

would be a pleasure to us all, the improvement of the efficiency of the Civil Service. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Blake) alluded to another Commission, which he said was of much more importance. In the first place, he protested against such a Commission at all. He said, I protest against this as in 1873 I protested against the other Commission on the Pacific Railway Scandal question. He protested it was unconstitutional, improper, altogether contrary to the principles which should actuate any Government, or should be sanctioned by any Parliament. Among other things, he said the Government should not choose their own judges. Well, this is not a matter of judgment. There is a special Statute on the Statute book providing that, whenever any enquiry is necessary for the good government of Canada, the Government of the day shall have power to issue a Commission and demand an account. So the power of the Government, under the Act, is beyond a doubt. If they have that power, they must, of course, have power to select the Commission. I will venture to say that in this case the choice of the Commissioners will do no discredit to the Government in the eyes of the House or of the country. It was announced in the House, press and country that there had been gross improprieties—this had been made the battle-ground of both parties—there were charges and counter charges of misconduct of official subordinates, and even insinuations as well as assertions with regard to members of the Government. It is absurd to suppose that a Committee of the House could by any possibility satisfactorily examine into matters of that kind. It would be a farce, a most perfunctory enquiry if made here, in Ottawa, dragging witnesses from British Columbia and the Georgian Bay, for the purpose of a full enquiry. The only consequence of this enquiry will be this: if the Commissioners will carry out their commission honestly and impartially, they will enquire into all the proceedings connected with the railway. They will report without fear, favor or affection, what they consider has been wrong, what extravagant, what well done—what parties are liable to censure, who are worthy of praise. I can only say this—and if my word be doubted, we can prove to the House—that not one single word of instruction, not a single word of insinuation, not one hint has been given to the Commissioners or any of them as to the manner in which they should perform their duty. The Commission itself tells them what the object of the enquiry is. They are told, there are your instructions, and there are to be no other. The Government sent no officer with them to guide them, no legal man to push a charge against one man or withdraw a charge against another. They left the Commissioners completely unbound in the future, to go where they might, to do what they chose, to call such witnesses as they pleased. I believe it will be satisfactory to the House and country to have a thorough enquiry, the more especially before one of the measures of the Government—that of transferring to a railway company the construction of the road—is adopted; that the exact position of the road, the exact truth or falsity of the charges, insinuations or suggestions that have been made may be ascertained the exact state of the case at the time the road is handed over by the Government to the company be fully known. The enquiry should elicit the facts as to the circumstances under which the Government and Parliament of Canada handed over this great work to this great company. In the meantime, no man is condemned by that enquiry, no one convicted by it. As the hon. gentleman said, it is a Commission of Enquiry, and therefore must, in one sense, be a one-sided tribunal. It must be appointed by the Government of the day, and therefore it may be supposed the Government ought to have some influence or interest in the selection of the Commissioners. But, that enquiry is not binding or conclusive upon any man. Every man, the moment the report is submitted to the House, can come before Parliament, and claim a Committee of the House, and protection from

Parliament, if he thinks that, either by act of the Commissioners, or by the slurring of his case—by the avoidance or bringing up of any testimony, for the acquitting or clearing of any man, any injustice has been done. This House will readily protect any man or any number of individuals who can make out any case of injury or prejudice to their standing by the evidence taken before, or the report of, the Commission. But the most extraordinary feature is this, that the hon. gentleman, while in the first place he protests against the Commission as being improper, illegal and unconstitutional, states it is a one-sided tribunal, that we ought to have men on it from both sides. But the hon. gentleman would not sit on it himself. When the last Commission was issued in 1873, the hon. gentleman and his hon. friends protested against it as being unconstitutional; they would not sit on it; and they would not sit on it now. It would be absurd to ask those hon. gentlemen to sit on a Commission which they declared to be unconstitutional and improper. The hon. gentleman to-day took up the same points as at Toronto, in his successful campaign there, and might have therefore spared us the repetition, which had rather the air of a twice-told tale. But with respect to this same Manchester matter, it arose thus: I was in London, not as Mr. Bethune said, because I was afraid to meet the electors of West Toronto, but I was in England on the purpose, which you all know, that of forming the syndicate. Fifteen members of Parliament connected with the Manchester interest asked to see me. At first I thought it would be no good, but on the whole concluded it would be discourteous not to meet them. I was told it was for the purpose of these gentlemen attempting to impress upon me the injury that the trade of Lancaster and Manchester especially were suffering from our tariff, and I met them for that purpose. Instead, however, of their pressing upon me as a member of the Canadian Government, the great hardships that they complained our fellow-countrymen in Manchester and Lancashire were suffering from; instead of making an appeal to Canada to alter the tariff in order to assist their trade, these gentlemen got up and delivered me a Cobdenite lecture, telling me the people of Canada were fools, that our tariff was nonsense, that we were ruining Canada, and for the salvation of Canada it was absolutely necessary we should alter our tariff. I was inclined to say, the people of Canada knew their own business as well as the people of Manchester. The hon. gentleman ought not to have taken that verbal criticism on my remarks, when he said I spoke in the present tense. I was giving them the reason why Canada ought to alter the tariff, and was showing that under the influence of free trade when our markets were open to the American manufacturers and theirs closed to us, we had no hope of manufacturing in Canada, and that all the ability, constructive skill, skilled labor, everybody in fact but those who were engaged in agricultural labor, was drawn to the United States. In order to prevent this, this tariff was introduced, and I believe the tariff was and would be successful in one of the objects for which it was got up. The hon. gentleman says I stated it was a revenue tariff. It is a revenue tariff and an incidental protective tariff at the same time. The hon. gentleman may remember for years and years the Conservative party adhered to the one statement that the tariff should be so readjusted that while it would meet the revenue requirements of the country, and equalize the revenue and expenditure, it would incidentally, at the same time, develop and foster the varied interests of the country. That is the resolution which I moved years ago. It was carried out after the present Government came to power, and I say it here, and the country knows it, that both objects have been gained, that we have changed a deficiency into a surplus, equalized revenue and expenditure, restored confidence at home and abroad in the resources and credit of Canada. At the same time honorable gentlemen opposite cannot but fail to see that in