

S P E E C H
ON THE
CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY RESOLUTIONS,

BY
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DELIVERED IN THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA,

ON THE
19th of FEBRUARY, 1884.

Mr. SPEAKER—In rising to address the House on these Resolutions, I do so with much diffidence, inasmuch as I am a young member, and as so many able speakers have preceded me and have exhausted the subject. But when we consider the importance of this question to the Northwest, and that the interests of the Northwest are so nearly identical with those of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, I think it but right that some member from the Northwest should be heard with reference to these Resolutions. Now, Sir, a good deal has been said with reference to the Northwest by some hon. gentlemen who are not fully posted as to the facts. I propose to point out some mistakes that have been made. When this charter was granted to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, the Government had completed a line of railway from Emerson to Selkirk, and east from that to Cross Lake, and from Winnipeg west to Portage la Prairie. The moment they got that charter they commenced the construction of a road from Portage la Prairie westward, with a rapidity that has been a source of pride to the people of the Northwest.

RAPID RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

I think the hon. member for South Huron said it was a great disadvantage to the people of the Northwest that this railway was built so rapidly. To a certain extent he is correct. To those people who were in the Northwest previous to the granting of the Canadian Pacific Railway charter, it has been a source of dissatisfaction and complaint; and for this

reason, that previous to the granting of the charter, there were two streams of immigration flowing into that country, taking Winnipeg as a starting point, one to the southwest, towards the Pembina Mountains and the Turtle Mountains, and the other by Portage la Prairie and to Shell River. The people in the southwest expected the road then controlled by Mr., now Senator Schultz, to pass their doors; and the people in the Northwest expected the Canadian Pacific Railway to pass their doors, because the Government in their maps laid down the line of railway they were about to construct as running in that direction, and the people therefore settled there. When the work of construction by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company began, people, instead of striking out in a northwesterly direction, settled along the line of railway. What was the result? The people already settled, instead of finding markets, found no markets; there was a lack not only of railway market, but they were not able to sell their produce, as previously, to incoming settlers. But I take it that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company have other duties and other interests to look after than merely the interests of the original settlers in that country. The interests they had to serve were the interests of the whole Dominion. They had to build a railway from ocean to ocean as rapidly as it could be built; and in that rapid construction they have developed a country which otherwise would not have been developed as it has been. This is a very important consideration, looking