

CARVELL'S GREAT SPEECH.

Liberal Member for Carleton Made Eloquent and Convincing Plea for St. John Valley Route.

PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT FACTS AND FIGURES WHICH ARE INCONTROVERTIBLE AND UNANSWERABLE.

In the House of Commons at Ottawa Monday evening Mr. F. B. Carvell, of Carleton, followed Mr. O. S. Crockett in the debate on the Transcontinental railway question and is reported in Hansard, the official record of the debates, as follows:

Mr. F. B. Carvell. (Carleton, N. B.) At this late hour I think it would be an infliction on hon. members present to ask them to listen to me for any time at all, but the matter brought up is so important to the people of my province that I consider it my duty to reply to some extent to the remarks of the hon. gentleman who has just sat down. (Mr. Crockett,) as well as to give my own views as briefly as possible. I regret exceedingly the standpoint from which my hon. friend has chosen to discuss this question. When I saw that he was to bring this matter up and learned from himself a week ago that he intended speaking about it, I looked forward with pleasurable anticipation to an honest effort on his part to induce the government to look at this matter from the same point of view as he and I do. But judging from the speech we have just heard I fear that he would not shed many tears if the government should never build a road at all through the province of New Brunswick. He certainly closed his remarks by imploring the government to build the road down to the port of St. John, but I think it is a fair inference to draw from his argument that in his heart he has not forgotten the speeches which he has made during the late election campaign when he told the people of New Brunswick that the government had no intention of building the railway through that province, and that the whole eastern section was purely a delusion and a fraud from beginning to end. Why that was the stock argument of the hon. gentleman's party all through the province of New Brunswick. I can assure you, Sir, that no proposition ever created such interest and excitement throughout that province as did this, during the late election this proposition to build the railway through the maritime provinces. It took place in the memory of most hon. gentlemen in this House, more particularly because of certain events which transpired in the province of New Brunswick of more than ordinary importance. The whole political situation, the Liberal standpoint, was considerably disturbed.

Mr. Crockett—Am I to understand, my hon. friend, to say that I made the statement in the county of York that the government would never build this eastern railway at all?

Mr. Carvell. The argument of the opposition candidates during the last election all over the province of New Brunswick was that the road would never be built.

Mr. Crockett—I can only speak for myself. No such argument was advanced in the county of York. We were all apprehensive with respect to the river route and the position of the government in that regard, but no suggestion was ever made that the road would never be built through the province of New Brunswick at all.

Mr. Carvell—I must accept the hon. gentleman's statement, but let him go into the reading room and read the St. John "Sun" during the recent election campaign, or any other Conservative paper, and he will find what the contention of his party then was. Who does not remember the cartoon in the "Daily Telegraph" entitled the Portland Cow, in which the cow was depicted standing across the boundary line, feeding on Canadian soil and being milked by Uncle Sam from Portland. The argument put forward by the Tory party everywhere was that the road would never be built. I have heard that prophecy in this House and it will no doubt be heard again. And I repeat that a reasonable inference to be drawn from the speech made by my hon. friend tonight is that the road may never be built and that in that event he will not shed any tears.

Mr. Crockett—Carleton will if it is not built.

Mr. Carvell—Beyond doubt this is a matter of importance to me personally. It is important to the constituents I represent, to the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and I contend to the whole Dominion. I accept the statement made by the government at the inception of this transaction as an honest, upright and frank statement made in the best of faith. I believe it was the intention of the government and of every patriotic Liberal in Canada then, as it is today, that this road should be built from ocean to ocean, entirely on Canadian soil, and have its terminals at Canadian ports. As long as the government is presided over by the right hon. gentleman who guides its destinies, I shall require better evidence than the insinuations and arguments of the hon. gentleman opposite before I will believe that it will deviate one jot or tittle from the contract it made in 1904.

It comes with very bad grace from any hon. gentleman to accuse the

government of any intention to abandon the eastern section because it has not commenced that section as soon as he hoped it would. I am sorry it did not begin that construction sooner, but I can give some of the reasons—in fact I can give all the reasons—why it has not yet been begun. I myself may as well plead guilty to being one of those who are to blame for the delay, and I have no apology to make for the course I took.

But before I go into that part of the case, I may say that I have always understood since I have taken the trouble to look up railway matters, that modern railway transportation was a question of curvatures, and grades rather than distances. Therefore, in considering this matter I have taken considerable time and trouble to look up the question of grades in the different roads which run to the Atlantic Ocean. I find that if we take the Grand Trunk Railway to Portland the summit has an elevation of 1,377 feet. I am not in a position to state tonight just what the percentage of grades on the Grand Trunk Railway is, but I do know that many of them must be one per cent.

MR. EMMERSON. Some over that.

MR. CARVELL. I am informed that some are over that. This must have an important bearing when we attempt to discuss the carrying powers of the Grand Trunk Railway as compared with those of the new transcontinental line. If we take the Canadian Pacific Railway going across the State of Maine we find that they have a maximum summit of 1,854 feet from Montreal to St. John; and it is within the knowledge of every hon. gentleman here that there are dozens and dozens of 1 per cent. grades on that line, and I think I am safe in saying that a large number run to 1 1/2 per cent. If we take the proposed route from Quebec to the St. John river, we find a maximum elevation of 1,500 feet. But the route crosses the St. Lawrence river at a very great height, I think I am safe in saying that we might consider 1,350 feet to be the elevation of the high lands between the St. Lawrence river and the St. John river. Now, this 1,350 feet must be taken into account though I presume there were figures in existence which would give some idea of what the elevations would be. But there are the facts you have an elevation of 1,350 feet, and with maximum grades of 21 feet to the mile, it takes a certain number of miles to get over the grades. But I understand that it is impossible to build a road with every inch at the maximum grade, therefore it must be longer. But the road must overcome the summit of 1,350 feet in order to reach from the St. Lawrence to the St. John river. There must be hills en route to be overcome as well. In that way, I am willing to agree with my hon. friend from York to some extent, although I cannot agree with him altogether.

It seems to me to be a preposterous thing to say that after the elections in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have been run on this issue, the building of the road should be turned down because the Grand Trunk Pacific does not want to build it. Does the hon. gentleman mean to insinuate that the Grand Trunk is the government of this country? Does he mean to say that that this country is going to break its word given to the maritime provinces, and not go on with the building of this road? It seems to me that it comes with poor grace from the hon. gentleman to say that nothing will be done at all. They had better wait at least one more year to see what the government will do before they make these wholesale charges of bad faith on the part of the administration.

I have here a number of altitudes of the Intercolonial, but it is unnecessary to quote them all. Suffice it to say that, in going over the Intercolonial looking up the altitudes of Canada, there is not a division—and I doubt if there is a section—on the whole line of the Intercolonial which has not grades of at least 1 per cent., and in some places 1 1/2 per cent. The principal of the important altitudes I may give to the House, as it may be a matter of interest to the reading public. I will start where the Intercolonial leaves the St. Lawrence. Before that, I have not taken the trouble to ascertain the figures, though I think there are a number of 1 per cent. grades on the route down the St. Lawrence.

These are only a few of the important summits that have to be climbed by the Intercolonial Railway. And my hon. friend in making his argument as to the fact that this road is longer than our friends supposed it would be at the inception, failed altogether to read the report of Mr. Butler which I think he should have read in all fairness, because he quoted from the interim report exclusively. He might have told the report in his speech and then we should have had it in "Hansard." Well, I do not like to read reports, and will not trouble the House with any reading of this report of Mr. Butler's, though I think it is a very admirable one and a credit to the gentleman who made it, showing his ability as a railway man, and also the attention he must have given to the question. But Mr. Butler in this report tells us that, were the grades of the Intercolonial reduced to the grades on this new road through New Brunswick, even by the back route—which I shall show later on is not the proper route—the Intercolonial would be lengthened by 100 miles. Therefore, instead of the two roads being practically the same length, it will be found when the new road is ready, it will be for all practical purposes 100 miles shorter than the Intercolonial from Quebec to Montreal.

MR. LENNOX.—If you lengthen the Intercolonial?

MR. CARVELL.—It does not matter if you reduce the grades of the Intercolonial to the standard of the new road, you will have to lengthen the Intercolonial by 100 miles; or, if you make the grades of the new road the same as the Intercolonial, you will have it, 100 miles shorter than the Intercolonial is. Therefore, the carrying capacity of this road will be greater than that of the Intercolonial, because either it will be 100 miles less or because it will have superior grades at the same distance.

I think that, in all fairness, my hon. friend (Mr. Crockett) should have quoted that part of the interim report for it is there that the highest grade on the Intercolonial is 1 1/2 per cent. upon the question under discussion to-night. And this, if for no other reason, would be enough to justify the government in building this road, in fact would compel them to build it. For, Mr. Speaker, the most important matter in Canadian statistics to-day is the transportation question. Anything which will facilitate the transportation of our western goods to the east must be of sufficient importance to be discussed in this House. This question is of such importance that we must discuss it. If we can get a road that is for all practical purposes, 100 miles shorter than the Intercolonial we shall accomplish wonders in the transportation problem of Canada.

Now, I am sorry that the report which my hon. friend has read here to-night has been brought to the attention of the people of Canada, for the simple reason that my hon. friend knows—and it is known to nearly every hon. gentleman in this House, and by very many in the country—that this report will never be acted upon; and for this simple reason, as stated by my hon. friend, that surveys have been ordered and will be completed. And just here I might tell him that, while the Minister of Railways could not tell him when the surveys will be completed, if he had changed his question so as to ask when these surveys will be commenced, the minister could have told him that they would be commenced about the 1st day of May.

I am not revealing any secrets, it is a matter known to the public and it must be known to my hon. friend that these surveys will be resumed about the 1st day of May, and will be pushed forward with reasonable speed, and the two routes through New Brunswick will be accurately and I believe honestly surveyed, and will be reported upon, and when that report comes down I believe that an honest decision will be made, and the road will be built by that route which should be adopted from an engineering standpoint. Well, while I never had the privilege of seeing this report until it was laid on the table last Friday, yet from the interim report which was referred to and which was brought down in April of last year, and from information I

have received from different quarters, and which was indeed current talk around the city, I came to the conclusion that the surveys through New Brunswick, while I do not say they were dishonest—I won't go so far as that, and I am going to make no comments on these reports because, if I did, I might say something complimentary to somebody—but I do say that they were very incomplete, and I think it is a great pity that when Mr. Lumsden made that report, he did it upon such meagre information. However, Mr. Lumsden submitted, I presume, the best report he could after getting all the information possible.

But, Sir, from my knowledge of the country, and from the knowledge which many other people in the province of New Brunswick possess, from the common knowledge of the country, when we read that interim report we saw that a great error in judgment had been committed by somebody; and I at once, in conjunction with Senator Thompson and Senator King went to the Premier and told him that we believed an injustice had been done, and he told us at once that if that were the case everything would be held up until the matter could be investigated, and he assured us that nothing but injustice would be meted out to us. Then the matter was published in the morning papers, and the result was that a delegation came here on the 1st of August, and as a result of that delegation the Commissioners made a trip to New Brunswick, and during that trip—I presume it was decided before that—but it was announced that the surveys were to be made. They were resumed, and were continued until Christmas when they were suspended, and are to be taken up again about the 1st of May.

My hon. friend finds fault because these surveys were not prosecuted in the winter time. I think the Commissioners are entitled to credit it is the fact they did not push the surveys through in the winter time. It is true that many of my friends were disappointed, I was disappointed myself, that the surveys were not completed earlier. But I feel that this is a matter of too much importance to be put through in the winter time when it is impossible to tell exactly what conditions we may find. The object is to make a location survey, to be able to tell the amount of rock to be cut as nearly as possible, to tell the amount of earth to be removed, the grades to be encountered and everything in fact that will put the commission in a position to make an accurate report, exactly the same report which the hon. gentleman Fleming made by Sir Sanford.

I think I can assure him that when these surveys are completed the report will be exactly as the circumstances demand. That is the whole reason why these surveys have not been completed yet, and I think when my hon. friend thinks it a little unfair in chastising the government the way he has done to-night.

MR. CROCKET.—For not doing what you say now they should have done?

MR. CARVELL.—For not doing what they could not do successfully in the winter time.

MR. STOCKTON.—Which they intended to do the winter before last.

MR. EMMERSON.—Those were on

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TUESDAY, APRIL 17th, 1906,

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All the conditions of the specification must be complied with.

D. POTTINGER, General Manager, Railway Office, Moncton, N. B., 26th March, 1906. March 31—d131.

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