

construct the Railroad upon receiving what the Colonial Legislatures have already agreed to contribute towards the great object. If it should be supposed by the British Government that these Colonies should contribute all the funds necessary for the completion of the whole work, it appears to be a far more eligible course for these Colonies to impose reciprocal duties upon all countries, and apply the proceeds scrupulously to the formation of the Railroad, than to adopt Mr. Hawes's proposition to obtain a loan from the British Government.

Suggestions relative to the formation of a Railroad from Halifax to Quebec, submitted to the Right Honble. Earl Grey, in March, 1847, through J. H. Uniacke, Esq., Secretary of the Railroad Committee of Nova Scotia.

I suppose all parties are now waiting for the action of Government, and their attention is too much occupied in cases of life and death under their immediate view* to admit of deliberate consideration of Colonial Interests; but if there ever were a time when a Colonial Secretary was competent to the task of carrying out a large, comprehensive, and well digested plan for the improvement of the North American Colonies, we confidently believe that we have now, in the person of Earl Grey, the very statesman we require. We believe, also, that His Lordship will be ably seconded by our Governor General, who, we anticipate will do more for the welfare of these Provinces, than any of his predecessors have been capable of doing. You have probably had interviews with Lord Grey, and most probably the Railroad has been the subject of conversation and you may possibly be in possession of His Lordship's views. Rumour states that they are favorable to a confederation of these Colonies. The completion of the Railroad will leave no apparent obstacle in the way of such a measure, as the communication between Halifax and Quebec will be as easy as between Halifax and Annapolis, and the Supreme Courts of Justice can then be held in the different Provinces of the Government with as much ease and at no greater interval of time than now exists in the sitting of our Supreme Courts in the different counties of this Province. Besides, the transport of troops and the munitions of war would be so much facilitated, that two-thirds, or perhaps one half the number of troops would be more efficient in repressing any disturbances in the Provinces or repelling a foreign foe, than are now rendered necessary by the difficulties of inter-communication. Such being my opinion, in which I trust you will coincide, the formation of the Railroad is essentially of such character as to entitle it to the consideration of the Colonial Secretary, and through him that of the Imperial Government.

You may perhaps enquire, what suggestions I have to make, to induce the Imperial Parliament to engage in so extensive and ex-

pensive an undertaking for these Colonies, which might call for an expenditure of three or four millions of money. I cannot state my views in extenso in this communication, but your intimate knowledge of the subject will enable you to comprehend all the matters in connection therewith which I may omit.—I have not access to the Crown Land Department for the information which it may afford, but Earl Grey can by his command acquire accurate knowledge; it is said there are about five million acres of Crown Land upon the proposed line of Railroad. This immense tract of land is now of very small value, but were the Railroad completed it would produce as many pounds, including the numerous stations which might be required on the line as depots for articles to be forwarded by the Rail Cars, which would command a price of at least an hundred pounds per acre.

The Railroad line would traverse immense coal fields now of no value, but it is believed that were the line completed, the transport of coals to Quebec and Halifax, would if conducted by the Government and without reservation of the Royalty, defray the annual expense. It has been asserted that an inexhaustible supply of coals can be placed in the Rail cars at a sum not exceeding 5s per chaldron and the difference between that sum and the selling price at Halifax and Quebec would accrue to the Railroad as a profit.—The Rail Engines would also receive their supply in passing to and fro, at that small price. It may be said that this arrangement would interfere with the rights of the mining company, but surely the Government might effect a compromise, as the company cannot now, nor ever work these mines unless the Railroad be completed. There can be little doubt therefore, that for an object of such importance they would relinquish a monopoly which already bears very hard upon the interest of these Provinces. Besides, their Shipping Ports of Sydney and Pictou could not be interfered with.

Thus you may perceive that if my views approach correctness, abundant funds will be furnished for the completion of the work by the Government, who would then have the entire management of its concerns, without any interference, together with its collateral powerful auxiliary, the Electric Telegraph, which in time of war, it would be of immense importance to possess. All the troops in these Colonies might be concentrated in one spot in the course of two or three days after notice, and as fresh and prepared for action as at the hour they might leave their respective barracks.

It seems only necessary that the Imperial Parliament should sanction the advances for the Railroad until completed, and then the lands, the mines, and minerals, would most probably repay the whole advance.

But as these Colonies will be much benefited by the Railroad, it is not too much to expect, and I think little doubt can be entertained that they will cheerfully grant one tenth part of their net revenue for 10 years, towards so important an object. The sum thus granted by the Colonial Legislature,

*In Ireland.