

taxation resolution. With this knowledge we came to the discussion of the vote in supply for the construction of the Pacific Railway, and to that vote it was proposed to add words declaring that the grant was made "with the view that the arrangements for the construction of the Railway shall be such as the resources of the country will permit without increasing the existing rates of taxation." That vote was moved after the occurrence of all the events to which the hon. the Minister of Railways has alluded as imposing such dreadful responsibilities upon him and his friends. He has not indeed spoken consistently upon this point, for after all these events, after the making of these terms by which he alleged we were more tightly bound than by those of the Union, he declared to-night in one part of his speech that, we were obliged by them to do what? to finish by 1890? No! he says he does not hold himself bound to do that. To spend \$2,000,000 a year? No! he says he does not hold himself bound to do that. To build the Island Railway? No! he does not even propose to do that: so that while the hon. gentleman at one breath cries out: "I am bound!" "I am bound!" "I am bound!" like himself, he turns round the next moment and exclaims: "I am free!" "I am free!" "I am free!" But, Sir, after all these entangling negotiations, after all these chains and fetters had been wound round this unhappy country by the late unfortunate Administration, it had prior to the vote of 1876, fully declared its meaning; it had taken its stand, it had declared that it would not recede from or abandon the Parliamentary policy of the now increase of taxation. And the vote to which I have alluded, was, under these circumstances carried, not by a party majority, but by a united House. The vote was 149 to 10; among the majority were a large number of members and supporters of the present Government. I find in the majority four of the present Ministers, Messrs. Langevin, Masson, Bowell and Baby. I find there also, many active members of the party including you, Sir, Messrs. Cameron, of Victoria; Caron, Costigan, Desjardins, Haggart, Kirkpatrick, McCallum, Mousseau, Orton, Ouimet, Plumb, Robinson, Rochester, and White; besides many others; in all

forty-two, out of the small contingent which, at that time represented the Tory party in this House. We were on that occasion nearly unanimous. In that year, 1876, long after the making and failure of the Carnarvon terms, and after the Government had fully declared its meaning and its policy, this House was almost unanimous in favour of the view that the country was entitled to say, and was bound to say, and we did in the name of the country say that the arrangements for the construction of the road should be such as the resources of the country would permit without increasing the existing rates of taxation. This is the fourth vote recorded by Parliament in the same sense. Now, I claim that I have proved that apart from the serious, the dreadful, I hope not the fatal error of 1871, in declining to engraft upon the terms of Union this limitation—an error for which the Liberal party is not responsible, because it did its best to avert it; that apart from that error the continuous and unvarying policy of Parliament was before, and after, and notwithstanding the Carnarvon Terms that this road should not be so constructed as to necessitate any increase of taxation. What happened after the Session of 1876? The surveys had been prosecuted; some contracts were let, some progress was made. The Session of 1877 arrived. Was there any proposal from the Opposition declaring that we should proceed faster with the work, anything to alter the view taken in 1876? Nothing! The Session of 1878 followed with the same result, nor did aught occur to shake the deliberate, solemn and repeatedly affirmed declaration of Parliament on this subject. But, meantime, further progress was made, and to some enquiries the Government answered that it hoped to be able shortly to advertise for tenders for the whole work on the land and money basis, subject to the approval of Parliament. It was the policy of the Government at the earliest moment at which the condition of the surveys would permit, to take that step, and so to give a fair trial to the plan, the only plan by which the road could be constructed in any short time without increasing the rate of taxation; and if that trial failed, it was obvious the whole question must be opened afresh for consideration, and that it would be the duty of