

what people generally understood by the Union Pacific was the whole road from Omaha to the Pacific—the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific taken together—and then the Minister read a communication from the American vice-president of the company instituting a comparison between the Union Pacific and the Canadian Pacific railway, which I thought was exceedingly unfair—I mean the comparison was unfair. The company said and the Government said that it was unfair to compare the road which is laid down in the statutory contract as being the standard for the Canadian Pacific Railway with our line. They say we should take the whole road—the Central Pacific along with the Union Pacific, that it is true the grades of the Union Pacific are not as steep as those on the Canadian Pacific Railway, but if you take the two roads together then the Canadian Pacific Railway, taken altogether, is better in the matter of grades. But what does the vice-president of the company do? When he comes to institute a comparison between the American and the Canadian road, he does not take the whole road, but takes the Central Pacific alone, the one on which the most difficult work of the American road was. Any one can see that it is most unfair. He says, take the 1000 miles or whatever it is of that Central Pacific and you get so many grades over 50 feet per mile; and then, instead of taking the section of the Canadian Pacific Railway corresponding with it—that is the section say between Calgary and the Pacific—he takes the whole, including the prairie section. Any one can see that is a most unfair comparison. If you wish to compare the two roads throughout then compare them throughout. If you want to compare the road from Winnipeg, take the American road from New York, or St. Louis, or some point like that. There is this feature, I think, in connection with the grades on the Kicking Horse Pass route which is a very objectionable one. One of the arguments which we heard a great deal of when this road was about being constructed, and at the time the contract was before Parliament, was that we would have a much better road than any American road.

HON. MR. POWER

HON. MR. PLUMB—So it is.

HON. MR. POWER—The company were not to be limited to this provision in the contract: that was put in the contract more as a matter of form than otherwise. It was not to be merely equal to the Union Pacific, but the intention was that it was to be superior; and it was pointed out that we had a great advantage over the United States lines because the summit in Canada was much lower than any pass through the Rocky Mountains in the United States, and the summit indicated was the Yellow Head Pass. Can it be supposed for a moment that if the United States company had a pass like the Yellow Head which they could go through without having a grade exceeding 53 feet to the mile that they would have adopted as a permanent thing the more difficult passes with steeper grades? Not at all. They were obliged to take the passes that they did take; but we had a pass which had been carefully surveyed and on which there was no grade exceeding 53 feet to the mile—I mean a road had been located there with gradients of that character.

HON. MR. PLUMB—The hon. gentleman is mistaken; the road was not located there.

HON. MR. POWER—The hon. gentleman may be sheltering himself behind a technicality. The road has been carefully surveyed there, the line laid down, and it was ascertained that no grade was over 53 feet to the mile; and it was stated in the contract with the company which I have before me now that the line should go through the Yellow Head Pass. Now the company chose, and the Government chose, as I think most improperly, in the face of the statute and in the face of their experience, to leave that admirable pass and select a pass where there are permanent grades of 116 feet to the mile; and the conduct of the Government and of the Company are both indefensible. The road across the prairies, I understand, is a very good one, and I am not saying anything against the character of the road as to workmanship; but I think it is a great misfortune that this route should have been taken through the mountains, because it handicaps the road forever as a