

Mr. McINNES. Then, I will speak to that motion. When the committee was considering this Bill the other evening, I began a few remarks, and quoted at considerable length some of the remarks that had been made by the hon. Minister of Railways last session in connection with the country through which this railway is proposed to be run, and the policy which the Government then held with regard to retaining the trade of that district for Canada. An insinuation was thrown out by two or three hon. members last Friday evening that there was a desire on my part in making these quotations, and on the part of some other hon. members who were opposing this Bill, to obstruct its progress. I certainly disclaim any such intention. This is a very important measure. To my mind it is the most important measure that has been introduced into this Parliament this session. If you will reflect upon the permanent nature of the industries which are likely to arise there, and the large population which will undoubtedly go into the country, you will see that its trade will necessarily be enormous. In fact, I do not hesitate to say that the commercial interests involved in this Bill are even greater than those involved in the Yukon Railway Bill, because there is this difference, that while there will probably be as large a population in the Kootenay and Boundary Creek district that there will be in the Klondike, it will have this advantage over the Klondike, that it will undoubtedly be a permanent population, and the industries of the country will be permanent. I say I disclaim any intention of speaking simply for the purpose of obstructing the passage of this Bill. If it were necessary to do that, I could talk at considerable length, and might possibly attain the object of killing the Bill by this means; but such a course would be manifestly unfair to those who are seeking charters by Bills which are on the Order paper after this Bill; and, apart from that, I have every confidence in this House, that when all the facts in connection with this matter are presented, they will defeat the Bill, and it will not be necessary to resort to any such tactics as it was insinuated we were attempting on Friday evening I was dwelling, when I was interrupted last evening, on the enormous mineral wealth of this district. I quoted from the speech of the hon. Minister of Railways (Mr. Blair) last session—a speech delivered by him, as he stated, with a good deal of authority and confidence, he having visited that district but a short time previously—as showing that that district was undoubtedly one of great mineral wealth. I also quoted the report of Mr. Hans Geise, one of the most eminent mineralogists probably of the world, who not only depicted in the most glowing terms the greatness of the mineral wealth of that district, but also made a forecast of the future and predicted that it would be-

come one great line of city life. Having established that that country is undoubtedly rich in mineral wealth which is bound to give rise to an enormous and valuable trade, I proceeded to observe that it was the avowed policy of the Government to retain that trade for Canada, and in support of that statement I quoted some other sections of the same speech delivered last session by the hon. Minister of Railways and Canals. I have now before me a speech delivered on the same occasion by the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright), which I shall proceed to quote, in order to show that last year, at all events, it was the undoubted policy of the Government to do everything in its power to retain the trade of that promising region for eastern and western Canada alike. The hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce, speaking on the Crow's Nest Railway proposition last session, said:

I believe that the construction of a railway into that country will, in all probability, lead to bringing there a population of many thousands of customers, who will afford a very valuable market to the inhabitants of the north-west portion of Canada, and also to our manufactures in the east. More than that, I agree with him also that it is a matter of moment to us that the great traffic which certainly will spring up, if the representations which have been made to us are confirmed even to only one-tenth or twentieth of the extent to which they appear likely to be confirmed, should be preserved to the people of Canada. A great deal of our trade is now being diverted to American channels.

I would call the attention particularly of hon. gentlemen to these observations:

I need not say to business men in or out of this House that there is no one thing more certain than that if once that trade be allowed to flow into American channels, we shall find it extremely difficult to recover it. These are two reasons sufficient to induce us to do what otherwise we might hesitate to do, ask the House to proceed with an enterprise which necessarily involves an addition of three or four million dollars to the public debt.

It is therefore evident, Mr. Speaker, that the policy of the Government last year with respect to the Crow's Nest Pass Railway was one intended to retain the trade of that section of British Columbia for Canada. But we do not require to go into the records of last session to arrive at the conclusion that this is undoubtedly the policy of this Government. During this session, we had introduced into this House a measure which was defended by the Government upon the very same ground. One of the great reasons, in fact the principal reason assigned for building the Yukon Railway was that the trade should be kept for our own people. While many of us differed in opinion as to the nature of the agreement by which this good purpose was to be attained, yet that sentiment being so strongly announced by the Government and being so prominent in that measure led a great number of us