

greatness of this Dominion so largely depended. He was not afraid to discuss the whole question with the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, now that the reign of passion and excitement was at an end, whenever challenged to do so by language such as the hon. gentleman had used that day. He came from the extreme east—from almost the most eastern point of the Dominion, and even there or elsewhere he would not be afraid to defend his vote and action on this question, and if to-morrow on a hu tings, in his own county, he would be prepared to stand or fall on the scheme he supported in 1872 for the building of the Canada Pacific Railway—in opposition to the policy of the present Government, if their vacillating, reckless, ruinous, and he would add, disingenuous course of action, could be dignified with the name of a policy. There was one particular in which the company scheme had been censured in certain quarters, and that was the shortness of the time allowed for the construction of the road, namely, ten years. He did not think that any one expected the road to be completed within that period, nor did he consider that those who nevertheless supported the limit of time were fairly chargeable with duplicity towards British Columbia on that account, as had been argued by some persons. It was necessary to fix such a limit as would convince the country of the earnestness of the promoters of the scheme, but otherwise it was not inflexible. But it should be remembered that although this might have been an embarrassment to the company it rather was an advantage in many ways to the Government, and therefore to the country, as a means of retaining greater control over the charter. When the Union was inaugurated, the old Provinces were promised the Intercolonial Railway in three years; but nearly thrice that period had since elapsed, and the Intercolonial was yet unfinished. Still no one charged the late Government or the present with bad faith because of the delay, for the work had been pushed on with reasonable dispatch. So it would have been with the Pacific Railway, and Columbia, in common with the rest of the Dominion, would have been satisfied if the undertaking had been carried out with reasonable expedition, and in a way to show that its completion was really intended at the earliest period possible. That was the sense in which the time limit was understood by all parties when the subject was before Parliament.

With regard to the motion before the House, the arguments of the hon. mover had not only been met, but no attempt had been made to meet them fairly. That hon. gentleman contended that the Georgian Bay road was useless; that the country through which it ran was rocky and sterile, and altogether unfit for settlement, which had not been successfully contradicted; that there was no trade or travel to be accommodated by it, and none likely to be called into existence by its construction. All these positions appeared to be unassailable; and in view of these facts the wonder of the taxpayers of this country was, why millions of their money, in a time of great public depression, should be thrown away without benefit to the country. Was it strange that people should say that the only man these millions would benefit would be the contractor, and that they should marvel what the obligation could be that required so dear a liquidation? (Hear, hear.) But it is said the Georgian Bay Railway is a branch of the Pacific line of the late Government, although we all know that the eastern terminus of that line was to be at Lake Nipissing, and therefore that statement was contrary to facts. But supposing the Georgian Bay road formed part of the scheme contemplated in the charter, the liability of the country was not increased one dollar by it. The company was to receive a fixed sum for whatever they were required to do, in full of all claims against the Dominion. The case was different when the Government were constructing the Pacific Railway as a Government work—a scheme to which the hon. gentleman's language to-day would fitly apply. Then, supposing it was a necessary part of the road, why build it now; why build it twenty years in advance of the period at which it would be required; why build it before the main portion, and the most needed portion of the railway could be completed? Those were the points at issue to which the hon. gentleman did not deign to refer, but from which he had tried to draw off the attention of the House by their old stratagem—by empty declamation about the mad policy of the late Government, when it was the policy of the present Government that was under the consideration of the House. (Hear, hear.)

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER D^s ST. JUST—
I think the hon. gentleman's statement is not quite correct as to the value of the Northern Pacific Railway shares.