000 who went away from Canada. If the hon. member will, for one moment, think of the number of people he will see that these people have