

Hon. GEORGE P. GRAHAM (South Renfrew). Mr. Speaker, I have listened with a good deal of interest to the address of the acting Minister of Railways, and I am sure he will not accuse me of discourtesy if I decline to follow him in much of his speech. I regret, with him, the absence of the Minister of Railways (Hon. Mr. Cochrane) on account of ill-health. Had he been here, one thing is certain, a great many things that have been said by the acting minister would have remained unsaid. My hon. friend asked quite dramatically: Whom did the late Government appoint on this commission? He replied to his question: Why, a grain dealer, another merchant and a lawyer; and he felt satisfied that that answered the query very satisfactorily, to himself at least. Now, let me put another question: Who is over the present commission? A doctor from Prescott—and he admits that he is doing it well. The hon. minister tells us how well the member for Grenville, the acting Minister of Railways, is managing the Railway Department; how economically, if he is allowed to stay in the position, he is going to construct the Hudson Bay railway; how much wisdom as a specialist he has already brought to the department—and yet he never in his life turned a sod for a railway. That argument, Sir, is the argument of a demagogue, appealing to men perhaps outside of this House—because I cannot imagine a man in this House taking any stock in it—who may not give the matter the consideration that members of this House do. Who is at the head of the Government of Canada with all these experts under him? A lawyer, and not an engineer. Why, Sir, the assertion is too silly to be considered for a moment. Is there an engineer at the head of the Canadian Pacific railway to-day constructing so many thousands of miles? There is not. Is there an engineer at the head of the Grand Trunk railway? There is not. Is there an engineer at the head of the Canadian Northern railway. There is not. And how do they manage these great enterprises? They surround themselves with engineers of the best calibre they can get, and they take their advice from their engineers just as the Minister of Railways takes his advice from his engineer. What is needed at the head of a concern of that kind is a man of executive ability. He may come from the purchasing department of a railway, as one of the great presidents and managers has come, and make a wonderful success of it, if he knows how to handle men and has executive capacity.

I want to point out one thing to this House, and I want the Prime Minister to listen to this.

### **An Error of \$41,000,000.**

I charge that the acting Minister of Railways made a misstatement to the extent of \$41,000,000, as to the amount of capital on which the Grand Trunk Pacific would have to pay rental after the year 1923. That only shows the mad and reckless way in which this Government is prepared to handle the figures in order, first, to injure the late Government, and, secondly, to discredit the Grand Trunk Pacific. I have made the statement—and I challenge any member, from the Prime Minister down, to dispute it—that the acting