

shall call to the attention of the House at this moment, to this effect :

The company shall within thirty days after the passing of the Act confirming this agreement and of the Act incorporating the company hereinafter referred to, deposit with the government \$5,000,000 in cash or approved government securities, or partly in cash and partly in such approved securities, at the company's option, as security for the construction of the western division and for the first equipment of the whole line of railway, as provided for in this agreement.

Now, Sir, these are the salient features of the contract which we have made with the Grand Trunk Pacific Company. Compare its terms with the terms which were granted to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company in the session of 1880-1881.

Twenty-five million acres of land were granted to the Canadian Pacific Railway—not an acre of land is granted to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company.

Twenty-five million dollars was paid in cash to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and works were handed over to that company which had been built by the Canadian government at the expense of the Canadian people, the cost of which was at least, if my memory serves me, \$35,000,000.

Therefore the cash aid which was given to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company was in the neighbourhood of \$60,000,000—the cash subsidy which is promised and which is to be given under this contract to the Grand Trunk Pacific Company will not exceed \$13,000,000 or thereabouts.

Under the contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for 20 years there was an exemption of competition—in this contract there is no exemption whatever. Everybody is free to compete with the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company and the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company has to face competition from whatever quarter it may come.

Exemption from taxation was given to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company in a manner that is felt even to this day in the North-west Territories and Manitoba—not one dollar of exemption from taxation is given to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company.

Now, Sir, I think under such circumstances that I can appeal with some confidence to the judgment of the House to ratify, and to ratify with earnestness and with joy the contract which I have the honour to lay upon the Table. Canada has made greater sacrifices, I imagine, than any other nation in the world for the benefit of her people, in building railways. These sacrifices were rendered necessary on account of our geographical position. We border on a powerful country which had a long start on us in the march of progress and which was in such a condition that it could well afford to leave railway construction to the unaided effort of private enterprise. These greater sacrifices on our part were rendered neces-

Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

sary likewise by the immensity of our territory, by the sparseness of our population, and the imperative duty which was cast upon us of binding together all the groups into which our country is divided. Sometimes, indeed more often than otherwise, the terms granted for railway construction in the past were excessive and perhaps extravagant. But, looking back upon the history of the past we can all see that even in the face of these excessive terms the result has been beneficial.

We offer to the House to-day a contract which is free from all clauses which were the blemish of former railway contracts, and which is far superior to them in every other respect. Sir, it can well be said that of all the inventions for which the last century has been famous, perhaps the one invention which has had the greatest potentiality for civilization has been the discovery of the locomotive and the railway. Justin McCarthy in his 'History of our own times' writes, that when Sir Robert Peel was summoned from Rome to London to assume office as Prime Minister, he travelled in the same manner exactly as 1,500 years before Constantine had travelled from York to Rome to become Emperor. The writer remarks that each traveller had only the power that horses and sails could lend to speed him on his way, but, had Sir Robert Peel made the journey a few years afterwards he would have covered the distance in the space of about forty-eight hours. The railway has been the great agency of civilization in the last century. It has done more to bind nations and nations together than any other human agency. It has removed old prejudices by enabling peoples and nations to know more of each other, and it has made union possible where but for its aid ignorance would have continued to sow its seeds of discord and strife.

The Canadian confederation would have been a union on paper and a union on paper only, but for the fact that the Grand Trunk Railway, and the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Intercolonial Railway brought all parts of our country together to act in unison and to beat with the same heart. This new railway will be another link in that chain of union. It will not only open territory hitherto idle and unprofitable; it will not only force Canadian trade into Canadian channels; it will not only promote citizenship between old Canada and new Canada but it will secure us our commercial independence, and it will for ever make us free from the bondage of the bonding privilege. For that reason alone, in my estimation, it would be worth all the sacrifices and far more than we are called upon to make.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

The PRIME MINISTER. Sir, it is therefore with a firm heart that I offer this