

that this gentleman, selected by his leader for so important a position as he now occupies, less than two years ago was a staunch advocate of the extension of the Intercolonial westward; that last year, as my hon. friend from Bothwell (Mr. Clancy) quoted him, he declared himself unequivocally in favour of government ownership and of the extension of the Intercolonial. Is it not a spectacle for gods and men that the hon. member for Westmoreland, who has been elevated to the important and responsible position which he now occupies, has been absent from this House practically during the entire time of this debate, that he has not once opened his mouth or raised his voice to give us one reason why he has changed his opinions, if he has changed them? If he now concludes that he was wrong in advocating the extension of the Intercolonial, he should be frank enough to say so; if he thinks the present scheme is more favourable, he should have the courage to express his opinions. It is not fair to the House or to the country that this gentleman, following in the footsteps of Mr. Blair, approving of all that Mr. Blair did up to the time of his resignation, should now turn around and swallow his previously expressed convictions.

Just a few words more before I sit down. The contention has been made again and again that if the Grand Trunk had been permitted to carry out its original scheme the result would have been that all the freight gathered at Winnipeg from the west would have been brought down through the Ontario system and find its exit to Europe via Portland. Addressing the shareholders of the Grand Trunk on March 8th, 1904, Mr. Hays said:

We are to-day handling from fifteen to twenty million—last year it reached 24,000,000—bushels of grain, which came across the lake from Lake Superior down to our ports, feeding the whole Grand Trunk system locally throughout Ontario, and this gives us the whole of the way from Montreal, thus contributing a very large portion of our earnings. We cannot hold that to our system if we do not take some means of fastening it to us. . . . That traffic will be lost to us if we do not tie it up, so that to-day the question is not what your position is going to be if you embark on this enterprise, but what it is going to be if you do not embark on this enterprise. That is the question that this meeting must decide to-day; that is the question to which you must give serious consideration. Your directors and your management have spent eighteen months at it.

That is one of the reasons why the Grand Trunk Company were so anxious to go on with their original scheme. Mr. Hays says they wanted to retain the traffic they now handle which comes to their Georgian Bay ports and goes over the Ontario system to Montreal; and they wanted to have access to the west so as to be able to secure the long haul on the vast traffic they now gather in Ontario and Quebec which is destined for

Mr. CLARKE.

the west. Mr. Hays is still steadily pursuing that policy. He has not deviated one hair's breadth since November, 1902, in the prosecution of the object he then had in view. He is still trying to reach the goal which he proposed to himself when he first made the announcement as to the intention of the Grand Trunk to gain access to the west. On the 25th of December last he says:

Our first object will be to get the east connected with the great lakes for summer traffic and then to give Winnipeg connection with the east. The people of the west want more railway facilities and we intend to give it to them as quickly as possible.

Well, Mr. Speaker, after they have made connection between the great lakes and the west, what then? Every pound of freight which comes down to Port Arthur is lost to the Grand Trunk Pacific, every pound of freight from the west when it reaches Fort William or Port Arthur is, according to the statement of the Minister of the Interior, absolutely and irrevocably lost to the Grand Trunk Pacific. That freight will be diverted from the main line of the Grand Trunk Pacific near Winnipeg and conveyed by a branch line to Port Arthur, it will be conveyed in vessels from Port Arthur to Midland and other Grand Trunk ports on the Georgian Bay; it will be taken by Grand Trunk trains over the Ontario system and find its exit at Montreal or Portland. So far then as the summer traffic is concerned, and I challenge contradiction of this statement, every wish, every aim the Grand Trunk had in view when presenting their original proposition can still be carried out by them, and will be carried out by them under the proposition submitted by the government. If we had any doubt about that, our doubt would be removed by reason of the statement made by the leader of the government of the province of Ontario on the 8th of this month when presenting his scheme to the legislative assembly for aid to the Grand Trunk Railway. What did he say?

The premier said it was proposed to aid a railway to be constructed from a point at or near Thunder Bay in a northwest direction about 200 miles, to intersect the Grand Trunk Pacific. The subsidy was \$2,000 and 6,000 acres per mile. It was agreed that the Grand Trunk Pacific should give immediate attention to this line, so that by way of the lake ports the province could have connection into Winnipeg perhaps four or five years before the main line of the Grand Trunk Pacific is completed. The Grand Trunk Railway by this connection would be able to deliver over its own route to the west what is now going by the Canadian Pacific Railway from Port Arthur. They wanted to encourage the Grand Trunk Railway to make Sarnia and Goderich distributing ports to the heart of the Northwest. There would be Grand Trunk Railway steamers to Port Arthur, Grand Trunk Railway trains to Winnipeg and the west. A system of 2,600 miles would be connected with 2,600 miles west of Winnipeg. The growth of the connecting trade would provide freight for all the steamers on the lakes. The Grand Trunk