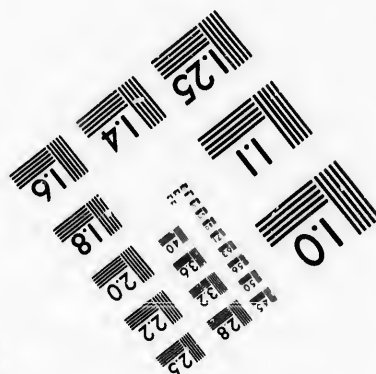
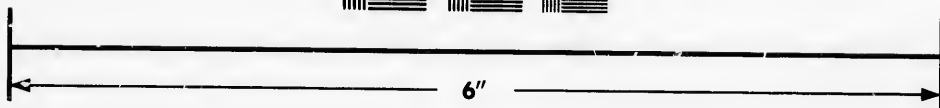
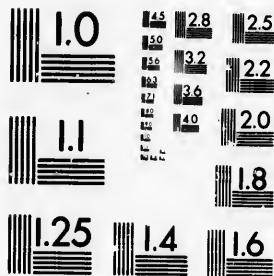


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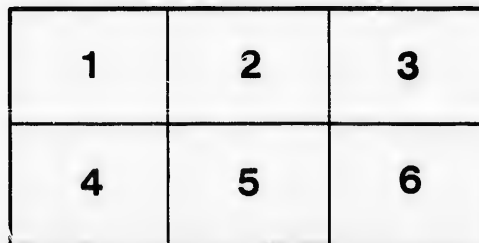
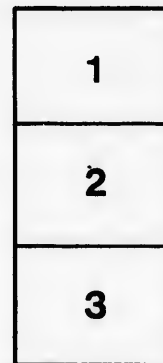
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House of Commons Debates

THIRD SESSION—EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

SPEECH

OF

HON. GEORGE E. FOSTER, M.P.

ON THE

CANADIAN YUKON RAILWAY

OTTAWA, THURSDAY, 10TH MARCH, 1898

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is with feelings of timidity and hesitation that I approach the discussion of this question this afternoon, after the implied rebuke administered to hon. gentlemen on this side of the House, and, perhaps, by implication, to many on the other side of the House, by the hon. member for Russell (Mr. Edwards) last evening. I still remember the fine scorn with which he alluded to my unfortunate friend, a lawyer who represents the county of Westmoreland in this House (Mr. Powell), for having ventured to approach this question from a standpoint of incomplete information and inexperience, and I equally well remember the self-satisfied air with which the hon. gentleman drew himself up as much as to say, Now, you are going to hear from a business man. Well, Sir, I listened with both ears, as I think did every hon. gentleman present on this side of the House, for the utterances of this business man on the Yukon scheme; and I am free to say that if a lawyer from the county of Westmoreland could not make a better business plea than did this business man who represents the county of Russell, I would be ashamed of him. For when it was all boiled down, what did the hon. gentleman from Russell say? Naively enough he confessed that at first blush he did not like this scheme at all; but after the party whip had been cracked and party discipline brought into play, he began to find it not so objectionable

as it had had first seemed to him. When the hon. gentleman came to give the reasons why he proposed to vote for that contract, and why he proposed to give his adhesion to the scheme, I was lost in admiration. He gave it as his opinion as a business man that the contract was a good one, and there he stopped. Now, an opinion like that is quite sufficient for the man who holds it, if he holds it strongly but an opinion which is not backed up by reasons good and sufficient, is of no earthly use to men who do not wish simply to be led by the opinion of a man but by the well-based and reasonable opinion of a man. When he had occasion to speak of the business part of the arrangement, the contract with Mackenzie & Mann for instance, he made the extraordinary proposition that he was in favour of it because it was a bad thing for Messrs. Mackenzie & Mann, that there was nothing in it for them; and ten minutes afterwards he declared that that contract ought to be carried through and he gave it his support because in that way this country would conserve to itself \$10,000,000 or \$20,000,000 worth of trade that would otherwise be lost to Canada in respect to the Yukon country. It would seem to me, though I am not a business man in this sense, that if the contract is carried out with Mackenzie & Mann and they come by that into possession of a transport franchise, and that by reason of the opening up of the country in which that

franchise is situated there arises trade to the extent of \$10,000,000 or \$20,000,000 per year, two things follow as a necessary consequence: first, it must be a rich country in order to call for that trade; and second, that the traffic and transportation over the railway will be as regards Messrs. Mackenzie & Mann very profitable and remunerative. So much, then, with respect to the business view of it; and I mention it simply to show that the monopoly of knowledge and of argument and reason with respect to this which, after all, is a very common-sense proposition, is not the property of any one member in this House, even though that member be the boasted business man from the county of Russell.

Now, would it not be well, Mr. Speaker, for a moment to ask ourselves what is not the question to be debated on this the second reading of the Yukon Bill, because I think an attempt has been made on the opposite side of the House to introduce issues which do not fairly belong to this question? In the first place, I wish to state that we are not discussing a question of patriotism, either absolute or relative; that in approaching this subject and in discussing and deciding this we can do it from a point of view which does not raise the question of the relative or absolute patriotic standing of either party in this matter. But it is significant and somewhat amusing to see hon. gentlemen climbing into these new clothes of theirs labelled "patriotic" all over the back, front and sides, after they have been trying to cover themselves for fifteen years with the tattered rags of every policy in the world. Sir, the Liberal-Conservative party does not need to spend one minute to convince itself or the country of its patriotism, its desire for the prosperity and benefit of Canada or its adhesion to the principles of the union of Canada and every other part of the British Empire. It is not a question either of maintaining the rights of this country as compared with the United States. We can approach this question and discuss it and settle it and both sides be just as strongly in favour of maintaining whatever the rights of Canada may be in the premises. But it is a little significant that hon. gentlemen opposite are today in their position of responsibility as the executive rulers of the country brought up by a pretty sharp turn in face of some of their expressions, for the last ten, twelve or fifteen years with respect to this very question. What I mean to say is this: that the Conservative side of the House is in favour of the maintenance of every just right that Canada possesses, on sea-coast or frontier, and will not yield one single one of those rights so far as it is concerned to the United States when they attempt to force concessions from us, to press for something which they wish to secure along the Atlantic Coast or in connection with the Yukon trade. It is not either a question of the absolute opening up of a route into the Yukon.

Both sides of the House may be equally in favour of opening up that country; and yet there may be an honest difference of opinion as to what is the best route and what is the best method of securing that route.

Let us, if we can, then, for a moment brush away these extraneous considerations as not being vital to the matter in hand, and let us see what the question under discussion really is. It is simply a business question. It is a question as to what is the best route for Canada to adopt in order to get into that Yukon country, not what is the best route temporarily, not what is the best route for a particular section, but what, taken as a whole, looking at the interest of Canada on the one hand as a whole and the possibilities of that new country on the other, what is the best route for us to adopt. We have to take the best route, considered also in two other respects, first, and in the least important respect, as to the adventurous spirits that are proposing to go into that country; secondly, and in a much more vital respect, as to the source of supply and its disposition geographically with reference to the Yukon country. This is a grave question. Associated with that is the question: How may we best obtain this road into the Yukon, when once we decide as to what is the best route? If you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, I wish to say that in my humble opinion there has been quite too much of the rush and the stampede in this matter as it has been placed before us by the Government. What I mean to say is, that we to-day are preparing legislation which will vitally affect this country for years and years to come, and it is worth while taking sufficient time and gathering sufficient information before we plunge into the heavy expense of opening up what is to be the route, and the best route, into the Yukon country. And, Sir, if there is any plan by which the necessary exigencies of this present year—and perhaps part of the next year—can be met by a moderate expense, let us meet it in that way and reserve for the time when greater knowledge will be at our disposal the more important and far more expensive proposition of opening up a permanent route into this region.

Another question which allies itself with this is: What is the reasonable cost which this country can afford to pay, and in what is it best that that cost should be payable, money or lands, or partly in each? It is a plain fact that too much may be asked for opening up any route into that country, when we come to compare it with what may be got as compensation in return. The question may very well arise, and indeed has arisen now, and a grave question it is: whether it is economy and in the best interests of the country to pay in cash or to pay by alienating the prospective wealth of the country; and, Sir, statesmen may awake to find that what they supposed was good economy in alienating the prospective wealth

of the country in order to avoid a present drain upon our finances, may turn out to be a most extravagant method and one which in the end will inure, not to the greatest benefit of Canada financially, but just the opposite. We must be careful that, to avoid the criticism of the man who does not want an extra few cents of taxation to-day, we shall not take the other alternative which may rob that very man and every citizen of this country of \$100 for every cent of present taxation, by this transfer of future prospective wealth.

It is a simple question: What is the best route, how may we best attain it, and in what should we pay the cost? That is a business question which any man on either side of the House can approach with the hope of coming to some fair solution of it. Before entering into that question, however, I desire to say this: that certain incidental circumstances have prejudiced my mind, and I will venture to say have prejudiced the minds of every cool observer of events in this country during the last three months. Let us contemplate the various side-lights thrown on this question. Sir, one of these side lights is the utter contempt for parliamentary precedents which has been shown by the Government in most important particulars in the way it has been proposed to make this bargain and to impose it upon this House and upon the country. I ask any man sitting opposite me to-day, partisan though he be, is he prepared to stand on his feet in this House and before this constitutionally governed country, and affirm this proposition: that we no longer have any use in this country for that old parliamentary and constitutional principle, that the franchises of Canada are the property of its Parliament and ought not to be given away by its executive. There is no man, not even the most utter partisan on the Government benches, who would dare in the white light of public opinion to contradict that principle. Let me ask you a question: Has not that principle been utterly and openly violated in this case? No man can answer that it has not, and the only question that remains for every honest man to ask himself is: Was there any reasonable reason why that principle should be thus utterly violated in this case, and his answer must be to his conscience.

Sir, the principle which from the reign of King John down to the time of the Georges was the central principle around which waged the war for parliamentary and political freedom in Great Britain is not of so little importance that at this time in the parliamentary history of Canada a man can afford to give the lie to it without having a very urgent and sufficient reason to justify his political conscience, to justify himself to his constituents, in setting at naught the principles of parliamentary freedom which govern in a country like this. Is there

a man sitting on the opposite side of the House to-day who will affirm in this Parliament that it is not for the best government of the Dominion that when any great public franchise is to be given it ought to be open to public competition by tender and sealed by contract? Let any man dare contradict this and he pleads for the worst forms of corruption that could be brought into the government of any country. No man on that side of the House will affirm that the principle which I have enunciated is not correct, and yet, Sir, every man sitting behind the Government knows that this principle has been contemptuously and determinedly violated in this very case. Was there any great national exigency involving the public weal which made it absolutely necessary that time should not be taken for that open competition and call for tenders? That is the question which every man has to answer to his own conscience and to his constituents.

Now, Sir, that is one of the things which predisposes me, and predisposes the majority of people in this country—and I will go further and say, predisposes the majority of men sitting on the opposite side of the House—to feel dissatisfied with this arrangement when it first came to their notice; and many of them to feel dissatisfied with it up to this very date, though they may be whipped into line and made to vote for the contract. I know whereof I am speaking, and I know that is true.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE (Sir Richard Cartwright). Our friends seem to have made you their father confessor.

Mr. FOSTER. I would be sorry, Sir, to be the hon. gentleman's confessor; I fear I should have to listen to more black malice than any parishoner ever poured into the ear of a parish priest, though, for some time it has appeared as if the good things of office which the hon. gentleman had taken into his system has made him almost an apostle of sweetness and light, and that the old malice had almost entirely left his system. I congratulate the hon. gentleman on the change; but should he go out of office again, should he get back to the old condition, I beg to be excused from being his father confessor.

There is another side-light which disposes me against this scheme, and which I believe disposes the large majority of the people of this country against it. What is that? It is the duplicity—and I use the word advisedly—that has characterized these transactions from the first that we knew of them, and I do not know how long before, up to the present time; and I will endeavour to prove that. What reason was there, Sir, why the Government, in December or January last, in the discussion and deliberation upon the opening up of the resources of so great and promising a section of country as the Yukon district—what

reason of state or of public utility was there, why they should have barred the door, and locked themselves within the Council Chamber, and let practically no one know of the plans which they were discussing or the propositions which they wished to bring to fulfilment, until they had made the final contract, and had practically in black and white their ultimatum to present to Parliament and the people? The answer has not been given to that question; the answer cannot be given to it. And yet, Sir, although newspaper reporters are fairly enterprising, and the people of this country are intelligent and wide awake, there was scarcely a breath of suspicion in the public mind of this country that anything like a measure to build a railway and form a system of transport and communication with the Yukon was even in the wind, until we received the notice in the "Globe" when the contract had practically been signed. Unless some reason of public utility is given, there can be no other motive for this concealment than this, that there is a reason behind which has not yet come out; and it is for the Government themselves to take away the suspicion of a baser and less worthy reason by stating to this country, in terms unequivocal and easily to be understood, why secrecy and duplicity surrounded that transaction from last July up to the 26th day of January, 1898. Sir, when they had hatched the whole scheme, and not only hatched it, but handed it over to its sponsors, Messrs. Mann & Mackenzie, they sent for a trusted newspaper friend of the Government, and put their case into the hands of the "Globe" editor or correspondent, to give to the public of Canada the first and formal intimation, not of what they proposed to do, but of what they had done. I have no hesitation in saying, Sir, that that information, as it was arranged and put out, was meant to have, as it actually had, the effect of catching a public approval which the scheme itself did not warrant—catching it by two methods; by skilful concealment of terms in the bargain which would prove disagreeable; and by, if not wilful, yet on the face of it, when you come to understand the bargain, patent misrepresentation of the facts of the case. What was the first impression that was conveyed to the people? That, in the first place, the Government had been immensely careful—that in giving this franchise and in opening up the country, they had conserved the farmer's interest, to wit, in that they had withdrawn all arable lands from the operation of this contract. My hon. friends laugh. Well, they may. They know that no man who has the run of this House, and who understands that country, would be misled by that observation, which entitled the Government, in the mind of the man who gave it forth, to very great praise and very great honour. They know that that would be laughed at by members of

the House; but they know also that nine-tenths of the people of this country have not the least idea as to whether there is arable land in the Yukon country or not; and from that great mass of intelligent men, but who are on this point ignorant, simply because they have no means of being informed, they snatched a favourable opinion for themselves by representing that they had withdrawn all arable lands from the operation of this contract. What more? The first idea that was put out by that official communication, by the gentleman who had the particulars of the contract put into his hands by Ministers of the Crown, regarding the cost of building the railway, was that it would have cost the Government \$7,000,000 or \$8,000,000, but that by this arrangement they would get it built without costing the country one cent. There were two misrepresentations in that. At the very moment the Ministers authorized that information to be spread before the public, they had under their hand, the testimony and report of their own engineer that the whole road could be built for \$3,200,000, on the mileage which has been taken by themselves in this contract. And yet, Sir, they put forth, to snatch a snap verdict from the great public of this country, that they had saved immensely, because they had not plunged the people into an expenditure of \$7,000,000 or \$8,000,000; and it was days before I knew myself—and I follow these things pretty well—that the contract was not for a good, broad gauge, solid road, but simply a tramway, with an indifferent track and an indifferent weight of rails.

What happened next, Sir? There immediately commenced in the press of hon. gentlemen opposite—and it was followed up in this House—an attempt to minimize the value of the lands in the Yukon. A crusade has been set on foot by hon. gentlemen opposite to minimize the value of the lands in the Yukon district. Why? Because, forsooth, if they could only persuade the people that these lands are not worth much, they would thereby minimize the value of the tremendously heavy subsidy which they have granted to Mackenzie & Mann. Without a thought of consistency, Minister after Minister, and speaker after speaker, in this House and through the columns of the country press and the city press which reported them, began a crusade for minimizing the value of those lands. Are those gentlemen in a confidence game? And if so, who are they attempting to confidence? Why, before any Minister opened his mouth, before any member sitting behind the Ministers opened his mouth to minimize and detract from the value of those lands, the Government itself authorized the publication of a Klondike official guide. That guide was published under the authority of the Department of the Interior, and sent broadcast throughout this and every country in the world. As I

am informed, more than half a million copies are already upon the market, and every line and every page of that work extols and magnifies the value and the richness of those lands in the Yukon. Is that work, published under the Government imprimatur, true or is it false in its facts? If it is true, these Ministers and their supporters who now seek to depreciate the value of these lands, are guilty of basely denying their own official information. For what purpose? In order to confidence this House, or that side of it at least, into supporting this measure on the ground that the lands are worth very little or nothing. Or are they confiding the great public and the world, to whom they have sent broadcast this official guide, vouched for by the Minister of the Interior, written, as Mr. Ogilvie says, under the express authority of that hon. Minister. Which are they trying to do—gull the world and the adventurous seekers of riches by false information, or endeavouring to get this contract through this House by a persistent attempt to make it appear to the conscience and minds of the members of this House, or as many as they can influence, that, after all, if you give away 4,000,000 acres of picked gold land, it amounts to nothing because nobody knows whether it is worth anything or not?

I find another instance of this duplicity in the fact that they have warped the official and engineering mileage of this road in the contract they have presented to this House. We have had no explanation of that. The hon. Minister of Railways (Mr. Blair) ought to be here to explain it now, and I ask the right hon. First Minister at this juncture of the debate—and I have a right to an answer: When Mr. Jennings reports to you that it will take 200 and odd miles of railway to reach from a certain point to another point, by what authority or on what information have you reduced that 200 miles to 150 miles in the contract you have presented to us? For any other purpose than to apparently diminish the area of the land grant by the amount that it would have been augmented, if you were to multiply the difference in mileage by 25,000 acres per mile? Has the hon. Minister of Railways (Mr. Blair), has the hon. Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton), has any of the Ministers any satisfactory explanation to give why they ask subsidy for 150 miles of road, more or less, when there is not a line in the official report—and they cannot get any better information than that at this moment—which warrants them in asking less than for 175 to 200 miles, more or less? Why this duplicity? Why cannot the Ministers be honest and above-board? Unless they have reasons to give for cutting down the mileage, why do they not, like men, say that it is 200 or 175 miles and not 150, and honestly face the larger land grant?

Again, we have been told that this measure should be put through because of three

great considerations, namely, impending starvation, possible rebellion, and a contingent loss of the territory to Canada forever. In this House, and in another House, all these have been urged—the last one most strongly in the other House—by a member of this Government; and I well remember how this Napoleonic Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) became inflated in size and elevated in power of voice, as he declared that he was not above going down to Washington and seeing Mr. Alger, if thereby he could be a saviour of the poor starving wretches in the Yukon country, and a minister of mercy to those who wanted bread. And he went down and saw the humane Mr. Alger, and prevailed upon him to consider him as the saviour of the poor starving unfortunates in that country. Reindeers were purchased, stores were obtained, but when Mr. Alger at last woke up to proper reports and information, he countermanded the whole thing. He sold his reindeers and sold or gave away his supplies, and came to the conclusion that the "tale of woe" of the Minister of the Interior was an imaginary one. Why, the Minister of the Interior himself contradicted it, when he boasted that on our side of the line, from before Christmas to the present, not one man had gone hungry, so well had he posted his men and his Commissioner Walsh. The cry of preventing starvation had some effect at first but the strength has gone from it, and every one to-day sees that it is as hollow as some of the other pretensions of the hon. gentleman why this measure should be put through.

Then he raised the bogey of rebellion—there was to be rebellion. But how, or when, was that rebellion to come? At the best, on the calculation of hon. gentlemen themselves, this road cannot be completed before the first of September. I am not much of a prophet, but I venture to say, that if they do get this Bill through Parliament, there will be no ingress or egress by that road on the first of September or October either. There are some things that man cannot fight against, and I am inclined to think that hon. gentlemen opposite have run up against one of these things. Rebellion? I think I questioned the hon. gentleman as to how many mounted police he had up there. He told me that he had 270 there and on the way thither. To-day we have been told that 200 men of the permanent force are to be sent in addition. Is not this force sufficient? What right has he to say that he expected there would be rebellion? Law and order has always been the grace and pride of this Dominion. Take the southern British Columbia region, overrun by miners of every nationality in the world—men who, before they came there, carried their pistols in their hip-pockets, and knives in their belts and shot and stabbed at sight—when they came over to this coun-

try, they simply laid them aside on the shelves and became law-abiding citizens. Throughout the whole of the British Columbia mining region law and order have been as well maintained as on the streets of Ottawa—even if I might not say better. Was there any ground for supposing that under honest and just conditions law and order would not be maintained in the Yukon district? Disorder and anarchy take place in a mining region, in ninety cases out of a hundred, only when rank injustice is done to the miners and not without that. There is no body of men, fishermen, artisans, farmers—no body of men anywhere, who are so vitally interested in justice being done as a body of miners in a mining country, because their wealth, their whole stake depends upon it.

But there was something more frightful still—that we might lose that country. I have not heard that scare of late. When the Minister in another place was pressed to tell what were his reasons for fearing this, he would not give them; they were safely folded within his bosom; they involved such a state secret that he could not impart it to them; but if they knew what he knew, there would be nothing but the most patriotic clamour for that Teslin Lake Railway to be built and built at once. The First Minister has not brought that machine into operation in this House. I do not think he will do so, because it proved so little effective in the other House, and has now the reputation of being an altogether out-of-date instrument of war.

More than that, if there was not a deliberate attempt, there was an effectually successful attempt to prevent every contractor, every financial concern in the world, from getting any chance to make a fair, open tender for the work of constructing the Teslin Lake Railway. Whether it was deliberate, determined upon in the sanctum of the Minister of the Interior months before the contract was signed, or whether it was not, makes no difference in the ultimate outcome or in the turpitude with which the affair might be branded. The outcome was this—that capitalists in Canada and throughout the world had no chance whatever to put in their propositions and compete for the building of this road. Why not? Is there any answer to that? What is a Minister if he is not a trustee for the people? What business has he to be a Minister if his object is not to get the best for the least for the country. And I have the evidence of my hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) who sits before me that he is not going to resort to the miserable technicality that because the offer was not in at a certain time, though it proved to be a better offer, it ought not to be accepted in the interest of the country. I have him down in black and white on that subject. And yet he has stood up once or twice in this House and come very close to the assertion that it is

all very well for men to put in their propositions after the contract is signed, but they should not be accepted. He might speak in this way of those who had had an opportunity openly to put in their tenders and had failed to do so. But when my hon. friend asks for no tender, locks the door against tenders and then makes a contract, if, after the contract is made, it is found that capitalists are ready to build for less than the contract price, my right hon. friend is estopped, if he has any regard for consistency and his knightly word, from raising a single objection. Well, Sir, what happened? Mr. Hamilton Smith came forward, Mr. Hamilton Smith, of whom hon. gentlemen opposite speak as "one Hamilton Smith" and as "Smith" and as "that prevaricator" and as "a busted bubble," to use the elegant language of my hon. friend from Lincoln (Mr. Gibson), or, to use the fine insinuation, the fine, I had almost said religious insinuation of the hon. member for Burrard (Mr. Maxwell) that Iuan Smith, who might not be able to pay his board bill—as if such a man should be shown any consideration. Sir, I venture to say that the First Minister had only to cable to proper sources of information to find that Mr. Hamilton Smith and the men behind him were men in every way capable of undertaking such a contract as this and carrying it out to successful completion. But, Sir, probably Mr. Hamilton Smith did not have before the knowledge that he has now of the ways in which a Liberal Canadian Government carry on these things. I suppose he thought that when capitalists were eager to compete for a public work, the Government would be eager to have them compete; and when he once intimated that he was in a position to compete, he supposed he would be given an opportunity to compete. That was a rather old-fashioned idea of Mr. Hamilton Smith; but still, he held it, and he pays the penalty so far as the Ministry sitting opposite is concerned. But, Sir, I beg again to disagree with the First Minister with regard to that Hamilton Smith episode in two particulars. One is that the right hon. gentleman himself, though having definite information under his hand and over Mr. Hamilton Smith's own signature that he had never made or been authorized to make a proposition on behalf of the Rothschilds, sent some sort of telegram to Lord Strathcona to put himself in direct communication with the Rothschilds and get a repudiation of Mr. Hamilton Smith's alleged representation of that great firm. Now, what did the First Minister want to get, if he was honest in his request for information? He wanted to meet an assertion made in this House and in the country, that Mr. Hamilton Smith had offered to build the road and that the Rothschilds were backing him. Was not that it? If that was the information he wanted, that information had been given to him by Mr.

Hamilton Smith over his own signature in these words: I have never been authorized to make any proposition on behalf of N. M. Rothschild & Co. And, if he were honest and wished nothing more than to meet that alleged statement on the part of the members of this House, the press and the country, all he had to do was to rise in this House, take Mr. Hamilton Smith's letter and read that gentleman's own statement that he had never made a proposition on behalf of the Rothschilds and had never been authorized to do so. That would have met the allegation and would have set right the distorted view of the press and the public. Why did not the right hon. gentleman do that? He was after something else which would act as a repudiation of Mr. Hamilton Smith and so lower him in the estimation of hon. members and in the mind of any one who was following this question. Now, Sir, I would put it to the right hon. the First Minister—who took occasion to leave this House the moment I broached this question—whether he did an honourable thing from one gentleman to another when, having Mr. Hamilton Smith's disavowal, he went behind the gentleman's back and sent the secret telegram to Lord Strathearn.

The word of one gentleman is as good as the word of another; and all that the Prime Minister could have needed in his most exigent mood, was to ask Mr. Hamilton Smith whether he did really represent the Rothschilds or not. When he was told that he did not, he had all that was required, and he had simply to use that information that he got at first hand. But instead of doing that he telegraphed to Lord Strathearn to put himself in communication with the Rothschilds. What more? We do not know; we want to know, the House has a right to know, Mr. Hamilton Smith has a right to know, the public of this country has a right to know. A telegram received in reply to that private telegram is heralded in the press of this country, given to the reporters and sent everywhere, and newspaper head-lines come out, "Hamilton Smith repudiated by the Rothschilds." That was an answer to a telegram. When we asked the First Minister for the telegram he said, I will bring it down to-morrow. But when the morrow came he said, I cannot bring it down, it is a private telegram. In the first place, there can be no such thing as a private telegram on public business where you give the resulting answer to the public and then refuse to give the question put on behalf of the public. In the second place, I say to the Prime Minister that when he refuses to read that telegram the only conclusion you can draw from it is that the question was improperly worded, that he either made a statement in the telegram that Hamilton Smith represented himself as an agent of the Rothschilds, which was false, or some other thing was put into the ques-

tion which the First Minister found was incorrect and would not, if published, inure to his political advantage, and he took the alternative of pocketing his honour rather than suffering politically. I am, says the hon. gentleman, the keeper of my own honour. Then, for God's sake, let him keep all such honour; no one else wants it.

Then, Sir, there was the Van Horne episode. Mr. Hamilton Smith put himself in communication with Sir William Van Horne. Sir William Van Horne put himself in communication with the Minister of the Interior. Is there any denial to that? There cannot be, the Minister himself has acknowledged it. Of the language of the conversation that took place between Sir William Van Horne and the Minister of the Interior, we know absolutely nothing. It was "casual," as the Minister of the Interior says. So the information about the sleigh road is "casual," according to the Minister of the Interior. The first pert and boyish answer, when asked the grave question across the floor of this House, was: Well, I have no telegraph line to Wrangel. Of course not. Then when he became a little ashamed of that pert answer, he led us to suppose that having had a "casual conversation," the sleigh road was completed. I ask the Minister now, as responsible in part for that legislation, as responsible for that clause which is an essential part of it, if he is in a position to inform this House to-day that 300 miles of practicable sleigh road has been built, with shelters at every twenty-five miles, and is now in operation for travellers across that country and pass to-day? The Minister has no answer, he cannot give an answer and save himself. He is wiser than he was the other day, and simply takes refuge in silence. The "casual conversation" has perhaps developed into a little more stated interview. Anyway, if the Minister can make that affirmation he ought to make it, for several reasons, and I will tell him why. The Minister may feel his responsibility or he may not. He may think that he is simply plain Mr. Sifton, of Brandon, but the facts are that, to whatever it is due, he has been translated out of that sphere, and is to-day one of Her Majesty's Ministers in this House. As Her Majesty's Minister in this House and representative of the Government, he has caused it to be heralded broadcast as an important and essential part of a contract made, that by the 10th day of March all intending adventurers seeking the gold fields of the Yukon can use a practicable sleigh road, with shelters at every twenty-five miles for 300 miles, from the mouth of the Stikine to the head of Teslin Lake; and hundreds and thousands of young men in this country, from all its provinces, are to-day either on the route, or they are preparing to go there, or are already there, under the impression that the Minister's word was to be relied on,

and that they would find there what has been stated in this Parliament would be found. They go, Sir, to the mouth of the Stikine, they are camping there to-day by the thousands. The least casual conversation with Mr. Mann will give the Minister that information. They are camped there without a shadow of a chance to get further, it may be, for two or three months, brought there and put in that position by a statement of one of Her Majesty's Ministers, on a provision placed in a contract, and with a tremendous deposit to be forfeited if the contract is not carried out that the road will be ready. Is it or is it not? Let him reckon with that public opinion outraged in that way, with practical men taking it for granted that it is true, and having their hopes disappointed, their health and their prospects interfered with because it is not as it ought to be. Yes, and let him reckon with his own conscience.

But to return, Sir. The Minister of the Interior knew from Sir William Van Horne that Mr. Hamilton Smith, backed by a syndicate of capitalists, wanted to tender for the building of that road. He does not deny it, he cannot deny it. He knew that before the 25th December, he does not deny it, he cannot deny it. If he had looked upon himself as a trustee of the people would he not have grasped at the information that a body of capitalists headed by Mr. Hamilton Smith, wished to have an opportunity to tender or to bargain for the building of that road? Why, what were the anxious days and nights of the Ministers? You heard it graphically described by that master of language, of much language and little knowledge, the Minister of Railways and Canals. A man can always describe his experience more graphically than something that is at a distance and that he does not know well. We heard him attempting to describe the route, to describe the gold fields, to describe even the terms of the contract, where the Minister was a know-nothing. But when he came to describe in pathetic words how he and his colleagues, and a committee of his colleagues, and in fact all his colleagues together, went down on bended knees and pleaded with Mann & Mackenzie, saying: O, Mann & Mackenzie, make it a little less than 25,000 acres of land, behold, these stern and hardened wretches, without any bowels of compassion or mercy, looked all the Ministers in the face and said: No, gentlemen, we are not fresh enough for that, it is 25,000 or it is nothing—how graphically that was described. But how easily my hon. friend could have been taken out of his misery by a simple expedient, just to have said to Mann & Mackenzie, these hard and obdurate wretches: Well, if you don't do it for less than 25,000 acres, we will just call

in Hamilton Smith or some other man who will do it for less. Sir, Mann & Mackenzie would have been brought to their marrow-bones inside of an hour, and my hon. friend's genuflections, and the piteous and fearful pleadings of this aggregated ministerial phalanx, with one after another marching up to plead with Mann & Mackenzie, would all have been spared. Now, Sir, the question arises here, was the Minister of the Interior the trustee for the people? Was it his bounden duty to get that road built for the least amount possible? Who doubts it? No one. Did he know that Mr. Hamilton Smith and a body of capitalists wanted to talk over the matter with a view to building the road? He knew it. On what ground did he refuse to send for them and talk the matter over and give them a chance to tender for it? As matters turn out, they were prepared to build this and another road for less than one-half of the subsidy granted to Mackenzie & Mann. Did the Minister of the Interior treasure that information simply in his own breast, or did he, as he ought to have done, go immediately to his Prime Minister, and say: I am told that Mr. Hamilton Smith and a syndicate of English capitalists want to bid for this road. Evidently he did not go to his chief, for his chief was a very much surprised man when he found that Mr. Hamilton Smith had ever spoken of a proposition to build the road. Then, Sir, I charge the Minister of the Interior with one of two things: either with being lax in his position and guilty in his position as a trustee of the people's franchise in that he did not take up that clue and communicate with those capitalists; or what may be worse, that for other reason best known to himself, he did not apprise his colleagues in the Cabinet that such a proposition had been made to him and take conference with those colleagues on the matter. Anyway it is plain enough that Sir William Van Horne knew it and that Sir William gave his information to the Minister of the Interior; that the Minister of the Interior knew, and the Minister of the Interior deliberately kept his knowledge to himself and signed the Mackenzie & Mann contract, and refused to let other parties have a chance of offering to build the railway.

The Minister of the Interior has something else for which to answer. He has officially issued "The Klondike Official Guide" in French and English, the publishing being given to Dan Rose & Company, Toronto, for a consideration, and the hon. gentleman has published editions of 500,000 copies and scattered them over every quarter of the globe. There is in that guide book a statement made by the Minister himself under his authority, and it is thus the statement of the Interior Department and of the Government. What does the hon. gentleman say?

Since the following pages were written the Canadian Government has completed arrangements which will during the coming season,—

What do people understand by the words "coming season?" That season of the year when people go into the Klondike for prospecting and for work, and the months in which they have to work.

—remove the great difficulties which have heretofore stood in the way of travel and transport to the Yukon district. The route to be opened is by steamer from Victoria or Vancouver to Wrangell, thence by the Stikine River to Telegraph Creek, thence overland 150 miles to Teslin Lake, thence down Teslin Lake, the Hootalinqua, Lewes and Yukon rivers to Dawson City. Large steamers run the year round to the mouth of the Stikine River.

Suppose they did. Suppose they ran there in November, December, January, February, March and April, what use was that except as a lure to the foreign travelling public? The vessel might go to the Stikine, and the searcher after wealth might leave the vessel there, but he could not in the face of natural obstacles enter the Yukon by that route during seven months in the year.

From that point a sleigh road to Teslin Lake will be open for travel, with stopping places every twenty-five miles, on the 10th of March.

That is the contract with the travelling public of the world bound for the Yukon.

Persons going in can thus reach Teslin Lake and make their preparations to go down from that point by water when the ice goes out, which is usually about May 15. While those who wish to prospect in the south-eastern part of the Yukon district may find it to their advantage to go by one of the overland routes, the great bulk of the travel to Dawson City and its neighbourhood will find an easy route by way of the Stikine and Teslin Lake.

River steamers will ply all summer from the mouth of the Stikine to Telegraph Creek. A wagon road with abundance of transportation facilities will be available from Telegraph Creek to Teslin Lake, and steamers will be plying on this lake to the Hootalinqua, Lewes and Yukon rivers. On the first day of September a railway will be in operation from Telegraph Creek to Teslin Lake.

That is the point I desire to come to. The hon. Minister of the Interior has advertised to the world that a wagon road will be available from the mouth of the Stikine to Teslin Lake. When first asked about it he gave the impression to the House that the wagon road would be completed and the Government would see it was completed. When he was told that it did not appear in the contract and was questioned a little more closely, the hon. gentleman stated the other day to the House that the Government were not responsible for that wagon road and did not propose to build it. What right have the Government of Canada to publish to the world, as one part of a contract to the travelling public, that there would be a wagon road there, unless either

by their own appropriation or work, or by contract with some responsible party they made certain their word would be implemented by deeds? They have not done so. The Minister of the Interior confessed they had not made any preparations, and asserted that the Government were not responsible for building the road. If the Government were not responsible, this announcement should not have been made in the official guide book. There is not a member in this House who will contravene that statement.

Then there is the sidelight of misrepresentation. That is a strong word to use, but it is true. Hon. gentlemen, warned by their bitter experience of 1891, earlier and later, wanted to catch on to a cry which they thought would be popular, and which they had reason to think would be popular in this country, and therefore they advertised these 150 miles of tramway as the all-Canadian route. Europeans read this official guide book, and said: Ho! for the Klondike; there is an all-Canadian route, which will be ready on 1st September, a wagon road and sleigh road supplying the facilities up to that time. Men in England and in different parts of the world, men in Australia and mining countries, read this announcement and said: Why, there is to be an all-Canadian route to the Klondike. Now, what does this Canadian route consist of? It consists of 150 miles of poor tramway, commencing somewhere in the mountains and ending nowhere. But when you approach these wily men they say: Well, this statement is true; the first of the 150 miles commences in Canadian territory and the last of the 150 miles ends in Canadian territory, and therefore it is an all-Canadian route. You might as well go up to the confluence of the Lewes with the Pelly River and build a road from Rink Rapids on to Dawson City and put that down as an all-Canadian route, all through Canadian territory. This all-Canadian route covered by the contract now before the House covers simply 150 miles of tramway out of a total distance of 1,500 miles from Vancouver to Dawson City; yet up to this day hon. gentlemen opposite are trying to secure support for this contract by appealing to the sympathies and susceptibilities of the people in favour of an all-Canadian route.

Hon. gentlemen opposite also published to the world the statement, that this was the route, and the only route, that could be chosen. Why? Because, they said, it was free from all international complications and difficulties. The Minister of Railways and the Minister of the Interior made that the chief point in their advocacy of the scheme. They told us: We take this route, not Pyramid Harbour, not the Chilkoot Pass, not the White Pass, but we take this route simply because there are no international complications. And yet, what has happened? In the course of a few days' debate, not only

have they themselves gone back on that position, but the Prime Minister had to rise in this House and acknowledge, that there were grave international complications. And what was the statement of the right hon. the leader of the Government? "Yes," he said, "there is legislation threatened by the American Senate, but there is a treaty, and the treaty gives us the right of free navigation. Go on, vote the land, vote the contract, build the 150 miles of railroad, set your great all-Canadian route into operation, and, if they interfere with us at Wrangel, we have a supreme and instant remedy." And what was his remedy? To appeal to the courts of the United States to quash an enactment of their own Congress. That is the learned, that is the invaluable, that is the wise remedy proposed by our right hon. Premier. Was ever such a humiliating position taken by any man in the Government of Canada as is taken by the right hon. gentleman? Now, Mr. Speaker, these side-lights thrown upon the operations antecedent to the giving of this contract, and thrown upon this contract, and upon the methods of the Government, are what predispose me, and every cool and careful man in this country, against this contract and against this scheme. Let us go now to the discussion of the scheme itself. This Yukon policy is only one more blunder added to successive blunders of the Government and of the party which supports the Government. I wish I could say it was the last blunder of the Government. It is the latest blunder, but I cannot hope that it is the last blunder that this party and Government will make. It is only in the line of sequence. These hon. gentlemen blundered, when, as a party, they were in Opposition long years before they came into power. On the trade question they blundered. In 1878, as a party, they took strong and radical ground against protection; they fought the principle of protection up until 1896, and then, Sir, they proved their own blunder by adopting the principle of protection and putting it upon the statute-books of this country. They, as a party, fought the Canadian Pacific Railway, tooth and nail; they have ended by embracing the Canadian Pacific Railway, by gobbling up as many of its fat positions as they possibly could, and by affirming day and night, in their action and in their statements, that the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway is the very basis of the present prosperity and the future progress of this great north-western country of ours. They blundered for years, and they acknowledge the blunder now by the changed aspect in which they view the Canadian Pacific Railway. The right hon. the leader himself made the same trouble upon the fisheries question, when in 1886 and 1888, and along in that period, we were endeavouring to stand by the fishery rights of this country in respect to the Treaty of 1818. What was the position of the leader of the Liberal

party then? It was one of carping criticism, one of fault-finding at the severity and barbarity, as he called it, of the execution of the laws and the maintenance of the rights of Canada. The statement that he then made at St. Thomas was so bald and so pointed, that his own party paper, the Toronto "Globe," was obliged, on the 29th August, 1888, to call him to task in these words:

How far is it possible to go in conciliation? The mere continuance of privileges granted to American fishermen by the *modus vivendi* will not satisfy the Washington claim that the privilege of transhipment in bond should be freely accorded to American fish cargoes. We fail to see how that privilege can be permanently accorded gratis by Canada. To yield it and what would logically and inevitably have to be given with it would be to make waste paper of the convention of 1818, and practically to surrender our inshore fisheries for nothing at all. Till Mr. Laurier disposes of the argument by which we yesterday maintained this opinion we must with all deference and good will to him maintain that the fisheries policy of Canada has not been unfriendly to the States.

Could there be any exigency greater than to call forth from a faithful party paper this rebuke to the chief of the party because of his unpatriotic stand in reference to the Treaty of 1818? What applies to the right hon. gentleman, applies as well to the present Minister of Marine and Fisheries; the one quotation points the argument against them all. The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) made a mistake, when he made Boston the centre of his political warfare, and when, on one memorable occasion, he stood before the inhabitants of a hostile country in many respects, and said, that Great Britain had been inhuman and severe in the way in which she treated her American cousins during the civil war; declaring before all of them in Boston, that Great Britain had made a mistake; declaring before the face of a hostile country in many respects, that he must say, a Canadian before everything else, that if it came to be the best for Canada that the ways should part between Canada and Great Britain, he would stand by Canada, that he preferred at any time to take, as he expressed it, the Yankee dollar to the English shilling. These mistakes culminated after 1896, in that famous interview in the Chicago "Record," where he threw the Treaty of 1818—established as firm as the granite rock of the mountains is established—when he threw the fishery dispute in Behring Sea—in which we were as clearly within our rights as could possibly be demonstrated—when he threw them both in with a lot of other trifling questions, and declared to the United States, that he was quite willing, for the sake of peace and amity, to wipe off the whole slate, bonding privileges included.

Sir, it is these blunders that hon. gentlemen made when they were in Opposition and since they have got into power, which

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are but followed now by these later ad-
ministrative blunders, the latest and worst
of which is this one of the Main-Mackenzie
deal. As we expected, so it has turned
out.

Now, what was there in this question to
face? Simply as to what was the best
commercial route. I take leave to reiterate
to a certain extent, and maybe to amplify
in some particulars, the excellent argument
made by the hon. member for Alberta (Mr.
Oliver) in his speech in this House four or
five days ago—the only speech on that side
of the House which has been addressed to
the business aspect of the question, and
which has not been answered or attempted
to be answered by any gentleman on that
side, but has been persistently evaded. I
say that in looking into this question of
opening up the Yukon country, the question
was simply one of providing transport fac-
ilities, so that the greatest trade for Canada
could be secured; and the placing of the
line of transport as far removed from in-
ternational complications as possible. These
were the essence of what was to be con-
sidered, and with referenee to which a con-
clusion was to be reached.

In the first place, was the question
rightly approached by the Ministry? They
have made the plea of urgency; they have
made the plea of haste—for what they
themselves have acknowledged to be undue
haste in this matter. I disagree in toto
with the argument attempted to be made
by the Minister of the Interior. I say that
neither he nor any other hon. gentleman on
that side of the House has made out a
sufficient plea of urgency in this matter, or
has been able to defend the Government
from the charge of negligence in the early
part of these transactions. I am not going
into the details; they have been gone into
by other hon. gentlemen, who have suc-
cessfully proved where this negligence took
place. The plea of the hon. Minister of
the Interior was that he had no knowledge.
That plea cannot stand before the facts
of the case. That hon. gentleman was ob-
liged to answer a question which was put
to him a little later, as to when Mr. Ogil-
vie's reports came into the possession of
his department. First, he declared that
they had no knowledge, and afterwards he
admitted that one or two of these reports
had been given out to one or two members
about July. Where were those reports,
Sir? The first report of Mr. Ogilvie, of
September 6th, 1896, came to his depart-
ment on October 19th, 1896; the second, of
August 18th, 1896, reached his department
on October 22nd, 1896; the third, of Novem-
ber 6th, 1896, arrived on February 16th, 1897;
the next, of December 9th, 1897, was received
on February 27th, 1897; the next, of Janu-
ary 11th, 1897, on March 16th, 1897; and
the last one, of January 23rd, 1897, on the
same day, March 16th, 1897. On the 16th
day of March, 1897, then the hon. gen-

tleman had under his hands the whole
of the information which his own officer
had transmitted to him by report, and the
essence of that information was that large
and rich and repeated gold finds were being
brought to light in that country, that there
was intense excitement there, and that there
was no doubt that there would be a great
influx of people into the country the mo-
ment the news reached the outside world.
Now, every man knows what mining fevers
are. Any man who is conversant with the
mining history of the world knows that
the very announcement of rich gold finds
in any quarter of the globe will bring a
rushing troop of adventurous seekers for
riches from every part of the globe—and
now more than ever, when the means of
transportation and the means of telegraphic
communication spread the news and bring
the seekers for wealth from every portion
of the globe in an astouishingly short space
of time.

What more? In the October session of
1896, the hon. member for Quebec West
(Mr. Dobell) passed through this House
an appropriation of \$6,000, on the request
of the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. Prior),
for the exploration and investigation of the
Stikine River and the Taku Inlet routes
leading over the mountains to the water
basins on the other side. That appropria-
tion was got by this Government in Octo-
ber, 1896, and a discussion upon it took
place in this House; yet, so far as I know,
not one single move was made with that
money in hand to carry out the object
for which it was appropriated—to get the
information which the House at that time
wanted it to get. The Minister of Rail-
ways and Canals (Mr. Blair) himself as
has been already pointed out, said that be-
fore the House rose last year the Ministers
had this question forced upon their at-
tention. Why, Sir, before we left this
House last year the papers were bringing
news of tremendous finds in the Yukon
country; and the first of that band of ad-
venturers who had spent the winter of
1896 in those regions were coming out
and spreading over the whole world the
news of the rich finds which they had made.

With all this information, the fact that
the Minister of the Interior, specially
charged with that subject, should sit down
and practically do nothing until the 25th
day of September, 1897, shows negligence
of the grossest and most culpable kind.
What length of time did it take for the
Government's engineer to make his in-
vestigations? Do not let us run away with
the idea that all this time was consumed
by the engineer. Mr. Jennings started on
the ground on the 25th of September. He
finished his exploration on the 25th day
of October. Of all the time he took
simply one month to do the engineering
investigation. Mr. St. Cyr, who was ordered
to explore the Hootalinqua River and Teslin

Lake, got on the ground on the 15th of October, and in thirteen days, or on the 27th of October, he had finished his survey. What does that mean? It means that it took these engineers less than a month to gather all the information which the Government needed both as to the railway and as to the rivers at both ends of the railway. Why were they not sent out in July? Why were they not sent out in August? If it took them but a month, one of them, and but thirteen days, the other, what reason in the wide world was there why a Government, with all the necessary means and information at its disposal, should not have had these engineers out there in July, and had their information back here in August? There is no reason in the world. Nay, more, if Mr. St. Cyr finished his work on the 27th October, as he did, who is to blame if that report did not get into the Minister's hands until the 6th January, 1897? Was there any reason why that report—not an abstruse or voluminous one—should not have been in the Minister's hands within three weeks, at least, after it was completed, which would have been the middle or latter part of November. There is no reason; it was simply stupid negligence—negligence which cannot be condoned. That negligence was shown, in the first place, by the Government not sending engineers out long before they did, and in the next place by their not obtaining a report before the 6th of January, when the work of the engineers was finished on the 27th of October. Therefore the charge of gross and inexcusable negligence lies at the door of hon. gentlemen opposite. They had July and August for making preparations and for gathering information, they had then September and October for deliberating and coming to a conclusion, and then they had November and December and part of January to ask for and obtain tenders, and then they could have met Parliament very shortly after the 1st of January, and not a single fundamental principle of constitutional and parliamentary government would have been contravened. That they did not do this shows negligence in the first place, which they attempted to cover by haste in the second place, and for both they are responsible.

I have spoken about the methods of this contract as being indefensible, and shall not amplify that point. The very fact that the negotiations were conducted in secret condemns it. But these hon. gentlemen say: How could we have made our intentions known? I ask how did you make the contract known? You made it known in a moment, when you wished to, by publishing it in the press, and it went all over the country and the world. What was there to prevent the Government stating, through their organs, or in any other authoritative way, that they were proposing to build a railway

line into the Yukon by Teslin Lake or any other route, and letting the public know that they were willing to meet capitalists and give them an opportunity to tender for the work. Why, the simplest announcement would have carried the news broadcast, and we would have had the benefit of competition almost world-wide, and the benefit of having this line built at a very much decreased cost than now proposed.

One of my greatest objections, the thing I quarrel with the Government most about, is that indefensible blanket which they give Mackenzie & Maun over the gold lands of the Yukon. What incited these hon. gentlemen to do that? They have confessed their own cowardice from their own mouths. They were afraid, after their long years in Opposition of protesting economy—they were afraid after their experience in trying to pass through the Drummund deal, which has a capitalization of \$7,000,000, they were afraid after they had passed through the Crow's Nest transaction which cost us \$2,000,000 more than was necessary, they were afraid, after having made the largest expenditure on current account ever made in this country—and so their courage suddenly oozed out, and they themselves alleged that they did not dare ask the people for one million or two million dollars to open up the great Yukon. So they adopted a subterfuge, as unworthy as it has proved costly, and proposed to deceive the people with the statement that this was not going to cost them anything, and at the same time give away nine-tenths of the eligible gold lands in the Yukon. Sir, this country has never yet proved itself indisposed to bear public burdens for a great public good, when once it has been placed fairly and well before it. The history of the last twenty years bears that out. To open up the Yukon country to the men of Canada as well as the people of other countries, this country would not have found fault with the Government for promising a vote of \$2,000,000 or even more, and have thus kept our heritage. I want to make this statement just as strongly as I can make it, that this plan of handing over the placer and gold mining regions of the country to a perpetual monopoly is a thing unheard of in the annals of Anglo-Saxon government. Basing their first action upon the history of the mining world, these gentlemen, on the 18th January, promulgated their latest regulations, which affirmed that the placer mining of that country should be kept for the individual miner, that every man with a mining license had a right to enter and prospect and take up land wherever he found it, to a certain extent, with the exceptions of town sites. Yet seven days afterwards, they went back on the salutary history of all mining countries, they went back upon their own reasoned-out judgment, as embodied in their regulations, and made a blanket of 3,750,000 acres of picked gold placer mining country, and gave

It to a monopoly in perpetuity, from which they get nothing in return, except a trifling fee in the shape of one per cent royalty.

I want to call the attention of this country to the statement made by the hon. member for Russell (Mr. Edwards), and made also by the Minister of Railways (Mr. Blair). What matters it, said the hon. member for Russell, anyway, about two million or three million acres of land? What is the difference whether Mackenzie & Mann get it or whether it becomes the property of many individuals? If individual miners get it, they will strip the wealth out of it and put it in their own pockets. If Mackenzie & Mann get it, they cannot do anything more than that. Then what are you making this bother about? Well, Mr. Speaker, if that be good reasoning, carry it out to its logical conclusion, and just give the whole of the gold lands of this country to one single firm. They will only take the gold out—that is all. But has it come to this, that the trustees of the wealth of the country are going to give that wealth into one hand and rob the multitude of their patrimony—rob them of possessions which for centuries have been the acknowledged right of the individual miner and prospector in all Anglo-Saxon countries where mining has been carried on. Carry that argument a little further. The extremely foolish stand was taken by the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Slifton) and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher) of holding up a map and showing a little black spot on that map, and saying: You are making a terrible time about the amount of land given to Mackenzie & Mann, look at this wide map and that little spot on it, that is all that Mackenzie & Mann get out of it. The Minister of the Interior, refining a little more, said: There is a lot of waste land about mining, just as there is waste cloth in cutting out a garment. All you can get there is a three-hundred-foot pay streak and when you calculate the quantity of land in this three-hundred-foot pay-streak throughout this 3,750,000 acres, you find it amounts to only a few acres of land—so, what have these men got? Exactly, but go to the Le Roi mine, measure the acreage of land, and measure the width of pay-streak, and you will see that the owners though rich now would be illimitably richer if they had a pay-streak three hundred feet wide. Why, every mining country in the world has to take its waste lands along with its pay-streak, either in lode or alluvial mining; and a lode is valuable only according to the extent of pay-streak or payable lode that is in it. But the point about that dot on the map was that to be accurate the whole country should have been reduced in the same proportion which the three-hundred-foot pay-streak in the country bore to the quantity of the pay-streak that Messrs. Mann & Mackenzie are to get. If the map had been constructed on that principle you would have found

that Messrs. Mann & Mackenzie's pay-streak would take about nine-tenths of the valuable placer mining pay-streak in the Yukon. I have no hesitation, then, in saying that, with the machinery they have, with the time at their disposal and the opportunity which they will make the most of in that great country, they will get the major part by far of all the paying alluvial placer mining lands in the Yukon. Now, what does this mean? Take this official Klondike guide. I do not want to read what has already been read, but if you take the summing up by Mr. Ogilvie you will see what this means. I will read just one sentence:

Taking this division—

That is only one division—

—as a whole, including the three creeks named, confluent to Indian Creek, a distance of some thirty-five miles in length and twenty-five or more in width, if the indications can be relied on, there are one hundred millions of dollars in sight in that area.

Suppose that Messrs. Mann & Mackenzie get but one such property in their whole one hundred blocks of 72 square miles each, suppose that in the location and search and pick of these lands they get simply one stretch of country equivalent to this, we have given them a bonanza. Suppose that, in every block they only get one good find, they will have one hundred finds, which may average them, for each, \$5,000,000 or \$10,000,000 or \$20,000,000. The fact is that the knowledge upon this point is so indefinite, the prospect is so rich as shown by the reports of the officers of the Government, that it is the height of folly and extravagance to give one single foot of picked gold lands for the building of this road. It ought to be the policy of this Government and of this country to save these lands for the people of the country, and to pay what cash may be necessary in order to secure the building of the road.

The hon. member for Russell (Mr. Edwards) said that he hoped no Canadians would go into that territory, that he did not want the young and sturdy sons of farmers to go there. I cannot help what he wants; I know that they are going there and will go there in increasing numbers; and I, for my part, bid them God-speed in their search for independence and a fortune in that great country that is to be exploited for Canada. I tell you plainly, I would not vote a penny for opening up the Yukon if I did not think our own people would have an opportunity to get there. If only foreigners are to go there and to take the gold from the country, so far as we are concerned let them get in and out the best way they can, let them provide their own means of transport, and pay for it. No consideration of mere trade would cause me to favour the spending of a single dollar of public money for

transport facilities. The great point with me is that in the opening up of that country we are giving our own young men an opportunity to go there and seek their fortunes, as many will, though no doubt many will be disappointed. The question has been suggested, what will be the spirit of the miners going into that country when they find that monopolists have the choice of the rich ground and are working at an advantage as compared with themselves? The miners' sense of justice is keen, and that sense of justice must be reckoned with by every Government that has a mining country to develop. Besides the alien miners who will go there, there will be the young men out of our own country who will go there this year and next year and future years. Retribution will begin to overtake hon. gentlemen opposite, when, in two or three years from now if they are successful in putting this deal through and blanketing that country, our young men from every quarter of Canada go up there with their brawny arms and their small capital to prospect the country in the hope of finding fortunes, only to find that they have been preceded by monopolists, and that a country which ought to be their birthright has been given away. Then, Sir, the people of this country will have an accounting with hon. gentlemen opposite. From a mere party point of view I might be willing, so far as I am concerned to let them put through this scheme and take the onus of it, because I would be sure of the retribution which would follow. But there is one consideration which makes any such thought impossible, and that is that once done this is irrevocable; once that land is given into the hands of monopolists it is perpetually alienated from the people, and, so far as I am concerned, and, I believe, so far as this side of the House is concerned, we propose to use our best efforts to defeat such a proposal.

Then, what follows? The inevitable middle. International complication may arise elsewhere, therefore choose all-Canadian route, and build the 150 miles of tramway to Glenora, and then you can go up the Stikine River, says the Government. And yet, before a single stroke has been done on this road, hon. gentlemen opposite are face to face with international complications which they can no longer ignore or deny. And they have largely brought it on themselves. If, last July and August and September, instead of taking their comfort and enjoying themselves, in different parts of this country they had been diligently making way with the Government at Washington and had been putting into shape a fair system of bonding on the Pacific Coast, I believe they could have had arrangements completed before this contract was given so that courteous and amicable treatment on both sides would have been assured on the Pacific Coast. But, instead of taking a single,

step in that direction, they dilly-dallied, they made no overtures, they made no arrangements. The first thing they did was to throw defiance to the people of the United States by saying: We will prevent roads built across your territory from connecting with the Yukon, we will build by the route that we choose, and we will prevent the United States trade from going into that country.

It is right that any Government should seek to take the most of the trade and keep it for our people. But they were unfortunate in not making their arrangement with the United States Government before they threw out that challenge, when, as I verily believe, they could have had this arranged in an amicable and friendly way, and without any trouble on this score. But, Sir, here we are, and we have now to look at this scheme just as it is, threatened with international complications greater there than at any other point on the Pacific Coast, with our right to navigate undoubted, a right which, I am glad to know, the right hon. gentleman proposes to maintain, as we on this side of the House propose to help him to maintain, but a right which, at the same time, is surrounded by certain complications for which my hon. friend himself can only find a remedy in the tedious and futile process of an appeal to a court of the United States, and the Minister of the Interior in a five or six years' course of negotiations and arbitration with the United States. What, then, is the position we are forced to? We are forced to this position, that, according to the statement of the First Minister himself, we are asked to-day to decide upon an incomplete proposition, which they admit is incomplete—they propose to add something to it, and they do not tell us what they propose to add; and so they ask us to vote a partial scheme through at immense expense instead of bringing down their whole proposition as a remedy under the present set of circumstances, and placing it in its entirety before this House.

What do we get now? We get, after all said and done, simply 150 miles of tramway, commencing 150 miles from the coast at Wrangell, ending some 600 or 700 miles this side of Dawson, which, for seven months in the year, is perfectly useless, and for five months in the year has tedious and expensive navigation on each side of it, with the inevitable shifts, and transfers, and changes in whatever you carry into or out of that country. You have that, Sir, and, in addition, the complications that are threatened by actual and impending legislation in the United States Congress, and which, however we may hope for the better, we yet fear will be put through. This tramway, by the calculation of Mr. Jennings himself, will cost about three million dollars. That is what we get. Now, what do we give? I think the House has, to a cer-

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tain extent lost sight of one of the franchises that we give to those contractors, that is, the profits on the operation of the road itself. I propose to make a calculation, which I will present to this House and invite criticism upon it. We have been unable to get the Government to say what are the maximum tolls they are going to allow on that road for passengers and freight; but we have this statement of the Minister of the Interior, that they will be high, very much higher than on any railroads which are known in this country at the present time. Now, I say it is necessary, to a proper judgment upon this question, that we should have the maximum of the toll and of the freights. Then, you take power to make two reductions of 25 per cent each in seven years, and when ten years have passed, you are to bring them under the operation of the general railway law. That carries out the proposition that they are to be high, very much higher than any railroad tolls and freights that are known. Now, if these tolls are to be at a certain amount, and the travel is to be what hon. gentlemen have estimated, the franchise of that road is a most valuable consideration in itself. Let me ask the attention of the House for a moment. I have taken the tolls at the rate of 10 cents per mile for a passenger, that is, \$15 over the 150 miles. I have taken the calculation made by the Minister himself as to the cost of the tonnage of freight, at \$50 per ton. Now, how does that work out? For 150 miles of road, taking their own calculation and Mr. Jenning's calculation of the cost, the contractors will expend \$2,700,000 of capital to build it. On the basis that 20,000 passengers and 20,000 tons of freight go into that country in a season, that is, going in and coming out, on that calculation, the earnings of the road, after you have taken out \$60,000 as the estimated cost of working, will give a profit of \$700,000. Now, is that to be laughed at?

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS (Mr. Blair). How many trains do you allow a day?

Mr. FOSTER. I am not going into the details.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. How can you tell what it will cost to run, unless you do that?

Mr. FOSTER. I take the engineer's estimate, and I add \$10,000 to it; and I have not heard from the Minister of Railways, and he has no report of an engineer to show that it will cost more than that to run it for five months in the year; and, until he makes a statement, either on his own authority or of that of his engineers, I will have to take the authority of the only engineer who has reported we have before us, and I have been generous in adding to his estimate. Now, I say, that on that basis, which is below the lowest estimate of the Minister of

Railways himself, it will make a profit of \$700,000 over the cost of operating.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. I made no estimate of the number of people that would travel over the road.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend says he made no estimate of the number of people who would travel over the road. Why, Sir, his own language is before you, in the "Hansard."

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. You had better point it out.

Mr. FOSTER. I will tell my hon. friend what it is, without pointing it out. He went over the different estimates, and showed that some people had estimated that 250,000 would go in, others had estimated that 200,000 would go in, others that 100,000 would go in, and he brought it down and based his estimate upon 50,000 going in.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. It is quite true I did state that the lowest estimate that has been made of the number of people who would go into that country in one year, was about 50,000; but I did not say, nor did I suggest, that that number of people would use this railway, because, I said, they were already commencing to go into the country, and would continue to do so long before the railway was built.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend thinks he can get out of it that way for the Government.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. I am stating what I said.

Mr. FOSTER. I will just bring this to his attention. For what purpose is the Government building the railroad?

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Chiefly to get tonnage in; and the people can get in there, but the tonnage cannot.

Mr. FOSTER. The *raison d'être* of the building of the railway, according to the argument of every hon. gentleman opposite, is that if the Government build this road they do so to make sure the Canadian trade will go in by that route. Canadian freight cannot go in unless passengers go in. The whole argument adduced by hon. members opposite is that: You have to build the road so that when it is constructed you will divert the trade into Canadian channels, and if you do not direct the trade and the passenger traffic there, no argument is presented for building the road at all. But I am safe even in that presentation of the case, when the hon. gentleman stated that 50,000 people would go into that district, and that 20,000 would come out. Will the hon. Minister deny that such was his proposition?

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. I did not give any estimate of the number of people who will use that railway.

Mr. FOSTER. Hon. members know that the hon. Minister did not seem to be very well informed or very accurate. On the assumption that 50,000 people will go in and out, that is 25,000 in and 25,000 out, and the hon. gentleman mentioned that no one had made a lower estimate of the number than 50,000, certain calculations may be made. Those are the hon. gentleman's figures as reported in "Hansard." Assuming 50,000 people will go in and out and 50,000 tons of freight will go in and out—and the hon. gentleman has admitted that the tonnage must go that way—what profits would accrue from that traffic, after taking out the running expenses? There would remain \$3,190,000 as net profit. If 100,000 people go in and out, 50,000 each way, or 75,000 in and 25,000 out, and you calculate one ton of freight for each person, and that is a small allowance, for the quantity will be found to be nearer three tons than one ton for each person—

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. No.

Mr. FOSTER. Suppose you take one ton of freight for each person and estimate that 100,000 persons go in, the profits, after taking out the working expenses, would show \$6,000,000 in a single season.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. What percentage of the receipts is the hon. gentleman taking out for working expense?

Mr. FOSTER. \$500,000.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. How do you get at that sum?

Mr. FOSTER. Will the hon. Minister of Railways say that a railway operated for five months and carrying 100,000 people and freight, will cost more than half a million dollars to operate during that time?

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. I never ran a railway up there.

Mr. FOSTER. I want the hon. gentleman, from a business point of view, to take up that calculation and tell me wherein it is extravagant. Are hon. gentlemen going to place an average rate for carrying passengers per mile at 10 cents and freight at 2½ cents per pound? If they are going to adopt such rates, then my estimates, taking the passengers and freight as named, give the result I have stated. So in three years of successful operation these gentlemen will pay for the whole of the railway and lay up \$4,000,000 or \$5,000,000, undoubtedly, of profits.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. FOSTER. Hon. gentlemen opposite may smile or laugh at these figures as they please, but let them tell the House the tolls they are going to charge.

Mr. DOMVILLE. They are charging \$500 now as tolls at Stikine, and the man walks.

Mr. FOSTER. Let the Government inform the House as to what tolls they are going to charge on passengers and freight. If the rate is to be 10 cents or 8 cents or 5 cents, let us know it. Let them state what freight tolls they are going to allow Mackenzie & Mann to charge. We are handcuffed for lack of this knowledge; but if the tolls are to be anything like those I have named, the contractors will, in three years, be able to repay every dollar expended out of the profits of the road, and have millions of surplus for themselves. But we give them even more than what I have stated.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (Mr. Welding). Why not incorporate that mine of wealth?

Mr. FOSTER. The hon. gentleman is always inclined to take a thrifty view.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Are these Mr. Hamilton Smith's figures?

Mr. FOSTER. No doubt he would endorse them. I am not, however, in the habit of submitting figures handed to me by some other person, though the hon. gentleman may be in the habit of doing so. These contractors also obtain bonding powers, and they are empowered to issue mortgages, debentures or stock on all their properties and undertakings. The Government give the contractors a five-year monopoly of the road to the north, with the opportunity of building by the route over the Chilkat Pass if they wish, and they give the contractors a preference clause as regards the southern extension, which means that if such an extension is built Government aid will be given, and Government aid must be given to that portion of the road. In addition, they give the contractors a grant which will actually cover over 4,000,000 acres of the mineral lands in the Yukon. It is an immense franchise which these contractors are given—and for what? For simply building 150 miles of tramway, beginning 150 miles from the ocean and ending 650 miles from Dawson City.

The Minister of the Interior alleged that the country would obtain some other benefits from the road. He contends that the building of this road is necessary for the preservation of law and order. However, I find I am entering on a new and what will be the last phase of my subject, and

I will be pleased if Mr. Speaker will now call it six o'clock.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, when the House rose at six o'clock I was going on to state, what it was that the Government got out of this arrangement, how much it would cost in the way of outlay of capital to the contractors, the franchises and subsidies which the contractors were to get from the Government, and I think the contrast is a sufficiently striking and significant one. We get 150 miles of mountain tramway, beginning somewhere in the hills 150 miles or so from the mouth of the Stikine River at a point which is totally inaccessible during the winter season, and which is accessible only by difficult and tedious navigation for five or five and a half months in the year. This railway ends 150 miles further on, somewhere near the head of Teslin Lake which is 600 or 700 miles away from Dawson City or the centre of the Yukon country, and which distance has to be traversed in small boats by a tortuous line of navigation involving possible portages and transshipments, and certainly taking up a great length of time in the round trip on account of the speed and strength of the currents by which those boats will be met on the return. This tramway is practically all that the contractors give to the Government. Under Mr. Jennings's report and his statement as to the cost of the road, the outlay of capital necessary to build that tramway is in the neighbourhood of three million dollars, in round figures. I was going on to state that we give the company the road and its possible profits, and I took the statements which were made by the Ministers, and took what I considered a fair good average, on the information given by the Minister of the Interior as to the rates of tolls and carriage of freight, and I calculated the profits on the incoming and outgoing, first, of twenty thousand people and their freight, second, of fifty thousand people and their freight, and third, of one hundred thousand people and their freight. I submit these calculations to both sides of the House and to the intelligent public, as it is impossible for us to get from the Government the knowledge which is absolutely necessary to this Parliament before it can come to any fair conclusion as to whether the grant we are giving is an inordinate and unreasonable one or is not. As the Government refuses to give us that information, I have assumed these railway rates, and I have made my calculation upon them. I state without fear of contradiction, that you can make a very large reduction on these rates, and even on that basis you must come to the conclusion, that if this road is patronized at all as the promoters, and

the Government suppose it will be, then the company stands to make in two or three years of its operation, not only the original cost of the road, but all its charges of operation as well as a very handsome return of millions of dollars on their investment. I was also stating, Sir, that the contractors are not called upon to put their hands in their pockets to build that road; the Government has looked after that. On all this wide basis of a rich franchise, they have given the contractors the power of raising as much money as they wish; yes, Sir, many times as much money as is needed, by bonds and mortgages which they can put upon their property and which they can raise upon the mileage of this road. And, Sir, with that franchise, with the reports that have gone broadcast as regards the richness of that territory, with the inevitable and openly patent spirit of speculation which is showing itself in all parts of the world in regard to this gold country, and the rush (as the records of the Department of the Interior will show) for mining franchises: I assert that that franchise alone placed upon the London market, or any other great money market, will give, in a small moiety of it, more than sufficient returns for these men to pay for all their outlay and leave them a large surplus of funds for future operations or for division amongst themselves. I added, that beside that, they had a monopoly which renders these territories tolerably safe and certain to them, a monopoly of five years on the north, or what is equally as good an option to build a road from Pyramid Harbour on to Rink Rapids towards Dawson City, giving them what is the real commercial route, and a ten years' preference of building a railway on the southern extension, with the inevitable Government aid which the right hon. gentleman who leads the House has declared Parliament would be asked for, if this road be extended. That is what the company gets. It gets besides this, charter powers of a very wide extent and of very great importance, viz., the power to build branch lines from all its possessions to the principal railways, the power to do almost all businesses under the sun, and what is of no slight account in a country where timber will be almost next in value to gold—the timber can be used and is to be used for nothing else, comparatively speaking, than for the operations and needs of the miners themselves—these contractors get the best timbered lands in that district, which timber they can sell out to the miners at very profitable rates. Although the miner may have the opportunity of going on Government lands and taking from them such timber as he chooses for his operations, yet he cannot touch a stick of timber on the lands of Mann & Mackenzie; that timber belongs to these gentlemen and they will keep it as a source of profit, as they are perfectly entitled to do.

Now I am aware that the Ministers said, we get more than that. What is it? The Ministers have declared to the country and to the House, that we get what is absolutely necessary to guarantee law and order in that community. I take absolute exception to that statement. I ask my hon. friends opposite what they expect in the way of difficulties in keeping law and order in the Yukon district. Into that district will pour a large number of people from the settled portions of Canada, law-abiding and orderly people every one of them, who will be, next to the mounted policemen so far as keeping law and order is concerned, the right arm of everything that is right and proper to be carried out. There are going into that country hundreds and thousands of young Englishmen of character and of force, and every Englishman who goes there is an upholder of English law and order by nature, and by custom, and by practice, and by his own self interest as well. From the Australian colonies are coming adventurers trained in mining who understand what law and order means to themselves in Australia, and who will carry the same respect for law and order into the Yukon territory. And of those who come from the United States—more in this than perhaps in any previous great excitement—a better class of men are forming themselves into syndicates of ten, and twenty, and thirty to go to that country. Are they going to fight law and order and the representatives of that justice which alone can give them security in their possessions?

I questioned the Ministry not long ago, and they said that in that country or on the way to it there were 270 mounted policemen. I asked the Government to-day how many of the militia or the permanent force they are going to send in there, and I had the answer, 200 men. What in the name of heaven do we need with four or five hundred mounted police and military to keep order among the people going into that country? I ask the right hon. gentleman one question. He has been urging us to vote this measure through for the sake of keeping law and order in the Yukon country. I ask him, is one of those 270 mounted policemen going to stay out of that country until Mann & Mackenzie's road is completed; or are they going in now, and will they continue to go in so as to get there on the first of July, or as soon thereafter as possible? I ask the right hon. gentleman if one of those 200 men of the permanent force, which he is going to send in as a right arm to the mounted police is going to wait until Mann & Mackenzie get the road completed, and go in after the first of September? He would not dare to take the risk of such a contingency. No; those men are to be sent in at once, and before Mann & Mackenzie strike one blow on that road the 270 mounted policemen and the 200 of the permanent force will be in the Yukon,

or far on their way thither, and they will be quite sufficient to keep law and order in that country. It is a false pretense to put before this country that we must go it blind and put this work through during the coming summer for the purpose of keeping law and order in the Yukon district. Now, when do you want to keep law and order in the Yukon district? In the summer season? Measurably so. In the winter season? Measurably so. Let us be sensible. In the summer season where are the 50,000 men who are in the country? Scattered over the country, in twos or threes or fives or sixes. These people will keep their own law and order. They are there not to fight against the civil power; they are there to search out the riches of the country for themselves, and they know that their best protection is that they shall be the observers of the law. In the winter season what are you going to do? Are the 50,000 people who are going in next summer going to camp there next winter; to live in that delightfully torrid season in the northern part of the Yukon district, for the simple pleasure of living? There will be two classes among that 50,000; the class of prospectors who this year will have struck something and will have something to work upon—they will be working on their claims next winter; and the class who will have struck nothing, and who either do not have to work or do not want to work on their claims, and will not care to have the pleasure of remaining in the Yukon country during the winter. He will find that next fall these will be on their way out to civilization on the coast. And in the winter season where will be the men who remain in the country? How many points have you there in which the men can congregate? I believe one or two, or three points at the most. Do you mean to say that four hundred mounted police and militia are not sufficient to keep law and order at Dawson City and the one or two other places in the country? It is a pretense that is blown away at the very first attempt you make to analyse it, that we perforce are to vote this thing, or law or order will be placed in jeopardy. Again, I ask the right hon. gentleman, is he going to wait until we get that road built on the first of September next before he sends in the police and his permanent force of infantry? If not, he does not want the road for that purpose. I will put another question. Is he going to send in with the men themselves, or by other means, the supplies they will require next winter, or is he going to keep them back until Mann & Mackenzie get the road completed? He does not dare to say that he will leave the men who will go there as guardians of the peace, dependent for their food and supplies for next winter upon the contingency that Mann & Mackenzie will get that road built by the first of September, or in sufficient time thereafter to send the food and supplies over it. No, Sir; the men

will take their food and supplies in themselves, or have them sent in by the routes that will be available during the coming summer. They will not depend upon the contingency of this road being completed in time. If they did, they might find themselves in a bad box if Mann & Mackenzie failed to finish the road in time.

Then, we were appealed to on humanitarian grounds. Our susceptibilities as to suffering were harrowed up, and we were told that it was absolutely necessary to carry through this secret contract and get it into operation—to do what? To save people from the pangs of starvation in the Yukon country. Starvation during what period of the year? Starvation this spring, next summer or next fall? No, because by this road not a pound of food will go in under the best of circumstances before the 1st of September; and up to that time, whatever food is necessary will be taken in by other and well-known routes. So that, so far as staving off starvation during this summer season is concerned, that road is of no more use than would be a road in the north of Siberia. Have the Government undertaken to keep people from starvation in that country from next autumn on? If so, they have undertaken a contract which they had no business to undertake, which this country never authorized, and I think will not authorize them to undertake. By what right have this Parliament, as the representatives of the taxpayers of this country, to say to the world, to adventurers and aliens from every clime: "Rush in; never mind your provisions; we will see that you shall not starve when you get there." Lay that down as an axiom in the conduct of the Government of this country, and where would you be? No Government dare lay down such a policy. These hon. gentlemen have gone far towards laying down that policy in this case; and if next winter men are found in that country with insufficient supplies, the guilt will lie at the doors of hon. gentlemen opposite, who advertised in their queer way to the world at large that they would build a line of railway into that country to prevent starvation next winter. But I take the more common-sense view, and I hazard the assertion that you may go to Dyea or to the Stikine or to the wharfs of Victoria and Vancouver, and you will find that nineteen out of every twenty of the men who are going into that country are going there with the determination either to come out next autumn, or, if not, with a sufficient supply of provisions in their possession for one and a half or two years. The tales of starvation and the dangers of starvation which have been heralded through the press of this country, and the press of every other country, have awakened every adventurer who turns his face towards that northern clime, to the fact that he must insure himself against the danger of starvation. The re-

sult is that nineteen out of every twenty men who are going in, with these examples before their eyes, with the constant admonition to take in plenty of supplies, with the admonition of Commissioner Walsh that they must have at least a year's provisions with them, will go in well supplied with provisions; and what they lack the trading and supply companies which are operating in the country by the dozen, will see that they have provisions to sell when the starving time comes and the people have to buy. Now, I think I have thoroughly exploded the idea that owing to the fear of starvation we have to put our hands into the treasure-house of this country and denude it of its greatest value for the purpose of keeping the people in that country from starvation. But they say: Oh, we want to save the trade for Canada. Let us examine that from a common-sense point of view. There are two things the Government are trading on. They are, first, trading on the cry of "An all-Canadian route," which is a pure pretense so far as this contract is concerned, and are trying to get the country to stand by them on this pretext. An ostrich may stick its head in a heap of sand and think it will thereby escape the attacks of its enemies, but so long as its huge posterior bulk is found to obtrude, its enemies are sure to find it out. This ostrich Government sticks its head in a mass of moss and snow, 150 miles from the mouth of the Stikine River, and cries out that this railway of 150 miles, on a route which is more than 1,500 miles in total extent, is an all-Canadian route. This is an ostrich policy, which the criticism of its opponents will soon make very short work of. Save the trade for Canada? I have said there are two things which these hon. gentlemen are trading on. One is the all-Canadian cry, and the other is that they are patriotically determined to preserve the trade of Canada for Canadians. Let us examine their scheme and bring to bear on it a little common sense. I ask this question of the right hon. leader of the Government; Will the building or not building of the Teslin Lake Railway, 150 miles in length, save one ounce or vary one pound of the Yukon trade for this year? Every man who proposes to go there this season, has either started on his way or has made all the preparations to get there. He has purchased his supplies, whether he has purchased them here or in any other country. And, so far as the 20,000 or 30,000 or 50,000 people who are going into that country to prospect for minerals this year is concerned, not one pound of the supplies they will take will be in the least degree influenced by the building of that 150 miles of road during this summer. Well, if the building of that road will not vary the trade of the Klondike one ounce, or a pound, this season, let us go beyond that into the wider question and test what this Yukon Railway scheme, as propounded by this

Government—for we must take it exactly as it is before us to-day—amounts to. There may be prophecies and promises as to something else that is to come, but we know nothing about that. This Parliament is dealing now with the simple Teslin Lake route and the contract which we are asked to pass upon. Let us ask what its effect will be on trade. Hon. gentlemen opposite are not a whit more eager that Canada shall have all the trade possible in opening that country than we are. But hon. gentlemen on this side, or the other side, might just as well come down to plain matters of fact and look into the question outside of anything else but the hard facts of the case. I propose to discuss briefly this question of the Canadian trade, and I make bold to say, this,—and I say it before I bring my proof, in order that it may catch the attention of hon. gentlemen opposite who may think that I am extravagant in my statement—that if hon. gentlemen opposite had searched the whole line of coast to the interior, they could not have selected a more disadvantageous route for the carrying of heavy provisions than this half-and-half scheme of the Teslin Lake 150-mile tramway business, with its attendant water stretches on either side.

THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. As the hon. gentleman's leader says so well.

MR. FOSTER. My hon. friend has given utterance to one of his wise remarks. He will now, as in the past, find that my hon. leader is quite able to take care of himself and the Minister of Trade and Commerce to boot. He will also find, if he wishes to look into the matter, that there is not very much difference between my opinion and the opinion of my hon. friend who sits beside me.

THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Hear, hear.

MR. FOSTER. And if there be a difference, it is that difference of opinion which every man on this side claims a right to have in looking at these questions from his point of view.

MR. LANDERKIN. There are no misgivings.

MR. FOSTER. My hon. friend had to apologize the other night, and he will find that quietness is the best policy for some people, under certain circumstances. What I want to state is this, and I state it again, because the facetious remark of my hon. friend quite overcame me for the time being. I was looking into the matter of the trade of Canada to be obtained by the opening up of the Yukon district, and I said that hon. gentlemen opposite would find it difficult to discover a line of transport which would labour under greater disabilities in the carrying of heavy freight than this scheme which is submitted to us.

My hon. friend from Alberta (Mr. Oliver) discussed this question of supplying the great bulk of products which will go into the Yukon district, from an intensely practical point of view, and much better than I can state it; but I propose to make another statement of fact, in order that it may be taken into consideration, if possible, even with greater attention by hon. gentlemen on the other side. When you speak of the Yukon district and of diverting the trade of Canada into that district, against competition from other quarters, there are three things to take into account. In the first place, you have to distinguish between what you may call the simple distribution of supplies what you may call the production of these supplies. It is a good thing, if the distributors or handlers of goods can get out of the Yukon trade a profit that comes to them as the medium of transmission, whether these goods are the products of their own country or simply handled in transshipment from another country. Every distributor being a medium for the passage of these products from the source of production to the place of consumption gets his profit upon it, and these profits are distributed to a large extent in the cities and towns in which these distributors live. So that, if nothing of this were produced in Canada, if a large proportion of it were handled by distributors in Victoria, Vancouver and other towns, the trade would be worth looking after, and could be profitably done in this country. But every hon. gentleman knows that that is not the important point. When we talk of having the trade of the Yukon for Canada, we mean that we want to have the productions of Canada consumed in the Yukon. We want our own men to handle the goods also. Then we have the double advantage of profits on production and handling as well. But every business man knows that as between the two, the profit that comes to Canada from sending in products of our own country are far greater than those which we get from the distribution of a similar quantity of products of other countries. When you come down to that point, you have three things to think of—first, the cost of production; second, the cost of transport, and, third, the incidence of customs duties. I think I am right when I say, as I think the hon. member for Alberta (Mr. Oliver) was right when he said that the greater part of what will be taken into the country as it fills up will be provisions of different kinds. A mining camp is proverbially lavish and almost wasteful. Man for man, the workers in a mining camp will consume two or three times as much as labourers in other classes of labour. So that a great feature in the supply of a mining camp is in provisions. These you may divide into two classes, those that are, so to speak, dead and those that are taken in on foot. Now, as to the cost of pro-

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duction. I take it that I am not uttering a hearsay when I state that in Washington, Oregon, on the Pacific Coast of the United States you can produce these staple provisions at as little cost as you can produce them in Manitoba or the North-west. I am not going into a laboured argument on that point. I will simply take it for granted that the cost of production of meats of all kinds and provisions of all kinds is as great on the plains near Calgary or further east, as on the fertile stretches of Washington and Oregon. Let us see, then, how we stand for the securing of this trade by the Stikine route in competition with the producers in Oregon and Washington. Call it unpatriotic if you like; say that we are not sounding the praises of our own country, but business, as an eminent authority on the other side says, is business, and we have to look at facts as well as to study sentiment. Taking the cost of production as equal in our North-west on one side and in Washington and Oregon on the other, what are the difficulties, if any, in the way of our competing with them? You have to take your provisions and cattle from the North-west on this side of the Rocky Mountains, and transport them for six hundred to a thousand miles down to the sea-board. You have to take them up by a vessel to the mouth of the Stikine River; you have to transfer them there to smaller vessels and take them up the Stikine River. And then you transfer to the tramway and take them over that road a distance of 150 miles. You must here make another change and take them by boat down Teslin Lake and Hootalinqua River until you get them to Dawson City. Count up the cost of that method of transport. Then take the cities of Oregon and Washington, where production is equally cheap and there you have a route less in mileage and less expensive, because it is by water entirely, until you reach the port where you leave them to be re-embarked for inland transportation. Will anybody tell me that you are going to give the producers of meats and provisions in Canada a fair chance to secure that trade of the Yukon under these circumstances? I do not believe you are. The question has come up whether British Columbia is a producer of surplus agricultural products. Everybody knows that she is not. I hope the time will come when she will be. She has rich lands and a very good selection of them, but we are dealing with facts as they are, and the facts that British Columbia has to import a large proportion of her food products, and she imports them from the United States and from the western part of the North-west Territories. If this supply of food for the Yukon is to come from Canada, then it must come from this side of the Rocky Mountains. That brings up the question whether it is possible for competition to take place

with regard to these things, competition which will bring a large quantity of Canadian products into the Yukon district for consumption there. Then, take the next large item of trade in the Yukon. A great deal of machinery and tools will be needed, also furniture and that sort of thing. Now, machinery is heavy and furniture is fairly bulky. Applying the same line of argument, and you can easily see that it is a question whether you would be able to compete with the United States in these articles, and whether things of that bulky kind will go over that road along the Teslin Lake and over this railway, or seek some way where there are not so many transshipments or where the cost will not be so great.

THE MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). Hear, hear.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend (Sir Louis Davies) says "hear, hear." I am glad the argument is sinking into his mind. I thought that after much reiteration I should bring my hon. friend to say "hear, hear."

THE MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. It sounds like an argument from a Tacoma paper.

Mr. FOSTER. I could not ask for anything more apt to illustrate my argument than this ejaculation of my hon. friend. Defeated in argument, with the facts of the case against him, his last resource is simply to ring the patriotic bell, to declare: Why this man who is talking to you reflects the ideas of a Tacoma newspaper. My hon. friend is welcome to that trick; he has used it before and he can use it again. It will never stop an argument, from a business point of view, so far as I am concerned. Besides the articles I have named, you have clothing and the like of that. It may be possible for eastern Canada to compete, even by the coast route, in this line of goods. That is a question which I will not take up. I deal simply with the principal items, provisions and machinery, tools, furniture and such like. So I say one of the most important things that this Government and Parliament has to take into consideration before they put any permanent route into operation is what route will really give to Canada the business of producing the goods that will be needed in the Yukon trade.

Is it this? If it is, let us put it through; if it is not, don't let us put it through. Let us make whatever transport is necessary on the Pacific slope to-day, temporary, but sufficient for the time being. Let us wait for time and knowledge until we gather what is sufficient, and are able to come to a permanent conclusion, for the best interests of Canada are involved in this. Will hon. gentlemen think of one thing? Have you heard of any

quarrel between Canadians and outside suppliers with relation to these people and parties that are going in by the Edmonton route? Where do these men outfit for their provisions? Nine-tenths of it is done in Canadian territory. The route settles the question. Where else would they get their provisions and their meats? They pass right through the source of supply, and they take their line for the Yukon out of the very centre of the source of supply. The question solves itself, and that adds additional interest to this discussion as to where shall be the route into which Canada shall put its hard earned money, but its well spent money if the result of spending it is to be a permanent arrangement towards increasing the markets of this country. Let me tell hon. gentlemen opposite that they have no greater opportunity to provide a market for the agriculturists of this country and the North-west in particular, than is opened up to them to-day in the Yukon district. If it is a country of the rich promise that their officials say it is, if it bears out one-tenth of the promise which to-day it holds forth to the public of Canada and to the world, there will be a centre of consumption which will be better for that great North-west in the supply of provisions than any foreign market that you can go into by preferential trade or reciprocity which discriminates, or any other plan that you might wish to propose. It is the very market that the people need, the very market which Providence seems to be opening up at the very doors of the district of Alberta and that section of country, far removed from the seaboard to the east, and far removed from the seaboard to the west, and consequently under the disadvantage of long hauls and expensive freight charges. I earnestly ask hon. members on both sides of the House not to be stampeded by a flurry, and not to put the inestimable wealth of Canada into the building of a 150-mile tramway until we are certain from investigation, and calm discussion and deliberation, that we are getting a route which will do for the productions of Canada that which we all wish to have done. Now, Canada has one great advantage. What is it? She has the advantage of the impost of the duties. That is an advantage which will counteract to a certain extent the cost of transport and distance from the field. But you can count upon that only to a very small extent if you bring into the route such costliness of transport as tends to more than compensate the advantage that is given to you by the impost of the duties upon the articles that go in.

Now let me go on to another point. According to the Ministers themselves there will either be no difficulty practically with the United States of America on the coast, or there will be difficulty. I take that broad ground, that if there is to be difficulty at Wrangel, there will be difficulty at Dyea,

and Pyramid Harbour, and on the Yukon River just the same. There will be no difficulty at Wrangel, if the good will of the United States is secured and manifested to us; and if she is disposed to manifest good will to us there, she is equally disposed to manifest it to us on the Yukon River, and at Dyea, at other ports along that coast. There cannot be any doubt as to the soundness of that position. What say hon. gentlemen opposite? They say that they have had unflinching courtesy shown them at Washington, and good relations with the Government of the United States heretofore, and they expect that these will continue. Is the Minister of Customs here to-night? I ask him a question. To-day, in your arrangements with the United States, have you a basis of satisfactory operations on the Yukon River, and at Dyea, and at Skagway? What is the answer of the Minister of Customs? The answer that he gave us a month ago, that there is now in operation, and so far as we know will continue in operation, an arrangement at these two mentioned ports and on the river, which allows the free interchange and passage of goods under a customs arrangement which is not burdensome, and which is mutually satisfactory. Now, what I say is this: If the United States proposes to squeeze Canada at Wrangel, she will squeeze Canada on general principles at Dyea, and on the Yukon River as well. If she does not do it on these, she will not do it at Wrangel; and despite all that has been said in the United States Senate and elsewhere, I am not yet going to lose hope that the United States, in its executive government, will so model and carry out things that in the end, although it may take some little time, we will have a modus vivendi which will be agreeable to both countries. Why not, Sir? The United States of America on that Yukon stretch has more to gain than to lose by having these amicable arrangements. Take the 141st meridian and run north. When you get a little north of Dawson City you have the United States territory of the Yukon. Will any one say that it is not liable to be as rich in gold as the Canadian side? It is just as liable, and if finds of gold are made in that United States portion of the Yukon along the 141st meridian, the United States would be just as glad as we would be to have an arrangement by which they could take their goods in bond across the intervening territory, and take them by rail way at all seasons of the year, and so deliver them to the centres of consumption in that country. Now, I believe this general proposition to be true; if the United States proposes to squeeze Canada they will do it in these other portions just the same as at Wrangel. If it gives facilities at Wrangel, it will give facilities elsewhere just the same. Under these circumstances let us look at this route as compared with other routes. Suppose that

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the United States gives us facilities all along that coast. Now, take your Stikine route, with this hybrid arrangement that you have, and compare it with the road which might be built from Pyramid Harbour along the Dalton trail down to the Rink Rapids, and so get into deep water communication for the summer, with Dawson City, and the not difficult communication in winter, some 225 miles. Place your merchant on the wharf at Vancouver and give him a choice of routes. He has piled around him everything that he wishes to export, flour, beef, pork and all kinds of provisions, heavy machinery, light machinery, tools, mechanical appliances, bedding, furniture and all that like. Ask him which route he will take—take the route via the Stikine, the Teslin Lake, the Hootalinqua, and the Lewes River down to Dawson, with its mixed navigation and land carriage, with its costly system of transport, a transport made costly by transshipments necessitated by the small size of the vessels which must inevitably do the transportation on the river stretches, both in the Stikine and in Teslin Lake and in the Hootalinqua; ask him whether he will send by that route, or whether he would send by a route, if it were open, by which he could take his goods up the Lynn Canal, hand them over to a railway at Pyramid Harbour, put them through on the railway to Rink Rapids in a day, get them from within 225 miles of Dawson City by an uninterrupted line of good water communication in the summer, and by fair stretches of snow road, or by railroad, in the winter. Should there be one moment's hesitation as to what route should be taken—the one an expensive route, a tedious route, involving both time and delay and great expense; and the other a speedy route, involving the least charge for transshipment and for loading and unloading, and open every day in the year, while the other will be shut up for seven months in the year? That is a business proposition. Let us ask ourselves, which route should be adopted. If the Minister of Railways were here, if the Minister of the Interior were here, I would ask the hon. gentleman whether it was true or was not true, that Mackenzie & Mann themselves wanted, as a commercial project, to build the railway by the Chilkat Pass, and were wedded to that route. If the Minister were here, he would be obliged, if he answered, to say that was true; the Ministers know it is true. Mackenzie & Mann had been over that route—it was their pet route. There they saw the most speedy means of communication, there they saw the least interruption and change, there they saw the best methods of transportation both for the carrier and for the person whose goods were transported. As a commercial route, that was the line they favoured. As a commercial line, it was the route which every business man would adopt, one open the whole year round, and consequently giving

communication between the sources of supply and communication every day in the year, and not shut up for seven months, during which people could not enter the country with supplies of any heavy kind or in large quantity.

Suppose the United States acts fairly or does not act fairly by us—let them take whichever course they please—the same objections would be met at Wrangel as at Lynn Canal and on the Yukon River, no more and no less, for we would be dependent ultimately on the good will of the United States as to arrangements they would make with us. Stand by your treaty rights as firmly as you please, say that the treaty means untrammelled freedom so far as we are concerned, the United States is at liberty to say that the treaty means something else so far as they are concerned; and there is no way of coming to a conclusion except by long diplomatic correspondence and probably the decision of a tribunal in the end. When the matter was settled and the United States came to the conclusion to treat us on a fair and amicable basis, there would be no obstacle in either case. On either of the assumptions, the Stikine River route so far as I am able to look into it, will not commercially compare with other routes which may be opened up ultimately from other ports on the coast. I am not going to elaborate this point; I have laid down the outlines, and every business man in this House can work out the calculations and details for himself. Hon. gentlemen opposite state that this is an all-Canadian route. I dealt with that before the dinner hour, and I do not propose to say anything more particularly in relation to it, only I again desire to bring to the attention of the House and the country, that the Canadian route passes through a strip of United States territory. On the Lynn Canal route, you come to territory which is indisputably ours, by the terms of the treaty, as we interpret them, but which the United States may claim, as they interpret the treaty. But the chances there are in our favour. The chances respecting the Stikine route are not in our favour and, inevitably, there is United States territory which we shall have to pass through. The territorial line has to be passed, and a length of 150 miles of tedious and somewhat intricate navigation in summer has to be passed, and in winter a chaos of snow and ice, impassable for the passage of man, let alone of freight, whether heavy or light.

Sir, I am told that we are estopped from asking the Government to consider the propositions which have since been made, even though they save the country one-half of the cost this secret bargain entails on it. Will the leader of the Government take that position, or will he say here to-night, that under the circumstances we are stewards and trustees for the people, and if we can get this route, or as good route, or two routes, built for one-half the cost to the coun-

try this bargain will entail on it, that for the sake of the country Parliament, which has the undoubted right to pass in freedom on this subject, may reject or modify this contract as it pleases, has nothing else to do than save the country's resources and secure the building of the proposed railway for a smaller sum of money? Will the hon. gentleman controvert that proposition? My right hon. friend is estopped from controverting it. My right hon. friend spoke with respect to the Canadian Pacific Railway contract, and in his speech he made a statement which I think it worth while to place on the "Hansard" of this House. It was as follows:—

It is stated that the offer is not seriously made, that it is a political dodge got up by the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, if the Opposition have organized this scheme they will have still another claim to the gratitude of the country, for whatever may have been the motives that induced these capitalists to make the Government this new offer, these motives are of little consequence, provided that we obtain the result, and the result is that the new company now offers more advantageous terms than those we have now before us.

It is stated that the offer is not serious. But there is a very simple means of ascertaining the fact, and that is to put these capitalists to the test. They are ready to deposit the money and give all the security the Government may require.

I fling the words of the right hon. gentleman before him to-night. I tell him he has an offer under his hands from capitalists of undoubted ability, to build this road for 1,000,000 acres, instead of 4,000,000 acres and over, and to build this road and the Pyramid Harbour route and Dalton trail route, to boot, both of them, for little less than one-half of the land subsidy to be given to Mackenzie & Mann for building 150 miles of tramway. Will the hon. gentleman try to crawl out of accepting that offer because "it is a political dodge got up by the Opposition?" Let him take his own words, which I quote to him, where he says, "If the Opposition have organized this scheme, they will have still another claim to the gratitude of the country, because they will have got the work carried out at a saving of cost to the country." Does the right hon. gentleman take the ground, that Mr. Hamilton Smith and his associates are not responsible men and able to build the road? I quote his words to him: "Put these capitalists to the test." That is what he said before; but put them to the test, not by a private telegram, the answer to which the right hon. gentleman made public, by a telegram which he himself promised to lay before the House, when he knew as well as he knows to-night the nature of the telegram, for he himself sent it, and which, the next day, he refused to give to the House, thereby doing gross injustice to a gentleman whom he should have treated as a gentleman, and degrading the dignity and

standing of a Minister of the Crown in this Parliament. Let the hon. gentleman, instead of sending winding and tortuous telegrams that he dare not produce to the House, let him put the matter to the test and telegraph London to know whether Hamilton Smith and his associates are men of means and men of worth, able to put this contract through, and I vouch he will get an answer that will set that matter at rest. What will the Prime Minister do? Will he eat his words as he has eaten them time after time; eat his words until his bad faith is becoming a byword in this country? What pledge of public policy has he made that he has not gone back on? And even a pledge that he makes across the floor of this House, knowing well every condition of it, when he wakes up the next day he comes in and repudiates and says, that though he breaks his word he will keep his honour in his own charge.

Sir, I have one word more to say and though I may reiterate something I have said before, I shall put on record once more my protest against alienating the rich alluvial placer grounds of the Yukon to any two men, or to any monopoly of men in this country. I want to affirm that, that is the heritage of the common people of this country and should be kept for the common people. By the common people I mean the people of worth and substance in the rural districts, our artisans in the towns, all that class of men who though they have not large capital have the hearts and the brawn which makes Canada strong and gives her a guarantee of the future. I put on record my protest against this departure from the settled principle of every Anglo-Saxon mining country in the world, as well as an outrage upon the rights of this country. If these gentlemen opposite succeed in putting this through and settling their monopolists at work, the harvest that will be reaped will be a harvest full of sorrow and of retribution to them.

Mr. GIBSON. Oh.

Mr. FOSTER. The hon. gentlemen laugh; irresponsible men are noted for laughing, irresponsible men have nothing but a sneer or a laugh, but the right hon. gentleman who leads this Government does not laugh just now. On his shoulders rest two weights. One is the dignity and interests of the country which he sometimes forgets, but which we call to his mind, and the other is that long stream of pap-hunters and patronage-seekers in his own party which renders every hour of his life a bitterness and which is ageing him fast as he sits in this House. I leave the hon. member for Lincoln to put himself in whichever of these classes he pleases; but the man who sneers and laughs when his country's best and richest portion is given away to contractors, is a man who can feel very little of the responsibilities of the situation.

I repeat, that we should not give away this heritage to monopolists. Do these gentlemen opposite think it is profitable for the country? Take your official guide book of the Klondike, discount the promises revealed in that by 50 per cent, give this monopoly to Messrs. Mann & Mackenzie, let them blanket four million acres of picked gold fields, and see how that is going to work out from the financial point of view. Suppose that in the next three or four years, out of that four million acres of picked land Mann & Mackenzie work 5,000 claims, and suppose that if it had not been given to Mann & Mackenzie five thousand prospectors would have taken these claims and worked them. How does that stand with reference to the revenues of this country? Mann & Mackenzie will work these 5,000 claims, we will say, for the sake of argument, five men to the claim. They will work them every year with these 25,000 men, and not a man of these pays his \$10 a year for a miner's license, or his \$15 fee for the entry of his claim. If these claims were worked by 25,000 free miners, they would pay a fee of \$10 each per year, making \$250,000, and all that is lost to the country by reason of this monopoly. They would pay \$15 entrance fee for each claim, making \$75,000 to be added to the loss. Suppose they worked out \$5,000,000 of gold, they would pay 10 per cent of a royalty, but Mann & Mackenzie only nine-tenths of that sum, and so you have to add another \$450,000 as a loss because of this monopoly. That makes \$775,000 loss to the revenues of the country on these five thousand claims that would be worked by Mann & Mackenzie. The Minister of Trade and Commerce laughs. He no doubt thinks that this is imaginary, but I have based it on the published statements of his Government and I take it they are worthy of credence. I look upon that as a promising land, and I say that out of 4,000,000 acres of picked gold fields, it is not extravagant to say that in a few years Mann & Mackenzie will have 5,000 claims working, and they are very great fools if they do not have four

times five thousand. That is how this huge grant works with regard to the revenues of this country, and the hon. member for Alberta (Mr. Oliver) showed how it works as regards the trade of the country. Look at it in whatever light you please, it is an extravagant arrangement, and we are doing our duty in protesting against it so long as we have the power. Though the mechanical majority may be whipped into line and may vote for it; numbers of them not wishing to do so, numbers of them praying that they might be relieved from doing so; the time will come when in the country hon. gentlemen opposite will meet with the judgment of that tribunal, before which we as members of Parliament have each to go and before which we have to give an account of our trust.

Now, Sir, I have finished what I have to say. If I may be allowed to offer a bit of advice, I would say that the Ministry had better now stop for a moment, take stock of the situation, and see what is the best thing to do under the circumstances. My own opinion is, that something like this would be best: go to work under the present conditions now that the urgency is past for the present year, use your means of having investigations as to all the different routes possible into that country, go slowly, go only to the extent of putting what is necessary as a wagon road, across that Stikine passage if you please, and a wagon road from Edmonton north, and leave in abeyance that weightier question on the conclusion of which the future of Canada so greatly depends. Leave it to a time when you can have sufficient information gathered, and when you can come to a fair conclusion as to where the permanent roadway should be; and then place Canada's contribution towards opening up that country for Canadian people and Canadian trade cheerfully on that roadway, and keep for Canada the great benefits that are likely to accrue from the rich blessings in the shape of gold lands that Providence has given us in the great north.

Hon G E F—3

