

man who had deceived them once, and had granted what he asked. I told him that that was followed up by a more conspicuous and a more ignominious failure, and that then it was contended that we were obliged to provide a subsidy for the poor sub-contractors and for the laborers along the line, and that was to settle the matter for a Session or two; but then it is well known—what is the use of discussing it—that hon. gentlemen were brought under pressure from the hon. members for Pictou and the other counties in that section to provide for the dissatisfaction which existed in consequence of the failure of the promises of the hon. gentleman. Those that trusted that company trusted it on his certificate. Sitting here as a member of the Government of Canada, he had declared that that company was competent and was responsible, and would build the road, and the people said: We trusted you, we did not trust them, we have lost our money, supply the deficiency, or we will vote against you; and, under that threat and under that terror, Parliament was asked again to supply the money. We did it, but once again a system of deception was practiced, because the Minister of Railways says it was then decided practically that we should do much more, that we should not confine ourselves to the amount which was voted to complete this link, but he had come to the conclusion and had pressed it upon his colleagues and upon the Minister of Finance—he says in the summer—that it was plain, it was inevitable, it must happen, if we were going to do the other thing which this Parliament had voted to do, that we could not leave this undone, that we could not leave the broken link, and that we must have all understood that. I said that Parliament was not supposed to act without any exhibition of frankness and candor by those gentlemen, that Parliament was not supposed to be governed by them as autocrats and commanders, but that they were simply a committee of this House and could not command Parliament without giving sufficient information. But then again we were to be led on by degrees to build the railway in Cape Breton. They said: Build the railways you shall know the rest some other day.

Mr. POPE. When we ask for the money.

Mr. BLAKE. Yes, but when the hon. gentleman asks for the money, he says that there was a policy which would involve a further expenditure, but he keeps the rest to himself because he does not want to tell the electors of Canada what the matter is when he seeks their suffrages once again. I strove to draw the moral as to our course in the event of the Minister of Railways of Canada, under these circumstances and at this day, coming down with his record of broken promises, of violated faith, of want of candour and frankness, and being unable to tell us within ten miles what the length of this road is, whether it is sixty or seventy miles, or what it will cost, and calling upon us with a well-grounded confidence, I admit, from the experience of the past, to go it blind, as he would say, once more. The hon. gentlemen says I have always been admirably fitted for special pleading. He has bettered my instruction. He came dangerously near the point once or twice, but he travelled far away, and adopted every recourse to obscure what the plain and simple issue is, what the story of the past and the issue of the present is. He says I was obstructing and opposing this grant as I had obstructed and opposed everything of the kind. I deem it my duty in every case to present to the Commons of Canada what I think is their duty to adopt in regard to any demand of the Ministers, to ask for that full information which will enable them intelligently to judge of the propriety of the ministerial proposals, and to vote as men and not as automatons. That I have done in the past, and, to the best of my poor ability, I shall do the same in future, notwithstanding the failure of past times, in reference to transactions in which I consider it necessary; and I am to be misrepresented as obstructing and

Mr. BLAKE.

opposing, because I call for that information which it is well known is always given in such cases in the Imperial Parliament. I will go on; I will bear the misrepresentation and the misconstruction; I will continue to discharge my duty. The hon. gentleman has said the road is very important. Did I say it was not important? Not at all. The hon. gentleman spent a long time and gave us some of his old speeches, almost in the old words. I remembered them as he rolled them out, about this "Grand European and North American Railway." Some of the old phrases came again as he described the importance of this road. Well, then he says that, last summer, he spoke to the hon. Minister of Railways about it. The Minister of Railways, according to his statement—we have got witnesses now upon this subject—told him that he, himself, had thought it was necessary: he had about come to that conclusion, but he had not presented it to his colleagues. He was not the whole Government, though rather an important wheel, I think, myself, but still, not the whole Government. Of course, he could not say more, so that the thing was not settled, except in so far as the mind of the hon. Minister of Railways had settled down in that direction. The thing was not settled by the testimony of the Minister of Finance; it was not settled by even more than his testimony, by that which makes his testimony absolutely certain—by his own acts six months later; because this happened in the summer. But in the winter, when he came in, he did ask that this question might be raised; he asked for a decision of his colleagues; he called for it, as he acknowledges, and asked that it should be put in proper form; and I trust that what was done in the shape of any Order in Council last January or February, will be laid upon the Table before we go much further with this resolution, so that we may see it. Well, it was the doing of the Minister of Finance, after all. The Minister of Railways decided six months before that he would propose it, but with greater caution, and consideration, and care, than he has sometimes exhibited, he had not done it until the Minister of Finance came up to Ottawa and had accepted a seat in the Government, and was going down to Cumberland, Colchester and Pictou. And, said he, I want to bring the Order in Council down with me to show the electors. And this was his demand, an extraordinary demand it was, for he was in that position that he could have taken almost everything. Do you remember what Lord Clive said, in the course of his trial before a Committee of the House of Commons when they were accusing him of having taken a trifle of one or two hundred thousand pounds from the servile populations amongst whom he was. "Good God! gentlemen," said he, "when I think of it I am astonished at my own moderation;" and in the position of the Minister of Finance I think he might well repeat that observation. Am I certain that that is all? No, Sir, I am by no means certain. If I could only be sure that it was the only Order in Council—I would not merely advise the Minister of Finance to make that his own exclamation, but I would almost re-echo my own expression of surprise. But I expect to have some other and less pleasant surprises; I expect to hear something more. For example, I have another little telegram here. It was not to Nova Scotia this time, it was to New Brunswick. It is dated from Parrsboro', a classic spot in the county of Cumberland, Nova Scotia:

"February 11th, 1887.

"To R. O. WELDON, Hillsboro', N.B.

"I intend to submit to my colleagues a proposal to consolidate the branch railways with main line, by which greater economy in administration will be effected, and much greater utility to the country secured.

"CHARLES TUPPER."

In the county of Albert there is a railway or two; there is the Albert Railway, which does not pay its working expenses, but which is furnished with an ample lot of ballast—in a word, with stocks and bonds which are upon the Lon-