

March 31, 1871

Mr. MACKENZIE had stated his willingness to send any number of men not to acquire the country, but to establish the supremacy of law over insurrection.

Hon. Sir GEORGE-É. CARTIER resumed the comparison of the expressions of the member for Lambton last year, and this, then he had stated distinctly that the acquisition of the North West would be the only way to obtain British Columbia, but now he did not want the Union.

Mr. MACKENZIE denied this; he was as much in favour of Union as ever.

Hon. Sir GEORGE-É. CARTIER said the member for Lambton had stated distinctly that in swallowing the Quebec scheme he had made a mistake, and now the great Reformer of Upper Canada, the representative of everything good, the representative of the great Party of Progress, said no, we must pull up, we must stop. The Government were really the Party of Progress and action, and the member for Lambton, and those who had followed him would at the next election be taken to task by their constituents for having in order to make a case against the Government made the humiliating confession that they had made a mistake in accepting the scheme of Confederation. The member for Lambton in his argument had said that between Thunder Bay and Fort Garry there was no soil and the railway could not be built but that question could be settled by Parliament hereafter, when the railway scheme should be submitted.

Mr. MACKENZIE: What about the obligations?

Hon. Sir GEORGE-É. CARTIER said, suppose the hon. gentleman undertook an obligation, could he be obliged to fulfil it, if he should be prevented by unforeseen circumstances. No one could be compelled to perform an impossibility. The time was too long, and the objection could only come from an economical Scotchman, and he would predict that in a very few years the hon. gentleman would be one of the most ardent supporters of the railway. He had not been sorry to lose his motion yesterday, and he was not sincere in his present proposal. That proposal was to entail a delay of seven months; what object could there be in so doing? The matter had already been discussed sufficiently, and the time was now come for settlement, and he would say that without the prospect of British Columbia, they would never have persuaded a majority of the House to consent to acquire one inch of the North West. For the sake of the member for Lambton himself he trusted his speech would not be well reported, and especially that part in which he had spoken of the character of the land in most disadvantageous terms, and yet he said he was in favour of building a railway as soon as possible. If the land was as described by the hon. member, why should a railway be built at all? He reiterated 10 years was too long, and as to the mode of building the railway that would all be submitted to Parliament, and within the next few days the Government would ask for an appropriation for the preliminary survey. He maintained that Canada was better able to-day to undertake the Pacific railway than she had been years ago to

advance fifteen millions to the Grand Trunk. The whole affair of the hundred millions was a bugbear. There was no such thing as incurring that debt in a few years—it was an absurdity to make such a statement.

The policy was purposely to retain the lands of the country in order to build railways and open ways of communication. Canada would not have to bear the expenditure alone. British Columbia would be represented in the House, and would be equally interested in the work. Speaking of the cost of the railway, he maintained the gentlemen on the other side had played the parts of old nurses, but the children on his side of the House were not so easily frightened. He spoke of the North Pacific, quoting from a statement showing the whole length to be 2,000 miles, and the entire estimated cost seventy-six million dollars in greenbacks. It had been objected that the estimate for the Canadian Pacific might not be correct. He admitted that, but the argument worked both ways. The cost might prove very much below the estimate, and an immense amount of land was reserved to cover it. He quoted a statement showing the average cost of railway communication in the United States, showing 2,600 miles of line in operation, the average cost being, in the different States, from \$25,000 to \$33,000 per mile. It was admitted that there was a large extent of prairie land to be crossed, and the smaller expenditure necessary there would leave means to overcome difficulties in other portions. The hon. members opposite had been sufficiently unpatriotic to represent the country as that it would never attract immigration, and he quoted from the proceedings of the House of Representatives of the State of Minnesota speaking of the Canadian line as practicable, and the territories of the North West and British Columbia, as fertile, and the most valuable of the Continent; and yet men in this country, the leaders of their party, did their utmost to decry their country.

Mr. MACKENZIE denied that he had done anything to decry the country.

Hon. Sir GEORGE-É. CARTIER was glad he had given the hon. member an opportunity to correct himself. He quoted from an article from an American paper, copied into the *Globe* characterising the Saskatchewan country as most valuable in soil and minerals, and British Columbia as possessing rich mineral resources, magnificent climate and fine soil. It was fortunate that the truth could be ascertained even if it came from opponents. The Government had stated again and again that they themselves would not build the railway, but that it would be constructed by Companies assisted by such subsidies as would not oppress the people. It was absurd to speak of building a line to the Rocky Mountains only, a vote could not be obtained for such a purpose, but when it was proposed to extend the line to the ocean, the question assumed a very different aspect. Many great works had been accomplished in England, but what were any compared with the scheme now proposed, and he could say that already there was a motion in England to assist the measure, and there would doubtless be capitalists to take the matter in hand, and everything was in favor of the successful construction of the road. The Minister of Justice had telegraphed him to present his congratulations to his friends on the vote of yesterday.