

the cheapest commercial connections between the two parts of our own country. If, Sir, we can annex commercially a part of Minnesota—as the hon. gentleman said the other day: Why not do it? But I want to go further, I want to annex, not only Minnesota, but Wisconsin, Michigan, Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Washington Territory. I believe they can be annexed to a great extent if you direct your energies and use your scanty resources wisely, and so get rapidly this efficient line, instead of spending ten years and many millions of money in struggling along the north shore of Lake Superior to find your way to the North-West. Of course, everything in reference to the problem of transportation is in a state of transition. Not merely is the cost by railway diminishing and likely to diminish, but also, owing to other circumstances, the cost by water though our routes is likely to diminish. Our water-ways are being enlarged, and it is said by experienced persons that even that measure of enlargement which is being given, will enable grain, under the most advantageous circumstances, to be carried 45 to 50 per cent cheaper than it can be carried at present in the full size Welland canal vessels. The problem, which of the two agencies, rail or water, will win in the competition for transportation, may be said to be in doubt. The actual cost, not including profit, to take the grain from Selkirk to Thunder Bay, 400 miles, would be on an average road 4 cents. I have already said that you can double freights on that railway, and therefore you may fairly count the rate of actual cost, at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents, making no allowance for profit at all. It is pretty clear, I think, from what information I have been able to gather, that you can freight the grain in large vessels on Lake Superior at from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents from Prince Arthur's Landing to Goulais Bay, the smaller sum being the actual cost, and the larger one embracing a profit; and the average rate from Goulais to Montreal is  $6\frac{1}{2}$  cents, making a total of  $10\frac{1}{2}$  cents. If you go by the lakes, you pay  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents to Thunder Bay and thence to Montreal 7 cents making a total of  $9\frac{1}{2}$  cents for actual cost exclusive of profit, so that at present both routes are nearly equal, and at present both routes are very good if only you resolve not to hand over those advantages which you have bought and paid for to others that they may profit by them, instead of your countrymen. I have to advert to another topic of minor, but still of great importance. I do not think that the facilities and regulations as to rates for connection with Ontario line are adequate. I quite agree that the system might perhaps be adequate, if this great corporation had its terminus and the end of its connections at a given point, at Lake Nipissing, but it is obvious from what we know of the position of the Syndicate, from the very contract itself, which contemplates the amalgamation of the Canada Central with the railway company, from the powers given it to purchase other railway companies, that we are or may be dealing with a corporation composed of one gigantic railway stretching all the way to Montreal. If the object is to take traffic from that railway at Lake Nipissing, it is clear there are devices known to astute railway men by which that may be avoided. They may charge to Nipissing a very high rate from the West. It would be no consequence to them if a low rate were charged from Nipissing to Montreal on the line of the Canada Central. You will be dealing with a corporation whose interests will lead it to send the traffic in a particular direction and you must guard carefully against wrong. Now I want nothing for the Province of Ontario except to secure that she shall not be placed at a disadvantage. I am sure no hon. gentleman will refuse her that. What I want is that she shall be so guarded that she shall have a fair chance to compete for that modest share of the traffic that ought to come to her, and I do not believe that this security is given her. Now, I cannot understand why it is that this monstrous bargain has been

Mr. BLAKE.

brought down to Parliament, how it is that Ministers who, during the last session of Parliament, told us that they were able without infringing upon or burdening the resources of the country to construct the Pacific Railway, should bring down a plan which does not relieve us from the burden of its construction, which obliges us to go on spending our money for ten years to come, which involves a total expenditure by us of \$60,000,000, and the total cession of 25,000,000 acres of our choicest lands, and which hands over to a private corporation the whole profits of that expenditure and a vast monopoly and incalculable boons of various kinds. The hon. gentlemen did go too far last session. They insisted on building at once in British Columbia. They alarmed the country by what they did. Had they proceeded in the business-like way suggested, had they gone on with the Thunder Bay branch and the prairie section, had they agreed that our finances could not stand the strain of building in British Columbia, there would have been no reason for them to do the thing they have done and invite Parliament to pass the contract they have laid before us. But they did that thing, they made those statements which the public mind did not credit, and they felt that they were bound to make some other arrangement to escape from the difficulty into which they had plunged themselves. They go to England and they make the attempt. It turns out that they did not succeed in England. The First Minister said that they had very nearly failed, and that when they left England they had not succeeded in making a bargain at all, that details which were so vital that disagreement upon them would nullify the whole proceedings were still in suspense when they came here, and remained in suspense some six or seven weeks after they arrived. Prudence demanded that they should simply say that negotiations were going on and that they hoped to succeed in arriving at a conclusion; but the hon. gentlemen would not wait. They announced a triumph; they announced that they had already made their bargain; that the contract was "firm;" and by such an announcement placed themselves in the hands of those gentlemen who formed the Syndicate. They could not afford thereafter to differ from those gentlemen. In what position were they to differ from them. The hon. Minister had announced, and the people had accepted his utterance, that a bargain had been made which would ensure the construction of the railway without cost to the people, and induce a great flow of immigration into the North-West. What in the world could he say if, after being here seven weeks, he should be obliged to give the lie to those declarations and to say: "I had made no bargain at all, I had only agreed upon some certain general lines. All those details remained unsettled when I spoke to you, the Syndicate and we could not agree to terms, and consequently we are where we were." That would indeed have been a great humiliation. To the chance of that humiliation he exposed himself, and in order to avoid it I do not doubt he has passed many anxious hours struggling with the men in whose toils he had placed himself, and endeavouring to obtain some terms less bad than those to which he has been obliged to submit in the end, struggling from day to day, scrutinizing, considering, and endeavouring to get these gentlemen to take something less than the bargain they insisted upon. They knew that the First Minister could not afford to declare that what he had stated was not correct, and that they could press him to bargain after bargain, to stipulation after stipulation, point after point, additional pound of flesh to additional pound of flesh, until they had their fill; thus it is that this contract has been prepared. A contract might have been presented containing altogether other terms which might have been worthy of our adoption. This contract is worthy, in my opinion, only our rejection. I shall not venture to hope that this House will reject it, but I do not doubt that an indignant country, although you will not give it time