

revenue must be paid into the public treasury, and be subject to the vote of this House for its payment out of the Treasury, we are to give to a body of gentlemen in Toronto—estimable and honourable gentlemen; I do not for a moment suggest anything to the contrary—we are going to place in their hands the enormous power of handling I do not know how many millions of the public funds of this country without asking for any parliamentary appropriation. I am amazed that the Government could bring forward such a measure. The members of the Government, in their several departments, have large responsibilities. My hon. friend the Minister of Customs collects a large amount of money. He is not allowed to have at his own disposal one dollar of that money; it must go into the public treasury, and once there it cannot be got out again unless this House has made an appropriation which will cover the proposed expenditure. My hon. friend the Minister of Public Works has large enterprises; he has to be subject, and will continue to be subject, to this rule of parliamentary appropriation. My hon. friend the Minister of Finance is the custodian of large sums of money which come into his hands officially from the various sources of our revenue, and these sums are larger than usual now because we are floating large loans. At one time during the present year, the hon. gentleman was the custodian of an amount which represented six hundred and more millions of dollars. Not one penny of these moneys is placed at the disposal of the Minister of Finance; these moneys are paid into the Dominion Treasury, into the consolidated revenue account, and once paid in, the Minister of Finance cannot draw out enough to pay even for cab hire until there has been an appropriation for it by this House. Now if that has to be done in the case of the Minister of Finance, and in the case of the other ministers of the Crown, why in the world do we make an exception in this case, and say that these gentlemen in Toronto who are managing these railroads are to have an entirely different rule applied to them?

While, as I say, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, or any minister of the Crown, could not pay for the hire of a cab on public account unless he had an appropriation for the purpose, we are proposing to give to this body of gentlemen in Toronto an unrestricted right to handle enormous sums of money. The revenues of these railways will be very large, indeed. We appropriated last year for the expenditure on the

Intercolonial, or the Government Railways, \$37,000,000. With the enlargements proposed by the present Bill I shall not be surprised—I am only making a guess—if the revenues which are to be received by these gentlemen at Toronto amount to seventy, eighty, perhaps one hundred millions of dollars; and if the larger scheme of public ownership which is often suggested in this House be included—as is also provided for in the Bill,—then the revenues which will be placed in the hands of these gentlemen at Toronto may run into enormous figures—I do not think it would be too much to say \$150,000,000 a year. Why in the world these gentlemen should be allowed these privileges, why we should remove all checks and guards with regard to parliamentary appropriations in the case of these and not in the case of the other departments, of the Government, I am quite unable to understand. These gentlemen are to collect these vast revenues, they are to use them, presumably for railway purposes, at their own sweet will. They do not have to come here and ask for any appropriation; and if at the end of the year this thirty, forty, fifty, sixty or one hundred millions of dollars of money, whatever it may be, proves insufficient, they can walk over to the office of the Minister of Finance and say: "Hand us out the balance." And without any further ado, or any further appropriation of money by Parliament, the Minister of Finance is bound to comply with their request. Surely, Mr. Speaker, that is a departure from all the sound principles of finance. Later on, after they have done that—after they have collected this money and have spent it without authority other than the general power conferred by this Bill—after they have collected these moneys and have spent them, and any additional sum that they get from the Finance Minister, then they are to come down and tell us what they have done; after it is all over they will come to us, we will take their statement and an estimate will be submitted to this House. I do not think, Sir, that is a sufficient recognition of the principle of parliamentary government to which I have referred.

I have given you the opinion of Sir Erskine May, a recognized English writer on the subject. Let me now quote from one of our Canadian writers who is generally regarded as an authority. Sir John Bourinot at page 404 of his work says: