

gentleman; and carrying out the pledge he had made to Lord Carnarvon, he caused these further surveys to be made with a view to the location of the line, and having satisfied himself that the best line that could be adopted was the line to Burrard Inlet, the hon. gentleman proceeded to put an advertisement in the papers calling for tenders for the construction of 125 miles from Kamloops to Yale. I heard with amazement, the other night, a statement from the hon. gentleman that he had not decided to do that work, that he had not fully made up his mind to do it. I am perfectly aware that it is legitimate for a Government going to the country, under the great discouragement which the hon. gentleman was compelled to go to the country—I am quite aware that it is legitimate for them to present a programme as attractive as they can for the consideration of the country; but I am astonished that the hon. the then First Minister of the Crown should deliberately, in his own Department, call for tenders involving the expenditure of large sums of money by intending contractors, for the construction of 125 miles of railway through the canyons of the Fraser, a most difficult and inaccessible locality, and afterwards state to this House that he did it deliberately, on the eve of an election, without the intention of carrying it on to completion. The hon. gentleman stated that he was upholding the honour and integrity of Canada; that this work should be carried on to completion as vigorously as possible, and that he had pledged himself to Lord Carnarvon that the surveys should be prosecuted as rapidly as possible, and that, as soon as they were completed, the road should be located, and not less than \$2,000,000 per annum should be expended. With that pledge he asks for tenders for 125 miles of Railway. That was the hon. gentleman's obligation, from which there was no escape; and there was the additional pledge to British Columbia that that work was to be immediately undertaken. I ask the hon. gentleman to tell this House, if he had not finally made up his mind to proceed with the construction of the Railway from Yale to Kamloops, why he made the contract involving a payment of \$32,400 to a contractor to carry rails from Victoria to Yale? Does the hon. gentleman mean to

say that, not content with holding out to the people of British Columbia that he was going to build the Railway, he was absolutely going to take out of the public coffers \$32,400 to remove those rails from Victoria to Yale, without having satisfied himself that he ever intended to strike a blow? That is a proposition, I am satisfied, the hon. gentleman, on reflection, will see is utterly untenable, and he will find himself in a position that no possible argument on his part could justify. Well, under these circumstances, the Government found themselves brought face to face with the great question of the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway forced upon them. The course which had been pursued by the late Government, and by the late Finance Minister, was that of holding up to the country the enormous and gigantic obligation that this work would involve, and the hon. gentleman felt it his duty to give the contractors all over the world, who might be invited to construct this line upon favourable terms, to understand that it was a work involving enormous expenditure, and that it would be disastrous to any contractor to touch it. We were under the necessity of dealing with this difficulty as a commercial undertaking, when it was in an entirely different position from that which it occupied when we were deprived of power. When we found ourselves brought face to face with this very serious question what did we do? We reverted back, as far as possible, under the changed circumstances to our former policy. Our policy was this: That the lands of the North-West ought to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. That was the principal plank in our platform. The late First Minister in his address at Sarnia, covered the whole ground when he said "that it was impossible ever to draw emigration into that great country and settle it without the construction of a Canadian Pacific Railway." We held that opinion, and we felt that, inasmuch as that great fertile North-West must remain a barren waste until the Railway was constructed, and that inasmuch as those lands were the most fair and fertile, and the richest to be found on the face of the globe, and that they must remain useless to Canada unless the Railway was constructed, we felt warranted in adopting the policy