

themselves, and as to saving by issuing small contracts, the object was profit with both large and small contractors.

Hon. Mr. Cartier advised any one hostile to the building of the Intercolonial to vote for the motion of the member for Hochelaga. He contended that the course proposed by Government was that rendered necessary by the Union Act, in order to secure the Imperial guarantee. If the selection of route were left to the Canadian Parliament, they would have the final approval and not the Imperial Parliament, as was provided. It was obvious, he thought, that in selecting a route, Government could have no other object than to select that which should afford the best means of communication between the Provinces, and at the same time prove most valuable as a means of defence. Referring to the allusion to the selection of Ottawa as the seat of Government, he said that the question was left to Her Majesty because it could not be settled here, and he believed after Montreal, Ottawa was the best place.

Hon. Mr. Gray said there were two principles involved which lay at the root of this discussion; the 1st was the adoption and carrying out of a public work immediately under the control of Government and managed by them. Second the mode of its construction by commissioners. When honourable gentlemen on the floor of the House laid down the principle that Government should take no part in works of this kind, they were looking back to a period entirely antecedent to the present day. When a matter is merely of a commercial character, it should be left to private enterprise, but if it partakes of a national character, it should be managed by the Government. If you look at the history of the world at the present day, you will see that railways have in a degree superseded the ordinary highways of the country for travelling and traffic. Highways are under the control of the Government without being under the control of individuals, and now when railways were superseding them, the Government should exercise greater control over them than they now do. In England it is a matter of serious consideration whether their railways should not be entirely under the Government control. In Belgium, railways are under the control of and are managed by the Government. In no country in the world is railway travelling cheaper or managed more methodically than in that country. There were few difficulties occurring there owing to the irregularity of trains, because they were

[Dr. Parker (Wellington Centre).]

managed by railway officials appointed by the Government and liable to immediate removal. This Intercolonial Railway affected our national prosperity, and it was important to the country that the Legislature, through constitutional means, should have direct control over it. It was not a constitutional mode to have control of public works by submitting them to the decision of the Legislature, but to submit them to those appointed to deal with them, and who if they did not manage the affairs of country property were accountable to the House. The amendments struck at the very root of the Constitution in relieving the Government from that duty. He referred to the railway in New Brunswick, as an example, of an efficiently managed railway under Government control. If the Intercolonial was built and managed by Commissioners, the Government would be responsible for their act. He referred to the necessity of giving a committee of the House the privileges of a judicial tribunal, in order to investigate matters connected with railways. On this Committee they could have members from both sides of the House who would impartially investigate everything that had taken place in connection with that work, and they could pass their censure upon any act they deemed worthy of it, the Government being responsible to the House for those acts. He felt a deep interest in the success of the work, but did not believe it would yield any immediate commercial return, and for half a dozen years it might entail a charge upon the revenue of the country. Yet the gradual increase of our resources, the expansion of trade and encouragement given to settle the country would yield a return which would benefit the country at large. He referred to different routes, and said whichever route was taken, Halifax and Saint John had certain advantages of which they could not be deprived, and in conclusion recommended the adoption of a Bill to allow individuals to apply to the courts of law to get redress from the Government for injuries sustained through their means.

Mr. Dunkin held that the best mode of constructing the road was by making it a Government work. That being so, the appointment of Commissioners seemed to him to be the most expeditious and intelligent way of carrying it out. These Commissioners would be servants of the public and officers of Government which would be responsible to Parliament for their acts. If they did wrong they could be removed, and if they did wrong with the consent of Government, this House