

A UNIQUE PRODUCTION.

Among the bundle of parliamentary papers which reached the Times office last evening was a copy of the resolution expressing condemnation of the Grand Trunk Pacific contract. Senator Macdonald gave notice of it in the upper chamber. The instrument is a unique thing of its kind, and we take the greatest pleasure in producing it in full. It is so charged with contradictions, and therefore so completely in harmony with the speeches of Conservatives in the House of Commons, that the conclusion is obvious that the author must have been inspired by his leader to take the initiative in the division of parliament whose members are popularly supposed to be least amenable to party discipline, and therefore most likely to view from an independent standpoint the important matter now before the people and their representatives. Possibly also the success of the Senator in killing another measure intended primarily and particularly for the benefit of the people of British Columbia, tempted him to make a new venture. This province has not yet fully recovered from the blow then inflicted. We lost our opportunity then. The words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his great speech introducing the Grand Trunk resolution applied specially to our case then as they apply specially to the condition of Canada now: "Now is the time for action; the good tide is upon us and leads us on to fortune. If we let it pass it may never recur again; if we let it pass, the voyage of our national life, bright as it is to-day, will be arrested in the shallows." "We cannot wait, because time does not wait." "Time lost now during our wonderful development is doubly lost."

The resolution reads:

Resolved, that this House considers that contracts for important public works, involving a large expenditure of money, or extensive land grants, should be placed before parliament for consideration before ratification, and not afterwards.

That the system now in practice does not afford members of parliament sufficient time for due consideration of public important questions.

That it is exceedingly reprehensible to have the most weighty and important measures placed before parliament in the last days of the session.

That the House does not approve of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway proposition, as presented by the Premier in the House of Commons, and consider its inception inconsiderable, and its fulfilment unnecessary under existing transportation conditions.

That the entering upon a scheme of such gigantic character as that proposed by the government, without proper surveys and exploration of the route having been first made, is reckless and unjustifiable.

That the outlay for the work contemplated is more than the country can adequately bear, together with the annual additions to borrowed capital.

That the leasing of the contemplated railway to a company is injudicious, and may be considered a free gift—that the proposed security to the country is insufficient and illusory, and stands to increase the public debt.

That in default of interest, and sinking fund by the lessees, it is not desirable in the public interest, to attach rolling stock and operate the contemplated railway, when constructed, as a government railway.

That governments do not operate railways as economically as private companies do.

That the country has an object lesson before it in the partial failure of the Intercolonial railway.

That this House should object in the most unequivocal manner to railways being constructed and operated by governments.

That the necessity does not exist for the government proceeding with the proposed railway—that the contract, as submitted, is entirely on one side and a sacrifice of public interests.

That the Canadian Pacific railway, with its excellent transcontinental line, and branch lines into the wheat and cattle country of the West, together with the rapid construction and extension of the Canada Northern railway, will in a reasonable time be in a sufficiently advanced position to afford our agriculturalists the necessary transportation facilities.

That the government—with the public treasury at its command—should consider, and hesitate before doing any act which may lessen and divide traffic on the Intercolonial and Canadian Pacific railways, or cause competition.

That the one is entirely the creation and an asset of the country.

That the other has been largely aided in its construction by public grants of money and land, and is filling a highly essential place in the commercial economy of the country, and its usefulness should not be lessened.

That this House approves the action of the late Minister of Railways, Mr. Blair, in withdrawing his support from the proposed railway, and in strengthening his conviction in so emphatic a manner by resigning his portfolio rather than be an unwilling party to an unwise and injudicious project.

That the prominence given by the Premier, on the introduction of the National Transcontinental Railway bill, to an all-Canadian route is not worthy of much consideration. Canada does not build railways for military, but for commercial purposes.

That their extension into a foreign country is desirable in the interest of trade, and has little to fear from the suspension of the international "Bonding System"—the advantages being as much to one country as to the other.

That the Atlantic ports, Halifax and St. John, are now reached and available to the railway system of the Intercolonial, and Canadian Pacific Railway Company—anything said to the contrary.

That Port Simpson being now a depot harbor is a myth; and is the same bleak shore it was in 1896.

That the surrender of seven years' interest on \$18,000,000—equal to \$3,780,000—will be a heavy charge on the public revenue, is an unbusiness-like proposition, and a loss to the country which cannot be made up on the principle of "Free trade as it is in England."

Why the patriotic Senator fled from the capital immediately upon giving notice of his intention to move this wonderful production of his fertile imagination is yet to be explained. Possibly someone called his attention to the numerous contradictions in its terms. What can be the cause of the Senator's evident animus, displayed on more than one occasion, to the northern portion of British Columbia? Why does he desire the transportation business of Canada to be made a special preserve for all time for the C.P.R. and the Canadian Northern railways? Hon. Wm. Macdonald must be a man of much more contracted or attenuated view than he is given credit with being—a supposition almost impossible of contemplation—if he really entertains the opinion that under no circumstances shall Canada enlarge the bounds of her transportation system. We hope the Senator before the end of the five-year term given the Grand Trunk Company to finish its new line will be able to proceed to Ottawa where the northern road, and that the effect of the trip will be to broaden his conceptions of northern British Columbia and of northern Canada generally. He did well in fleeing from the face of his stupid resolutions. And yet it is a pity someone cannot be found to assume responsibility for it. The opposition to the railway policy of the government has thus far been merely a travesty upon the word debate, and the dissection of such an extraordinary pronouncement as the Senator's would have introduced the culminating point of absurdity.

COMPLETE COLLAPSE.

It is as we suspected. The Conservative party as a party has decided not to oppose the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway. It will make a show of opposition just for appearance sake, and to justify its existence as an opposition. It will tell the people of Canada how much better bargain it could make if it had the opportunity, and the people of Canada will contrast the bargain it did make when it was in power with the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway. It will make a show of opposition just for appearance sake, and to justify its existence as an opposition. It will tell the people of Canada how much better bargain it could make if it had the opportunity, and the people of Canada will contrast the bargain it did make when it was in power with the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway.

The Liberals have not given away an acre of the public domain since they were called to power. That was a principle they laid down when they were in opposition, and they have adhered strictly to it. Let any reasonable man consider the tremendous increase in the value of the assets of the country when the new transcontinental road is completed, and he will realize the vital importance of the project to the Dominion and to the different provinces whose public lands extend along the zone affected by the line. We knew it would be only a matter of time until this feature of the contract would permeate the understanding of the opponents of the government and convince them of the futility and impolicy of the frantic, frenzied attacks they were making on the undertaking. Add to the entire absence of any land grant the very small liability the Dominion will assume in comparison with the tremendous expansion of the public debt on account of the C.P.R. at a time the credit of Canada was not nearly so high as it is at present, and the absurdity of the opposition attacks will be thoroughly appreciated.

Now the cry is that the construction of a new transcontinental line is necessary and that the demand for increased transportation facilities is urgent, that the terms of the government's contract with the Grand Trunk are not absolutely vicious, as was at first supposed, but there is no guarantee that they will be carried out, and the country has treated that part of Canada it at present serves so badly in the matter of rates that it should not be given an opportunity to treat other portions of the country after the same manner. This is in line with the reasoning of Senator Macdonald, who says the C.P.R. and the C.N.R. are sufficient for Canada. We would recommend the critics to read the agreement with the Grand Trunk Pacific Company. They will find in that instrument the fullest guarantees for the protection of shippers and for the fulfilment of the terms of the contract to the very letter. Nor are the provisions to remain inoperative until the company has earned 10 per cent. upon its capital as was provided in the one great undertaking the Conservative party managed. The government will have absolute control of rates. If within the specified time the company fails to meet the interest on the cost of the eastern section the deficit will be added to the capital invested by the people, while if the company continues in default the whole of the line with its rolling stock may be taken over by the government in satisfaction of its claims. This provision proves how grotesque is the claim that there is no guarantee that the Grand Trunk Company will meet its obligations either as to interest or operation. It cannot discriminate against the eastern section without injury to the western section. It must work the line as a whole with the purpose of making it a financial success, and the management has no misgivings whatever about doing that, or the name of Charles M. Hays

would never have been subscribed upon the documents.

Nor is the clause providing that other companies may secure running rights over the line merely put in for spectacular effect. It is possible that if the leasing company had supreme control it might make such terms as would shut out all rival lines. Therefore the government retains the right to arbitrate any possible differences. It can step in at any time and fix the terms for joint operation.

Every conceivable contingency has been provided for. The rights of the people are protected under any seemingly impossible developments. The opposition realizes that the scheme is going to be the most popular one that has ever been submitted to the country, and if it carries its attack to the hustings the collapse will be as ignominious there as it has been in the Houses of Parliament.

Hon. Robert Green, whose countenance indicates that the mission to Montreal was not a complete failure, says the Liberal leaders are not capable of giving British Columbia good government. Leaders of the wide capacity, extraordinary depth, unique ability, unimpeachable integrity and unassailable probity of Hon. Richard McBride and Hon. Robert Green are the men the country has been looking for ever since the discovery of the conspiracy to rob the province on behalf of the C.P.R. There is no question about that. But what British Columbia needs at the present time is not men who hope to obscure their connection with the "old gang" by tagging themselves as Conservatives, but men of character and ability—men of character especially. The party which gives the people the men they are looking for will win. The grafters and bootlickers of previous legislatures have all donated Conservative garments, as the electors will realize when they scan the list of nominees.

A Conservative who has just returned from the East informs the Vancouver Province that "the people of all shades of political opinion seem to think that the railway is the thing they want, and are united on the general move to have the road built. They think that the opening of a new country in the West would give a big trade, and that is what they are after." That is what we are after in British Columbia, too. Public opinion in the East must be very nearly unanimous on this subject, or the Conservative party, which had started a campaign of unprecedented virulence, would not have beaten so precipitously a retreat. The country is practically unanimous on this important question; upon the advisability of building the C.P.R. on the terms contracted for by a Conservative government it was almost evenly divided. No wonder the grand old party is in a funk over the mistake it has made and dreads the thought of a general election at the present time.

Senator Macdonald, acting on behalf of the Conservative party, and therefore speaking in the name of the Conservative party, says: "That Port Simpson being now a Depot Harbor is a myth, and is the same bleak shore it was in 1896."

Is it true? Is it spoken in ignorance? Or is it merely the expression of commend it, and with a record which is anything but a strength to the party, the Conservatives must depend upon the "still hunt" in their campaign. Liberals are more likely to express their own views, and therefore, not allow themselves to be misled, but must be prepared to offset the advantages won by tactics which are despicable.

To-day is the last for registration of voters, and the duty of the electors is to enter their names on the lists to-day.

P. F. Venables has been mentioned lately as the Conservative candidate for Richmond electoral district. Mr. Venables is apparently quite willing to accept the position. The News-Advertiser says: "When questioned on the subject Mr. Venables said that he had been approached by many people in all sections of the riding and requested to come out. He had told them that he would not take any action in the matter until the convention was held. If, however, no local man came out, he was willing to do so. The plan of the men behind the enterprise is to elect Mr. Venables. Whoever was selected by the convention as the Conservative candidate would have his support, and he would do all in his power to have him elected."

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