

tions with the fact that some of the most prominent members of the Government are, and always have been, sworn opponents of the carrying out of the terms of Union with British Columbia? How can they believe in the sincerity of a Government which would not hold out a hand to save one of their own Bills, that of the Equimalt and Nanaimo Railway, which was lost last year in this House by so narrow a majority? And while I am on this subject I wish to refer to some remarks on this matter which fell from the hon. the Secretary of State, a few days since in this House when a discussion was going on about the steel rails. The hon. gentleman explained that the Equimalt and Nanaimo Railway was brought down last year by the Government to enable them to carry out certain arrangements into which they had entered with the Government of British Columbia, under the auspices of, and through the intervention of Lord Carnarvon; and the hon. gentleman proceeded to express his surprise that under these circumstances the Senate should have thought it right to defeat the passage of the Bill. So far, hon. gentlemen, I agree with the hon. Secretary of State, and I may be allowed to express my surprise that the Senate thought fit to adopt the course they did; but I will go further and express my most unqualified surprise that any member of the Government should rise in his place and assert that the Government did all in their power to secure the passage of that Bill. Why, hon. gentlemen, what were the facts of the case, were they not patent to all? The hon. member himself introduced the Bill in a very short, and I will add, a very lame speech, and having so done, the unfortunate Bill was left to take care of itself, to live or die on its own merits, while no member of the Government or any supporter of the Government had another word to say in its favour! And what did we see, hon. gentlemen, when the vote was taken upon the Bill? Why, we saw two prominent supporters of the Government, hon. gentlemen who are unswerving and unwavering supporters of the Government on all occasions—hon. members who never before or after, either during this or the past session of Parliament, have voted in an adverse way on any Bill, or motion in which the Government expressed an interest, we saw those two hon. members rise in their places and vote against the Bill! Now, hon. gentlemen, how can we reconcile that fact with

the idea that the Government did what they could in favour of the Bill? If the Government had held out its little finger in support of the Bill, if they had merely whispered to them the necessity there was of supporting the Bill, can we for a moment suppose that it would have met with the fate which it did? And again, if the Government were earnest in their wish to pass that Bill through Parliament, why was it so readily dropped after its being defeated in this House by so narrow a majority? Why should not the Government have brought it up this year, and came forward and said—This Bill must pass; it is to enable us to carry out a certain engagement into which we have entered, and we bring it before you again, and you shall pass it, or if you will not, we fall with it. I do not say that that is a likely course to be adopted by the Government of the day, but I say that such is the course which they should have pursued had they wished to persuade us of their integrity and good faith. Then, again, to proceed a little further, what shall we say of a Government which could give to the light such a document as that precious Minute of Council of September 20th, 1875. I can only describe that document as one more worthy of emanation from the office of some low attorney than from the office of the grave Council of State, for it was a document so purposely obscure and untranslatable, and to capable of different constructions being put upon it, that even one of the principal supporters of the Government among the press of the country, the great *Globe* newspaper of Toronto, gave it one explanation one morning, and the next was obliged to eat its own words, and say that it meant exactly the opposite! Then, to come nearer the present time, let me mention the very last Minute of Council which has seen the light, that of the 13th of this month. I do not know whether all hon. members have seen that Minute, or whether, at all events, they have read it with attention, but I can only characterize it as a document remarkable for the wordy special pleading contained in it—not the grave, conciliatory and kindly Minute which one would expect to find addressed by the supreme power of the State to one of its component parts, to a Province under its own care, but rather the work of a lawyer trying to make the most of a bad case, of an advocate fighting a matter to the bitter end with his opponent, and this document at its end, throwing to the winds all argument and

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