

undertook to build the road. What do we find further? That Mr. Mackenzie, for his party, introduced an amendment to the resolution, and surely that must be taken as its policy on that occasion. What was the amendment? Have we a direct resolution against the annexation of British Columbia or the construction of this railway? By no means. It was in these terms:

"That the proposed terms of Union with British Columbia pledge the Dominion to commence within two years and complete within ten years the Pacific Railway, the route for which has not been surveyed, nor has the expense been calculated. The said terms also pledge the Government of Canada to a yearly payment to British Columbia of the sum of \$100,000 in perpetuity, equal to a capital of \$2,000,000, for the cession of a tract of waste land on the route of the Pacific Railway to aid in construction, which British Columbia ought to cede without charge in like manner as lands of Canada are proposed to be ceded for the same purpose. This House is of the opinion that Canada should not be pledged to do more than proceed at once with the necessary survey, and after the route is determined to prosecute the work at as early a period as the state of its finances will justify, and that the further consideration of the said terms be postponed with a view of obtaining some modification thereof."

Mr. MACKENZIE. A very good resolution.

Mr. IVES. If the hon. gentlemen opposite can construe that resolution into a stern and determined opposition to the admission of British Columbia upon the condition of the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, they are quite capable of explaining the inconsistency between their course last Session and this Session. On motion for the reception of the report by the Committee, Mr. Mackenzie said: "it had been stated the other evening over and over again during the debate, that he had stated he regarded the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad as a pressing political necessity. He denied having made any such statement." He thus continued:

"He would admit, however, that he would be willing to subject the country to some inconvenience in order to obtain communication with the Pacific through Canadian territory. He was in favor of opening up communication immediately through the country lying between the head of Lake Superior and Red River. From that point to the Rocky Mountains the way was comparatively easy, and quite clear enough for the use of immigrants passing into the North-West country. On the Pacific slope there was no doubt, but that it would be necessary to expend large sums from time to time as the financial condition of the Dominion permitted, in opening up a good route to this side of the Rocky Mountains, but this country should not be bound to construct within so short a time such a gigantic work."

The present member for Centre Huron (Sir Richard J. Cartwright) also declared his views on that occasion. What were they? They were represented in the form of an amendment in which he proposed that, instead of absolutely agreeing to build the road in ten years, that the Government should agree to use their best exertions to complete it in ten years. When the Pacific Act of 1872 was introduced, the Liberal party did not take ground against the construction of the road. They merely objected to the details, especially to the powers taken by the Government with reference to the location, the chartering of a company and other details. But nowhere, from first to last, do I find any determined opposition to the construction of the road, or to the commencement of the construction as soon as the surveys should be made. But we are not confined to this, although I think the best indication of the policy of the present Government is the resolution and Bill of 1872 and subsequent enactments. When the Liberal party came into power in 1873, what do we find them doing? The Premier introduced a Bill in which he provided for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, and in which he passed through this House, the first resolution in favor of the work being undertaken by the country and the Government. Prior to that time, neither party had assumed that responsibility. But he went further than the leader of the Conservative party had ever gone, so anxious was he that that work should be constructed. He undertook, in case he could not find a company to undertake it, to construct it by the country and for the country. He made a second treaty with British Columbia, under which, so far as the Government

were able, he agreed to spend not less than \$2,000,000 on the mainland of British Columbia every year in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. He purchased large quantities of rails, which he transported at great expense to the Pacific coast, for the purpose, we must presume, of building the Pacific Railway in the Province of British Columbia. Further than that, he asked for tenders for the construction of that whole line, on a basis of \$10,000 in money, and 20,000 acres land per mile, and he asked also for tenders for that particular section, from Yale to Kamloops, about which we heard so much last session. Even in the motion of the present Leader of the Opposition, which was made in this House last Session, and argued at such great length, he did not dare to attack the policy of constructing the Pacific Railway, but simply proposed to defer the construction of it for a certain period of time.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. Hear, hear.

Mr. IVES. Therefore, I say that I have proved, beyond doubt, this position which I take, that both of the great political parties are equally responsible for the obligation, under which the country rests, to construct the Canadian Pacific Railway. Now, can the obligation to construct this road be avoided? I find that in the same debate to which I have referred, the debate of 1871, the hon. the present leader of the Opposition declared his opinion upon this point. I find him saying as follows:—"If this measure should become law, the faith of the Dominion of Canada would be pledged, and without the consent of British Columbia we could never break one jot or tittle of these cast iron obligations." I also find Sir A. A. Dorion, then leader of the Liberal party in the Province of Quebec, gave his opinion on this subject. Referring to the statement that it would be found impossible to build the road within the time fixed, that Canada could not be expected to ruin herself, he said: "He regretted the humiliating proposal that after the pledge had been given, it might afterwards be reconsidered." Later on, on the motion for the report, the member for South Durham (Mr. Blake) made a further declaration on this question. He said:

"The argument seemed to be that they could not be compelled to perform impossibilities, but an honest man would fulfil an obligation, even if the result might be bankruptcy. If rashly the national credit and faith were pledged to build that road in ten years, any one who voted for that obligation with the mental reservation that they would not be compelled to fulfil the obligation unless such should be desirable, was a base man. * * The bill is not one that can be repealed, but is an irrevocable engagement to build the road."

I will not pause to compare the language of the hon. gentleman in 1871, with the course he took during the last Session, but the inference is very obvious. Then, there is only one honorable course which we can follow and that is, to proceed with the construction of this road as rapidly as our financial position will justify.

Mr. BLAKE. Hear, hear.

Mr. IVES. And a refusal to do so is not only a breach of public faith and honor, but furnishes a good excuse for the dismemberment of the Union itself. If both parties are equally pledged, and there is no way out of the obligation, the next question is how shall the obligation be performed, Shall it be by subsidizing a company to construct the road, or by having the work done by the Government, as a Government work, a course which the Opposition in this debate seem inclined to support? The constant policy of the Conservative party has been to have the road built and operated, when built, by a company. The form of the original resolution is in these words: "To secure the commencement and to secure the completion of the road;" and you will find that Sir George Cartier had not proceeded a dozen sentences in his speech introducing the resolution before he declared that it was the intention of the Government not to undertake it as a Government work, but to