

character of the road as to grades and curves, though the character of the structures is, to some extent, inferior. I did not say or imply that I wanted this information for the purpose of making any charge against the Government.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I did not understand you to do so.

Mr. BLAKE. I said expressly I did not mean to make or imply any charge of impropriety in regard to altering the character of the road; but I said I thought that the country was interested in knowing what the real change was in the efficiency of the structure we were to get at the reduced price—which I still think a very reasonable demand, although every person in the House does not appear to agree with that view. The Minister of Railways objects to my inquisitiveness, saying that he gave me very important information already. But no information produced at all indicates what the grades and curves are to be in the British Columbia section, or were to be on the 200 miles west of Red River; and we do not know, in these important particulars what the modifications were to be. We knew the grades were to be deeper and the curves sharper—that was told us before the Session; but we did not and do not know what the grades and curves were to be while a close estimate was made on the 2nd April last, by the late engineer and another by the present engineer, since that time Ministers must know what the present standard of grades and curves is, and there should be no great difficulty in telling us the facts. However, it is of great consequence to get early all the information procurable. I think it is important to get all asked in the motion. I hope the hon. gentleman will not find I have asked for too much, for more than his own engineers Mr. Smith and Mr. Cambie gave him, with reference to the British Columbia line, as it was then proposed to be constructed. Why should we not have the information now, as it was given then. I think the motion reasonable, and that we should have expected the information without any demand, for our assistance as an element in the discussion. I am glad to know the hon. gentleman will give us, early, all he can get, and hope we shall obtain the rest at some time or other, not distant, as even then it would be interesting as a relic of the past.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The hon. gentleman is quite correct in saying that I confined my statement to the maintenance of a first-class road between Thunder Bay and Red River. At the same time, I am prepared to state that the road in British Columbia, as now going on, and in conformity with the contracts originally made, will, I think, be a very good and sufficient line for all the traffic that will require to be carried.

Mr. BLAKE. I believe that.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I will relieve the mind of the hon. gentleman and the House, when I state that there will be no curve on the British Columbia section sharper than any on the Intercolonial, and no grade heavier than on this road.

Mr. BLAKE. Does the hon. gentleman mean to say there is not a very bad grade on the Intercolonial?

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I do not; but I can say it is a first-class road.

Mr. MACKENZIE. It is not. The hon. gentleman knows there is a grade on the Intercolonial under 700 feet radius.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. It is, nevertheless, a first-class road.

Mr. MACKENZIE. No; that portion will have to be rebuilt when there is any great traffic.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I could name half a dozen first-class roads in the United States with sharper curves

and steeper grades than the Intercolonial possesses, and which are not only regarded as first class roads, but accommodate an enormous volume of traffic.

Mr. PLUMB. Yes; the Hudson River road, between Albany and New York, has steeper grades, and it is considered a first-class railway.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I will submit information, apparently not covered by the motion, including the additional correspondence, which will embrace all the surveys not yet laid before the House.

Motion agreed to.

STEEL RAILS.

Mr. BLAKE moved for a statement showing the quantity of steel rails and fastenings bought by the Government in 1879, and average price thereof, together with statement of interest on such price from date of payment at the rate at which part thereof are to be conveyed to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company; the quantity already delivered and the dates of such delivery, and dates at which undelivered are due; the quantity already used by the Government, and quantity required for completion of the Government part of the railway; the quantity which will remain for conveyance to the Company and the price thereof according to contract as of its date 21st October, 1880; the market value of such last mentioned quantity on the average prices for each of the months of September and October, 1880, and on the price of 21st October, 1880.

Mr. PLUMB. There are one or two omissions in this motion which, I presume, occurred through inadvertence, and, before the motion is adopted, I beg to supply those omissions by proposing the following amendment:—

That the motion be amended by adding to it the following words:—
“And also a statement showing the quantities of rails and fastenings purchased by the Government in 1874, 1875 and 1876, showing the price thereof and the interest on such purchases from the date of each purchase until the said rails and fastenings were used on the Canadian Pacific Railway or elsewhere, and showing also how and where such rails and fastenings were used, what quantity remains unused, and the place or places where such remainder is stored.”

I think that in getting the information called for by this resolution, it will be desirable at the same time to have embodied in the report the information which I ask for, and I trust the House will be in accord in the view that this amendment should be adopted. There have been, as this House well knows, several purchases of steel rails in regard to which the public interest has been shown; and it is desirable in matters of this kind to avoid, as far as possible, multiplicity of documents and reports. I have no doubt, therefore, that the hon. gentleman will consent to the amendment, and perhaps it was through inadvertence that he did not insert in his own resolution a request for the information of such importance for the purposes of comparison as I ask for in my amendment. There are purchases of rails, and we like, when we get information of this kind, to have all the information that can be elicited by a resolution of this House.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. In furtherance of the laudable object which the hon. member for Niagara has in view, I would move that this resolution be further amended by requesting, that to the motion be added:

“And also the several quantities of steel rails bought since the 1st January, 1877, together with the prices thereof.”

If it is desirable to have any additions to the returns, let us go back to a reasonable time, ten years back, and then we will have all the information together.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. As the duty of making these returns will devolve upon myself, I am not very anxious to have the work of preparing them any further extended,