

for holding meetings and adopting petitions. But, I would ask what did most of the members even of this House know of the scheme when they first came to Quebec? Did we know as much about it then as we know now?

HON. MR. ROSS—Yes.

HON. MR. CURRIE—My hon. friend from Toronto says, "Yes."

AN HON. MEMBER—No.

HON. MR. CURRIE—Another hon. member replies, "no." I may say for myself that I have learned something even from the speech of my hon. friend from Toronto that I did not know before. The people of the country have been waiting, expecting this matter would be discussed in Parliament, and that the whole scheme would be presented so as to enable its being judged of as a whole. Unfortunately, however, it is only a part of the scheme which we have at this moment before the Council. I did not have the pleasure of hearing the whole of the remarks of my hon. friend from Montreal (Hon. Mr. FERRIER), but I was greatly interested in listening to the portion I did hear. I refer to what he said respecting the ministerial crisis in June last. I thought that the celebrated memorandum, which, by the bye, has since been in great part repudiated by the Government of the day, contained all the Ministerial explanations. But that scene, so forcibly described by the hon. gentleman, where the President of the Council met the Attorney General East—

HON. MR. FERRIER—I did not say I saw it. I only heard of it.

HON. MR. CURRIE—When the Hon. Mr. CARTIER embraced the Hon. Mr. BROWN. (Laughter.)

HON. MR. FERRIER—I simply said it was so reported on the streets.

HON. MR. CURRIE—And the Hon. Mr. BROWN promised eternal allegiance to the Hon. Mr. CARTIER. (Laughter.)

HON. MR. FERRIER—I was simply giving the *on-dit* of the day. I said I knew nothing whatever of it further than what I had heard on the streets.

HON. MR. CURRIE—I must have misunderstood my hon. friend. I thought he was a witness of the affecting scene. (Laughter.) But my hon. friend did tell the House something which was new to me, and which must have sounded as new to the country, when he said that the Grand Trunk Railway cost the people of Canada very little. The

hon. gentleman seemed to think that I was very much opposed to the Grand Trunk. But never in my life have I spoken a single word against the Grand Trunk as a railway. I believe there is no hon. gentleman who can possibly appreciate more highly the commercial advantages to this country of that work than I do. At the same time, I have taken occasion, and may do so again if the necessity requires it, to speak of some of the transactions connected with that undertaking. Let this work or any other public work come under the attention of this Chamber, and it will receive at my hands in the future, as in the past, that degree of consideration to which as a public work it is entitled. I hope the day is not far distant when the Grand Trunk will become what it ought to be, a strictly and entirely commercial work, and when the people of all classes and parties will look upon it with favor.

HON. MR. FERRIER—It is strictly a commercial work now.

HON. MR. CURRIE—My hon. friend stated that it had cost the country a mere trifle. But unluckily the Public Accounts do not tell the same story, and they do not exactly confirm the views of my hon. friend in relation to this work. If he looks at the assets of the province—the valuables of the province—he will find there is a charge against the Grand Trunk of \$15,142,000 for debentures. And besides there is this little \$100,000 which has been used in redeeming the city of Montreal bonds. There is something more besides about subsidiary lines.

HON. MR. FERRIER—I spoke of the first capital investment.

HON. MR. CURRIE—My hon. friend from the Erie Division (Hon. Mr. CHRISTIE) admitted in opening his case that this scheme was very much marred by its details. Admitting this—which is just the whole argument—that the details so greatly mar the scheme, it is much to be feared that the measure will not work so peacefully, usefully, or harmoniously as its originators expected, and I believe sincerely hoped it would do; because I do these hon. gentlemen the credit of believing that in devising a scheme which should be for the future as well as the present welfare of the country, they were animated by a desire to do the very best they could under the circumstances. Their great error, in my opinion, lay in