

House of Commons Debates

THIRD SESSION, FIFTH PARLIAMENT.—48 VIC.

SPEECH OF HON. MR. BLAKE, M.P., ON THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY RESOLUTIONS.

OTTAWA, JUNE 16TH, 1885.

MR. BLAKE. Mr. Speaker, if the rest of the Cabinet do not desire to continue the discussion, I will trouble the House with some reference to the speeches we have heard, and the proposals on the table. I congratulate the hon. member for Picton (Mr. Tupper) upon the events of this day. I congratulate the High Commissioner upon the events of this day. Government brought him out before, and specially for the purpose of engineering the last Canadian Pacific Railway aid measure through. He came at their call and spoke, although not qualified to vote. He comes no more.

"Oh, for one blast of Roland's horn
On Fontarbian echoes borne!
Through the dark Ronces Valles pass."

As he came not, it was necessary to fill his place by a double performance. It was not exactly a duet. I can hardly call it a concerted piece, for there were some discords between several of the expressions and phrases. There was not that degree of harmony which I should like to have observed between the arguments of the hon. gentleman who moved and the hon. gentleman who seconded the resolution. We have had a speech, in at least two volumes, with this peculiarity about it, that the authors of the speech seemed to reverse the proper order of these volumes, because the modern history came in the first volume and the ancient history came in the second. We have had a joint composition. One was a speech composed of figures, and the other was composed of figures of speech. I will admit that there were a good many tropes in both. But, Sir, although I have, upon this occasion, to meet these two hon. gentlemen, who have taken a course unprecedented in

my brief parliamentary experience, on the occasion of a Ministerial proposition, of pressing two speeches in support of their measure before a voice from the other side was heard; although I have got to meet them both, the same spirit which induced them to think it was necessary that there should be two opening speeches, may, I hope, serve to sustain me in this unequal contest, as I have been sustained in former contests against the eminent statesman whose place they have attempted to fill. This is a great day for Quebec. Her Ministers have opened the battle. Her Ministers have commenced the war—in the absence, it is true, of the Minister of War, who may have gone away by the *Grand Nord*, for aught I know; but they have commenced the war. But would not one of them have done? Was it absolutely necessary that they should both speak. Would no one hon. gentleman from Quebec have been adequate to open the Ministerial proposition? Now, the hon. gentleman who spoke last at some length, closed his speech somewhat in the tone of Sir Charles Tupper, and in a course and strain of exhortation which we have heard not unfrequently when from that side of the House, they invite us to discuss the question. They say that they invoke criticism, that they challenge it, that they are not at all afraid of it, that they rather relish it. If our observations indicate that their policy has been injurious to the country, and that the country has been injured by their policy, oh, they say, you are decrying the country, you are injuring the country. Criticise us as much as you like, but admit that we have caused the country to prosper, and that our policy has been all that it should be. These are the conditions under which the hon. gentleman invites us to discharge our duty. Now, Sir, we