

of Quebec in the month of October last.

He was a member of the Commons in 1903 when the Transcontinental Bill was introduced into the House, and when it was stated that the promoters of the railway had intended to construct the line as far as North Bay only, a great many of the members from the province of Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, protested, and said they would never consent to have that money voted for the construction of the Transcontinental railway if it were not provided that the line between Cochrane and Quebec would be built. It was to be built and it was to be operated. The hon. minister said, as reported in the papers at the time, that Quebec had now the Transcontinental railway and the bridge, but that was not enough, as Sir Robert Borden had said that Quebec must be made a national highway. The line between Cochrane and Quebec was to be built not only to bring the western trade to Quebec, but also to the lower province ports, St. John and Halifax, and to develop that rich and important region. This also was the idea enunciated by the officers of the Board of Trade of Quebec in the interview which they had with the Hon. Mr. Casgrain in October last when, after being appointed Postmaster General, he came before the electors. The president of the Board of Trade said that the minister would pardon them for troubling him so soon after his appointment, but the matter in question was one which called for an immediate decision, because 2,000 new settlers who had been induced to take up land on the line of the Transcontinental railway west of Quebec, at Belle River and other points on that railway, from 50 to 450 miles west of Quebec, and who had founded a flourishing settlement on land of the very best quality, now found themselves in a very perilous position. They had been informed that the Grand Trunk Pacific was not ready to assume the operation of the railway until next spring, that it was intended to close the road for the winter months, and already some of those settlers had taken fright and left the country, as they had no other means of transportation than the railway. Mr. Picaud said that this would have a disastrous effect on future colonization, so important for the traffic of the railway, and which already had shown so promising a commencement, and that it would look very strange for the Government, after first spending \$30,000,000 or \$40,000,000 on the road from Cochrane to Hervey Junction, to close it up and allow it to fall

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into disuse. He said that Quebec had a very vital interest in this question, because of the numbers of new settlers which had gone from the district of Quebec, and wanted to do business with that city. He said that those new settlers would make pulp-wood and telegraph poles and other freight for the railway, if allowed to remain there. The reason given by the hon. Postmaster General not to acquiesce in the demands of the Board of Trade of Quebec and of the settlers in that region was that the operation of the railway, on that part of the line, would cost too much and was not necessary. The Board of Trade met the objection as follows:

The statement of the hon. the Postmaster General is contrary to the opinion generally held in this province as to the extent and value of the lumbering operations in the St. Maurice Valley, of its vast water-powers, costly industrial establishments, valuable forests, and in certain localities land suitable for settlement, but we cannot help thinking that the Minister of Railways must have been wrongly advised in the information given to him as to this country.

The following extract from a letter published in the press from Mr. Authier, Mayor of Amos and agent of colonization for the district of Quebec, shows that the hon. the Minister of Railways must have been wrongly advised, as alleged by the Board of Trade of Quebec. I quote his letter, and I want to call the attention of the hon. gentlemen of this House to it, because it contains facts which cannot be denied, facts which have been admitted by public men in many circumstances:

Since the month of November, there are no more trains on the Transcontinental, between Hervey Junction and Quebec or Abitibi. The country therefore beholds this spectacle: a railroad which has cost more than one hundred millions, is closed just as soon as it is completed. These millions are left to rust.

What is the reason? Because, says the minister, the operating of the entire section between Hervey Junction and Cochrane would result in a deficit of from \$40,000 to \$50,000 a month.

A competent contractor led me to believe that he would have a weekly service, on this section, during six months, for \$100,000 or less than \$20,000 a month.

The construction of the railway is terminated. It is in the hands of the Government, which has all the necessary outfit for its operation, the Intercolonial's outfit.—Why, therefore, did this Government not undertake the transportation of forestry products from Abitibi to Hervey Junction, at rates sufficiently low to allow traffic of the same. What would have been the result if the lumber and wood of Abitibi had been carried to Hervey Junction at \$2.50 a cord or \$2.50 per thousand feet.

The result would have been,—for Abitibi only,—the transportation, before the 1st of June, next, of 30 or 40 thousand cords of pulp-wood, of two million feet of lumber and of