

# MR. TURGEON'S SPEECH.

## Eloquent Member for Gloucester Discusses the Central Railway Charges.

Following is the Hansard report of the excellent speech of Mr. O. Turgeon, M. P., of Gloucester, on the Central Railway charges:

Mr. O. Turgeon (Gloucester). I have no intention, Mr. Speaker, of following the hon. gentleman who has just addressed the House through the many tortuous windings of the lengthy speech he has made. When my hon. friend from West Elgin (Mr. Crothers) brought in a resolution yesterday to the effect that the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Pugsley) should be asked to resign or be dismissed, he appealed to the very tender regard which the English people have always had for the character of their public men, and he hoped that the high record they had shown in that respect would not be departed from in this instance in Canadian public life. With that sentiment, I am in perfect harmony with my hon. friend, and so is every true Canadian who has the honor at heart of the men to whose guidance are entrusted the destinies of this great nation. But because we are jealous of the character of our public men is no reason why we should fall into the opposite extreme and create bad impressions, not only among our own people, but in countries outside of Canada, regarding the conditions of Canadian public life. The time has come, it seems to me, when we ought to cry halt in our endeavor to achieve political success by suspecting scandals where they do not exist. Changes of government have taken place before this session. We have had recently a change of government in New Brunswick. A few years ago we had a change of government in Ontario, when the party which had held the reins of power for many years was compelled to give place to its opponent. Inquiries of all kinds have been made, commissions appointed and changes have also taken place in other provinces, but are we to expect that whenever there is a change of government, its successors must appoint commissions to find out evils in the administrations of its predecessors, and have those reports brought before the federal parliament, as in this case, which are foreign to our jurisdiction. My hon. friend from Elgin, to add to the solemnity of his language, made several times the declaration that he was standing for the report of the judicial commission. Well, for my part, every time I took up the report of the judicial commission, I found it impossible, according to my own conscience and my own intelligence to reconcile my judgment with every assertion made in that report.

Fearing, perhaps, that if the name of Judge Landry did not appear at the head of that commission, there would be less respect for its findings, my hon. friend from York county made a reference to the standing of Judge Landry before the bar and the people of New Brunswick and the people of the Acadian race whose interests he has advocated so ably on so many different occasions. Well, no man in this House could have a greater respect for Judge Landry than the member for Gloucester who is now addressing you. One of my proudest recollections is to have had the good fortune, in the starting years of my public life, to have had the honor of collaborating with him in his endeavor to bring the Acadian race, by means of education to the level of the other races.

Meanwhile my respect for Judge Landry, the respect in which he is held in the province of New Brunswick, and which he specially enjoys as a Judge of the Supreme court of that province, does not grant him the gift of infallibility, and his judgment with that of the other commissioners, of whom my hon. friend has spoken so highly is not necessarily to be accepted without question. When I study this report of the commission, I find myself at times unable to find in it any evidences of the judicial attitude. I am not a lawyer, or, as the saying is, the son of a lawyer—I am only the father of a lawyer—but I appeal to every man of legal training and legal ability in this House to say if he can find in this report the judicial tone which the hon. member for West Elgin (Mr. Crothers) has endeavored to make the House believe it had, and because of which, apparently, he sought to invest it with infallibility. When I look at this document, I fail to recognize the wisdom the lucid explanation of legal matters characteristic of my old friend Judge Landry, and shown by him on many a previous occasion. I fail to see the evidences of careful thought in this report. I wholly fail to appreciate the conclusions resting upon assumptions which, at times, can hardly be said to be sound. I find in some of the conclusions of this report rather the characteristics of a political harangue by a stump speaker, regardless of the responsibility of his utterances. There are only a couple of points to which I wish to call attention, and which particularly struck me from the first. These

points I cannot explain to myself; believe they are enough to cast suspicion on the judicial findings of this report based upon evidence which is not at our command today, we are here called upon to pass judgment upon the political life of one of the biggest men, to use the expression of my hon. friend from York (Mr. Crocket), whom the province of New Brunswick has ever produced. We are called upon to eliminate from public life a man who has been at the head of affairs in his own province, and who in this parliament has taken a foremost place and since he has been amongst us has commanded the sympathy and admiration of every hon. member. And why should we be called upon to discuss this report? The legislature to which it belongs has not seen fit to discuss it. This report was placed upon the table of the House of Assembly of the province of New Brunswick, and for thirty days thereafter that House was in session, and no action was taken, or attempted to be taken, upon the report. What is the reason that the present leader—the temporary leader I may say—of that House did not see fit to call attention of the legislature to review it? But we, the great parliament of Canada, are called upon to discuss a question beyond our sphere and foreign to our duty while the legislature of New Brunswick, for whose benefit this report is made, has left the discussion of it over for another year.

### THAT TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR.

One of the first points to which I wish to call the attention of this parliament to be found in the second paragraph of the conclusion of the report. It may be said again that I am appealing to that figure which is called a typographical error. In saying that \$430,000 and \$500,000 are misprints here for \$43,000 and \$50,000. But leave out the responsibility of a typographical error, and I ask you again, if these commissioners were really alive to the responsibilities of their actions and findings, could it be possible for such an error to be allowed to pass?

On the face of it the motive of the promoters as stated was to develop the coal mines of Queens county. Responsible and respectable men from various parts of the province were obtained to lend their names as directors; and from that fact that \$430,000 of the total \$500,000 authorized capital was to be distributed as founders' shares, we conclude that the interested parties had visions of ultimate large profits, with absolute certainty of no personal loss.

If this was a typographical error, if the commissioners had in view merely the sum of \$43,000, then there was no reason for "visions of ultimate large profits with absolute certainty of no personal loss," and therefore which I wish to call attention to in these words should not have been used in this report. Another point to which I wish to call attention is the great difference in the conditions of railway building as they exist now and existed twenty or thirty years ago. It strikes me that if I were called upon to make an estimate for the construction of a railroad I would not be simply guided by the estimates which may have been given by engineers twenty or thirty years before the date of the construction of this 15-mile section, and conclude that because a few miles of railroad may have been built in the early days in New Brunswick or \$10,000 a mile or less, today you can build in other sections of the province a railway for a somewhat similar amount. We must remember that conditions railway building have changed completely, in the cost of labor, in the cost of materials, and in every other way. There can be no possible comparison between the cost of railway building in the two periods. Thirty years ago you could get labor for the asking. I knew men in those days working on railroads in my own county for 75 and 80 cents a day, and they were paid out of the stores of the contractor whatever price the contractors chose to ask for their goods. In those days railway ties could be bought for a few cents apiece I have the testimony of a friend of mine in Kent county who, in his early years, sold railway ties for 15, 13 and 12 cents apiece. Now I ask you, Mr. Speaker, how much has the present Minister of Public Works or his predecessor had to pay for railway ties? Why, Sir, the prosperity of Canada has advanced the value of every possible commodity. I am safe in saying that in Kent county today it costs 100 per cent more to construct a railway than it did in the former period. It is also to be remembered that modern railways are much more solidly built, they are built for the purpose of transporting coal and heavy freight, whereas in former years they were built for the transportation of a few boxes of fish and a few passengers. And because this railroad has cost 100 per cent more than our friends think it should

have cost, they say there has been a misappropriation of \$242,000 upon that section. I say, Mr. Speaker, that such a conclusion lends itself to doubt and suspicion on the part of every honest man who wishes to come to a correct conclusion. These two points are sufficient, I think, to answer the contentions of our hon. friend opposite. It is not my intention to follow in detail the long speech of the hon. member for York, N. B., (Mr. Crocket). It was not my purpose in rising to defend the hon. the Minister of Public Works. That hon. gentleman has proved on many occasions that he is quite able to defend himself; he has proved it twice already during the present session; he proved abundantly last night that he needs no one to come to his defence when he is attacked, that he is well able to stand against the calumnies of his political opponents. I may yesterday I have had some conversation with hon. members, both of this House and of the Senate, and they are by no means in sympathy with the motion of censure. I am confident that this motion does not meet with the approval of every Conservative in the Dominion of Canada, nor even of every Conservative member in this House. I am sure that the Minister of Public Works yesterday satisfied every member in this House who desires to form an impartial judgment, that as ex-officio director of this company he did not know everything that was being done, and if at one time when he had to take over this road it was found that the company had got into financial difficulties, I say it is no new thing in our province of New Brunswick. We have found in the past that when our public men were endeavoring to develop the great resources of our country they did not meet with the encouragement they were entitled to. Today we are doing everything possible to develop the west, knowing that its development will mean the progress of the east. I think that when our public men enter into schemes for the development of our province of New Brunswick, and of the Dominion of Canada, they are deserving of more encouragement than they receive. That has been a trouble that has existed in the past. I hope that after all, when this matter has been thoroughly sifted, when the judgment of this parliament and of the country has been pronounced, it will be that these men who were acting in the interest of the province are deserving of more encouragement than they had received. Hon. gentlemen opposite contend that \$20,000 a mile should have been sufficient to build that railway. What did we find in the legislature of New Brunswick when that very report was laid upon the table of the legislature of the local.

### DR. PUGSLEY PRAISED.

Only two weeks ago, and since that report has been placed upon the table of the House, Premier Hazen, the leader of the government, has undertaken to give the guarantee of the province of New Brunswick for a railway with the same objects as this one had, that is for the development of a coal mine, for a railway which traverses the county of Gloucester from Nipisiquit river to Bathurst, and which will assist in the development of the iron ore deposits there. He does not estimate the cost of the railway construction in New Brunswick cannot be carried on for \$8,000 gives a guarantee of \$15,000 a mile and this very same company are also applying to this government for a subsidy of \$6,400 a mile. The fact that he is willing to give the guarantee of his province to the extent of \$15,000 a mile is an admission that railway construction in New Brunswick cannot be carried on for \$8,000 or \$11,000 or even for \$20,000 a mile. Therefore, his action, patriotic as it may be, in giving this guarantee, which I approve of, and I have advised his supporters to second his efforts in this matter, is a contradiction of the finding of this commission as to the cost of railway construction in New Brunswick. In conclusion, I wish again to say that, whatever the vote upon the opposition side of the House may be, we, on this side of the House, feel convinced of the moral innocence of my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works. He has devoted a lifetime to the public affairs of the province of New Brunswick and in every sphere into which his activities have entered he has won a high place in the affections and esteem of patriotic Canadians in all parts of the Dominion who have observed his public conduct. Today every Liberal in the province of New Brunswick, every unbiased man, to whatever party he may belong, feels, as my right hon. friend the Prime Minister said a few days ago that he felt, proud of the Minister of Public Works. Every friend of ours in the province of New Brunswick is satisfied that the Minister of Public Works has faithfully discharged the trust which was reposed in him when he was called to the federal arena to give his important services, not only to the great Liberal party to which he belongs, but to the Dominion at large. I shall consider it my duty to vote against the resolution and I feel that in doing so, I shall have the confidence and support of all of my constituents in the county of Gloucester. I feel also that I shall have the sympathy and support of the great Acadian race in the province of New Brunswick, of which the hon. member for York has spoken, which has

shown its appreciation of the development of the resources of this country under a Liberal government for the last thirteen years, and which has no ground to alter its views with regard to any public man because of anything contained in the report of this commission.

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### A GLUTTON FOR WORK.

Story of the British Civil Service in the Last Century.

The British civil service during the middle of the last century was a delightful place for young gentlemen who wished a "job" with nothing to do. Mr. Arthur W. A'Becket in his "Recollections of a Humorist" describes his first day in the war office. After reading the Times through—no short task—and listening to the conversation of his colleagues for awhile he ventured to address his chief.

"Can I do anything?" I asked. "Is there anything for me to do?" He seemed a little perplexed. The other denizens of the room paused for a moment in their conversation to hear his reply. It seemed to me that they appeared to be amused. My chief looked at me and then at the papers in front of him.

"Ah!" said he at last, with a sigh of relief. "Are you fond of indexing?" I replied I was fond of anything and everything that could be of the slightest service to my country. If those were not the exact words I used, that was the spirit of my answer.

"I see a glutton for work," observed my chief, with a smile that found reflection on the faces of my other colleagues. "Well, A'Becket, just index this pile of circulars."

I seized upon the bundle and returned to my desk. Oh, how I worked at those circulars! There were hundreds of them, and I docketed them with the greatest care and entered their purport into a book. From time to time my official chief, so to speak, looked in upon me to see how I was getting on.

"I say," said he, "there's no need to be in such a desperate hurry. I am not in immediate need of the index. You can take your time, you know. Wouldn't you like a stroll in the park? Most of us have a little walk during the day. We none of us stand on ceremony and are quite a happy family."

But, no! I stuck to my indexing and after some three days of fairly hard work found my labors done. I took up the bundle of circulars, now in apple pie order, and laid them on my chief's desk.

"I say, A'Becket," said he, "this won't do. You are too good a fellow to be allowed to cut your own throat, and for your brother's sake I will give you a tip. Don't do more than you are asked to do. Now, I gave you those circulars to index because you would rather me for work. I didn't want the index. Now it's done it's not the least bit of use to me. Of course it may come in useful some day, but I scarcely see how it can, as the lot are out of date. But of course it may," he added to save my feelings.

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### THEY HAVE MADE HISTORY.

Little-Nosed Men Deserve More Recognition Than is Usually Theirs.

Have the big-nosed men, as is popularly believed, really done all that has been done in the world? asks a writer who, apparently, is much wrought up over the subject. Have not the people of little noses made history also?

There is, it is true, a very formidable array of big noses among the history makers of the world. One recalls such men of big noses and big deeds as Caesar, Hannibal, Wellington, Marlborough, Washington, Turenne, Comde, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, and many other warriors, statesmen and poets.

But if we peep over the bridge of the big noses of the world we will find a very much larger space in history occupied by little noses than their physical dimensions would seem to justify.

Of the world's great soldiers—a class of men who, as a rule, seem to run as naturally to big noses as to blood letting—there was Alexander, whose tears, shed because there were no more worlds to conquer, trickled down the sides of a nose that may not be described as exactly diminutive, but which, in comparison with such eagle beaks as that of Julius Caesar, may be classified as small; Marshal Ney, esteemed by Napoleon as his greatest lieutenant, and Marshal Macdonald, whose artillery charge at Wagram decided the battle and the war, were

men of impressively small noses. Of poets and makers of literature, the little-nosed men are amply represented by Gibbon, Goldsmith, Moore, Byron and Sir Walter Scott.

In the chronicles of statecraft, Mirabeau, Burke, Talleyrand and Henry Clay prove that greatness and a small nose may, as it were, go hand in hand.

In addition, the question of differentiation arises. In other words, "What is a big nose?" Or, as some might put it, "When is a big nose?"

Look carefully at Napoleon's nose. Did he have a large nose—this mighty soul that shot from obscure poverty to world power and a throne? It was a strong, finely chiseled nose, with a bold spring, an imperious arch and a predatory, hawklike curve. But was it big?

Considered in relation to what we may term its facial context—the great brow, the ample sweep of cheek, the massive jaws and chin, the wide mouth, the whole generous architecture, in short, of the Napoleonic face—might not this world-conquering nose be properly classed as small?

Grant, for the sake of argument that we are living in a day of little noses. Is it a sign of deterioration or cause for repining? If this is the day of small noses, it is also the day of the airship, the aeroplane, the X-ray, and all the marvels of steam and electricity. The world never before saw such a day. This is the answer.

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