

shortest line. I moved an amendment on that occasion, to the effect that the choice should not be final, but should be referred to the House for approval. A majority of the House was induced to negative that amendment, but in order to get their followers to negative it, the Government had to make promises to them, and the promise was that no line should be adopted except after the most complete surveys. Sir Charles Tupper, who had charge of that measure, spoke as follows in reference to the motion which I had before the House:—

"It is intended, before any line is adopted, that the shortest and best route shall be ascertained by competent engineers, and the Government shall locate the line upon the report of competent engineers, upon what they find, after careful examination, to be both the shortest and best line."

This was the promise made by Sir Charles Tupper upon that occasion, but, complete and thorough as it was, the Minister was questioned by some hon. members in order to have the assurance if possible more complete than it was. The then member for Lévis, Mr. Belleau, said:

"I would like to ask the Minister of Railways if the Government is disposed to admit the principle, that, besides the engineer, who is to be appointed by the Government to make the exploration, other engineers who may be suggested by the Provinces interested, could be admitted as parties to the exploration."

And the answer of Sir Charles Tupper was:

"We will be only too glad to receive any suggestions of that kind."

Not satisfied with this, the hon. member for Temiscouata (Mr. Grandbois) went on further and expressed his satisfaction and the reason why he would vote against the amendment which I proposed:

"After the very explicit statements made by the hon. Minister of Railways, it will be readily understood that it is my duty to vote against the amendment moved by the hon. member for Quebec East; otherwise I would have hesitated a great deal, as the county which I have the honor to represent is one of the counties the most interested in having the short line built exclusively on Canadian territory. The resolution states that the shortest and best line will be chosen, which enables me to hope, Mr. Speaker, that the line will really be built on Canadian soil, and will go through Rivière du Loup, as the hon. member for Quebec East has said."

So this was one—not only one, it was the paramount reason for which the member for Temiscouata voted against the amendment, that the Government pledged themselves to have the whole of the lines thoroughly surveyed before they made a choice. Now, I charge this upon the Government, I charge them deliberately on the floor of this House, that they have not kept the promise they made last year. They have broken the pledge they then made. This, perhaps, may be considered hard and strong language, but I use it advisedly, and I repeat that the Government have broken the pledge they gave last year when they said no selection would be made until after the most complete and thorough surveys. After the departure of Sir Charles Tupper, the Department of Railways was put under the control of the hon. the Minister of Agriculture, whom I am sorry not to see in his place when this matter is before the House, but I must say in his absence, as I would say in his presence, that strong objections were taken at the time to the Department of Railways being put under his control because he was supposed to be interested in one of the lines which were to be surveyed, and which might afterwards be adopted and selected. The complaints came not so much from the Opposition press as from the Ministerial press. I will quote here the opinion of a Ministerial paper published in Montreal, which is a strong supporter of the Government—it cannot be objected that it is not a most Conservative paper—I mean *L'Etendard*.

Mr. GIROUARD. An Independent paper.

Mr. LAURIER. An Independent paper which warmly supports the Government, but it offered a good example to some members in reference to the Franchise Bill. That is the only question on which the *L'Etendard* did not support the Government:

Mr. LAURIER.

"It is really unfortunate from many points of view that Mr. Pope, the Minister of Agriculture, immediately after the departure of Sir Charles Tupper, was charged with the control of the Department of Railways. Rightly or wrongly it is stated that this gentleman has a considerable personal interest in causing the new railway to pass by Sherbrooke. It is even stated that a considerable portion of that railway, of which the hon. gentleman is said to be the *quasi* or exclusive proprietor, is to be bought by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company at an immense profit for Mr. Pope, if he succeeds in getting a route selected which would permit the incorporation of that portion of the road into the new road. We do not know personally how much truth there is in this statement, but we can hardly believe it. But we do not hesitate to say that Mr. Pope should not have been entrusted with the control of these matters as long as there exists the least reasonable suspicion that he has a personal interest to serve in this connection. Not only would he then become a judge in the case, not only would he, one of the chief officers of the State, find himself in a position to be able to serve his own personal interests to the detriment of the State, but such a state of things would create an immoral and dangerous precedent."

Such is the opinion of *L'Etendard*. Now, during last summer numerous complaints were made in the press that the surveys which were made were not *bona fide*, were not thorough, but that they were partial. Another paper to which objection will not be taken as being a Conservative paper, *Le Canadien*, spoke as follows on this matter:

"This exploration is not made. What is now taking place is a farce, a snare, and a sham exploration. The instructions given to the engineers are insufficient, and the engineers are the first to admit it."

*L'Etendard*, speaking again upon this subject, said:

"The apprehensions of the adversaries of the Sherbrooke line would seem to be, to a certain degree, justified by the fact that Mr. Pope, Acting Minister of Railways, is said to be partial to the extent of not giving to the engineers the instructions necessary to insure an impartial survey of the different rival routes."

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is only fair to the Acting Minister of Railways to say that he stated the other day that he had nothing whatever to do with these surveys. Well, whoever had anything to do with them, the fact remains that the surveys are not accurate, and particularly are not complete. The Acting Minister states that when he took charge of the Department he would not act in this matter. That he entrusted it to the Prime Minister, and that the Prime Minister was responsible for all the surveys. Sir, this story is not new, it is as old as humanity itself. It is the old story—I am not the one, but the woman whom thou gavest to me to wife, she is the one. Whoever in this matter is the tempter, or whoever is the fallen one—whether the Prime Minister was the tempter and the Acting Minister of Railways the tempted, or whether the reverse was the case—and I am rather inclined to believe that the Minister of Railways was the sweet Eve on this occasion—whoever was the guilty one, the fact remains that the subsidy has been granted to, and the selection has been made in favor of a railway in which the Acting Minister of Railways is directly interested, and this has been done after the promises made by the Government last year that no selection should be made except after complete surveys. These promises had been broken and violated. Now, Mr. Speaker, I proceed to show in what manner and to what extent these surveys are incomplete. In the first place, it was generally understood last year that no subsidy should be given to a line passing through foreign territory until it had been ascertained by surveys that it was impossible to find in our own territory a line, not as good, but almost as good as the line over the foreign territory. What was then the first thing to be done? The first thing to be done was certainly to have this line which was projected exclusively upon Canadian soil fully surveyed. A line was suggested by the way of Edmonston and Rivière du Loup. It was then said, and it has been repeated several times since, that as good a line, a line almost as short, and a better line, in respect of gradients and curvatures, could be found upon Canadian soil by the way of Rivière du Loup. Two routes were proposed to connect Rivière du Loup and Edmonston. One was by the way of the valley of the Rivière du Loup, and the other was by the way of Rivière Ouelle. It would appear