

The hon. gentleman chose to make a quotation from the speech of the right hon. leader of the government with regard to the bonding privilege, and to belittle the fears expressed by the Premier—to assert that those fears were groundless, and that it was all nonsense to talk about the danger of the abrogation of the bonding privilege. Why, Sir, said he, the Americans cannot afford to abrogate the bonding privilege; it would injure them; self-interest would prevent them from doing it. Why, Mr. Speaker, the Americans have threatened to abrogate the bonding privilege, not once, not twice, but repeatedly. Whenever friction exists, whenever bad feeling is aroused, one of the first things suggested in the United States is to bring this 'spoiled child,' as Senator Depew characterized Canada, to its senses by shutting it from access to the sea by the abrogation of the bonding privilege.

Mr. ROSAMOND. Nonsense!

Mr. CHARLTON. Nonsense! It is absolute nonsense to suppose that we are not in danger from this source, and it is nonsense to suppose that we are giving evidence of prudence and evidence of thought and care for our interests if we do not attempt to place ourselves in the position where we shall be independent of this threat, if our friends on the other side of the line choose to carry it into effect.

Mr. ROSAMOND. What is the matter with us now?

Mr. CHARLTON. There is nothing the matter with us now. We are going down to the sea all right, and if my hon. friend had his way, we would go to the sea through American channels eternally. What is the matter now is that we want an alternative route; we want to place ourselves in the position where we can defy the application of this threat if it is ever made in the future. The hon. gentleman (Hon. Mr. Blair) who addressed you is loathe to believe, he tells us, that the people of Canada are at the mercy of Americans. We are loathe to believe that. We do not believe it. But we simply want to take prudent steps to place ourselves in the best possible position in our relations with the Americans. We do not want to quarrel with the Americans. If the bonding privilege is abrogated, it will not be abrogated with our consent. They call it a privilege; and they hold that we are beholden to them for this privilege. But it is a privilege they can withdraw. They have threatened to withdraw it. That may occur again, and this threat they may carry into effect.

Mr. ROSAMOND. Not a bit of it.

Mr. CHARLTON. My hon. friend says not a bit of it. Well, he knows the American character better than the most of us. He knows their magnanimity. He knows the generosity with which they have treated this country for the past thirty-five years.

He knows how impossible it is for the Americans to be guilty of such an act.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend (Hon. Mr. Blair) characterizes this road as a sentimental road.

Mr. BROCK. Political.

Mr. CHARLTON. I do not know that he characterized it as a political road. He characterized it as a sentimental road. Well, it is a sentimental road. At the back of the proposition to build this road is a sentiment, and that sentiment is the freeing of Canada from the danger of being shut out from access to the sea. That sentiment is the development of Canada upon broad national lines. That sentiment is the building of a transcontinental road from ocean to ocean upon Canadian soil. That sentiment is the carrying to our own seaports, on our own roads, of the products of our own lands. It is a sentimental road. At the back of this road is the loftiest and noblest sentiment that can exist—the sentiment of patriotism, of love of country.

My hon. friend says that the question of profit and loss does not enter into the calculation. Well, we have carefully considered that matter also. While the road is a sentimental road, I think we shall be able to show that the question of profit and loss has received due consideration; and the conclusion we arrive at is that profit on the right side of the ledger will unite with sentiment in justifying the building of this road.

My hon. friend tells us that he would favour the building of a road under certain conditions. He says he would favour a well-considered line proceeded with at the proper time. He intimates that this is not the proper time, and he goes on to say:

Now in the immediate future there is no need of another road not even on the prairies.

Compare this with the speech made by my hon. friend less than a year ago, on the 9th of October, in Vancouver. He had been waited on by the Board of Trade of Victoria two days previous. He had been presented with an address, and the Victoria Board of Trade had in that address recommended government aid to the Canadian Northern Railway for the purpose of securing an additional line across the territory of British Columbia to the ocean. Inspired possibly by that address he made, in a speech at Vancouver on the 9th of October, use of the following language:

There is no country where the soil is more fertile than in the millions of acres in Canada which the plough has not yet touched, and which man has not yet invaded. Railways were necessary to open up these great fertile tracts. If we are to invite the people from the world outside to immigrate here, they have a right to expect that the government can assure them the means of transportation. That means a great many railways in many parts of Canada and we feel as a government that we have ample justification in going to all reasonable lengths