

"Why," says he "the county of"—and again somebody prompted him with the name "Cape Breton"—"I know," says he, that the county of Cape Breton has no railways and it ought to have railways." Thus we found the deep interest and the intelligent information that the hon. gentleman has on this subject. It reminds me of the well known story of the Duke of Newcastle, who also was a Minister of the Crown in former days, when a public functionary, one of those busy permanent officers, came unto him one day at the time when they were engaged in struggles with North America and in struggles with France. He said to him: "My Lord, my Lord, Annapolis is in danger; it must be defended." "Good heavens!" says the Duke, "do you mean to say Annapolis is in danger? Certainly it must be defended. Where is Annapolis?" Another day, in discussing a subject pertaining also to the Maritime Provinces, he was informed by his permanent officer that Cape Breton was an Island. "Good gracious! Cape Breton an Island? Why this is very interesting. I must go and tell His Majesty that Cape Breton is an Island." And so the Acting Minister of Railways, in attempting to satisfy my hon. friend from Inverness, balked at the port he was to name, balked at the county he was to name, and was obliged to be prompted both as to the port and the county when he was telling how near to his heart was railway connection with those points. I do not wonder that he altogether forgot Sydney; in fact I do not think he ever knew of it. Well, Sir, these, it seems, are not to be provided for this Session. But this Session has seen a good many unexpected turns. Few of us expected to be here at the present time, and how much longer shall we be here? I do not know, I am sure, whether we may not see a subsidy for Cape Breton yet, if my hon. friend from Inverness stands to his guns, even this Session. I know that I was assured most positively two years ago—for I have always taken an interest in this Cape Breton Railway; I have always felt that the Island of Cape Breton had been hardly treated with respect to railway facilities—I heard the Minister of Railways propose a moderate subsidy for the purpose of that railway. I said that I was very glad to hear that the Island of Cape Breton was going to have a railway, and the terms were discussed, and I asked the Minister, being anxious to secure that railway, whether he was quite sure that he was going to get that railway for Cape Breton at that price, and the Minister, Sir Charles Tupper, assured me he was quite satisfied, that the arrangements were made, that the company was solvent, that the conditions were settled, and that Cape Breton would have a railway. My hon. friend from Inverness and myself, metaphorically speaking, shook hands over it, and some hon. members thanked me for having said a good word for Cape Breton. And so it happened that three years ago we were to have a railway for Cape Breton, and now the Acting Minister of Railways says the best thing he can say to Cape Breton is, when he remembers the name, that at some time or other in the future, he proposes to make some further provision for a railway in Cape Breton; and that in the face of a direct statement made, I believe, by the hon. member for Inverness, that if that thing was not done before the federal elections, Cape Breton would return six members hostile to the Administration—and he could not say anything fairer than that. Now, Sir, we were promised last Session that all these objects should be obtained for the price, which was stated. The subject was discussed, the short line was discussed, the various connections with the Atlantic ports were discussed; and we were told the financial proposals of the hon. gentlemen opposite were made after full consideration, were made after full enquiry, were made after having counted the cost, and with the certainty that the results expected would be reached by that proposed investment, and upon the faith of that promise the House

Mr. BLAKE,

assented to the policy and agreed to the vote. And this Session votes of \$2,200,000 more are brought down to accomplish the same results which we were told would be accomplished by the votes of last Session. Now we are told that the Administration was out by that amount of money, that it is a comparatively small amount; and we know not at all, as yet, how much farther we may have to go to accomplish this object. Sir, I maintain that it is a disgraceful thing to have to say of a Government, that they bring forward proposals committing the country to very large financial expenditures upon such incomplete and inaccurate information as to render it utterly impossible for the Government to carry out those objects upon the terms on which we were assured they could be carried out. They come down Session after Session and say: We find we were mistaken and we want more money. Is it on purpose, is it by design? Is it intended to get the people and Parliament accustomed to these expenditures by degrees; is it intended that the country shall get accustomed to the notion of an expenditure of one or two millions and then the Government shall come down the following Session and say they require three or four millions for the work, and the people will be disappointed if the additional amount is not given and the work carried to completion? Is that the reason? Or is it simply incompetency and incapacity. What is the reason why hon. gentlemen commit the country to proposals on terms which turn out afterwards to be totally incapable of execution? The information given by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the Government upon which to base this very large proposal now before us is altogether scanty and inadequate. I am not going to discuss at this moment the information given by Mr. Stephen in his letter and the statements given from the opposite benches. I say no man can examine that information without feeling that it requires more thorough investigation and more full reports from engineers and experts and others before we can come to any reasonable conclusion upon it. We have before us no evidence whatever of the necessity or propriety or even of the character of many of the proposed expenditures, or of the necessity or propriety of many of the expenditures in the past. It is in the absence of such evidence and information as business men would require that we are called upon to act. How are we called upon to act? We are called upon to act in this way. Our interest is to be reduced to 4 per cent., although, as I pointed out last night, for the last six months we have been paying 5 per cent. on a loan which might in January last have been reduced to 4 per cent., and we are paying it because our Canadian Pacific commitments rendered it inconvenient for the country in the opinion of the Finance Minister to take the course of effecting the conversion, and we have been paying high rates of interest to the banks in the meantime as well. This company cannot borrow money anywhere else at 4 per cent.; I do not know whether it can at 5 per cent. I find that last fall it proposed a loan on the Ontario and Quebec system with its own guarantee for 5 per cent. at 92½, and it is said there were no takers or very few takers. They could not borrow at over 5 per cent. on what they say is a very profitable part of their system, with the guarantee of the whole Canadian Pacific Railway. It required a higher rate to tempt investors. Last year hon. gentlemen opposite, when they wished to induce the House to agree to the loan to the Canadian Pacific Railway told us that the country should get 5 per cent., and that it was a reasonable rate for such a company to pay and for the country to obtain; that the country was engaged in borrowing transactions and 5 per cent. would be a fair rate. Having so declared, they induced the House to agree to the loan. It was the boast of hon. gentlemen opposite that we were making