

have safeguarded, the interests of the people of Canada in a matter of such vital importance to them. So I say that the government need not be surprised, as we on this side of the House are certainly not surprised, that the legislation passed last session was to a certain extent abortive, and that they were obliged to consider further modifications which the Grand Trunk Railway Company insisted upon before they would proceed with their part of the undertaking. When the proposition of the Grand Trunk Railway Company to obtain access to the west was announced publicly, I think on the 25th November, 1902, members of the government spoke favourably respecting it. We on this side of the House are charged, as if it were an offence, a crime, that we favoured giving permission to the great Grand Trunk corporation to enter Manitoba and the Territories. We certainly were glad to notice that this great company which has its ramifications throughout the older provinces of Ontario and Quebec and which has an immense mileage in the well settled portions of these provinces, should endeavour to gain access to Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, but the conditions under which that access could be gained would of necessity have to be settled later on by parliament. But if it were an offence, a crime, something wrong on our part to advocate that the Grand Trunk Railway Company should be given permission to go into Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, we sinned in company with the hon. gentlemen opposite, because when this scheme was first propounded by the authorities of the Grand Trunk Railway Company in Canada, when Mr. Hays and those associated with him in the management of the Grand Trunk Railway in this country made public their intention, not one word of disapproval was heard from hon. gentlemen opposite, and every minister of the Crown who gave an expression of opinion on the scheme of the Grand Trunk Railway Company spoke favourably, spoke hopefully, spoke encouragingly respecting it. The 'Globe' made an announcement on the 25th November, 1902, as to what the intentions of the Grand Trunk Railway were. In the same paper interviews appeared given to the representative of that journal in this city by members of the government. The hon. A. G. Blair, who was then Minister of Railways and Canals, declared that—

The extension of the Grand Trunk Railway would be a good thing for the country.

Not for any particular part of the country, not for any particular province, but for the country generally. The Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson) was also interviewed on that occasion, and he said that :

The proposed extension would be advantageous to the country.

Mr. CLARKE.

The Secretary of State, who is an important member of the government, is also on record. He said :

There would be lots of traffic for both railways. The extension would be built under advantageous circumstances, the money could be borrowed at 4 per cent and the new road could probably be built for \$25,000 per mile.

When this scheme was first propounded, when the announcement was made of the intention of the Grand Trunk Railway Company, there was no opposition, as far as can be gleaned from an examination of the press favourable to the hon. gentlemen opposite, on the part of the government to this proposition. The 'Globe' which is the leading organ of the Liberal party in Canada, and which was then edited by a gentleman who had the advantage, the distinction of close, personal and political communication and friendship with the right hon. Prime Minister, made an important announcement upon the subject. It stated that :

The spending of a hundred millions of dollars in the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway transcontinental system means much for all Canada.

The 'Globe' estimated that the more modest scheme outlined by the Grand Trunk directors of that time meant an expenditure of at least 100 million dollars in this country. The paper said :

The spending of a hundred millions of dollars in the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway transcontinental system means much for all Canada. . . . We should, however, deprecate the spending of such a vast sum. . . . were we not absolutely convinced that the capital invested in the Grand Trunk Railway continental system as Mr. Hays has outlined it, will pay handsome returns even before the road is built.

Here we have the proof out of the mouths of hon. gentlemen opposite, as well as from the editorial columns of the leading organ of the Liberal party, that as far as any expressions of opinion were given at that time in connection with the original project, those expressions were entirely favourable and in sympathy with the proposition that Mr. Hays then presented to the public. It is interesting to trace the several steps which have been taken in connection with this project from the time Mr. Hays made his first announcement as to the intentions of the company up to the present moment. The original proposition which, according to the authorities I have placed before the House, was intended and destined to do so much for all parts of the Dominion of Canada, was refused incorporation at the hands of hon. gentlemen opposite. The Grand Trunk was refused permission to extend its system from North Bay westward to Manitoba and the Northwest Ter-