

passenger can see the trains racing with one another almost every day. Between these two railways and the river there is a distance of not more than one mile. Does my hon. friend seriously contemplate building another line of railway in this distance of 30 miles, when we could be accommodated in another manner? In another part of his speech my hon. friend has advocated the acquisition by this government of that section of the Canadian Pacific Railway between North Bay and Fort William, and making it a common highway. Does it not occur to my hon. friend that if we acquired the Canada Atlantic, it would be more reasonable for us to acquire one of the existing lines between Coteau and Montreal? It seems to me that this part of my hon. friend's scheme cannot bear criticism. However, in view of the great improbability of Canada acquiring and operating the Canada Atlantic Railway, this is not of very great importance.

I come now to the main proposition of my hon. friend. He proposes to acquire the Canada Atlantic Railway as it exists to-day. But though the government may acquire the Canada Atlantic Railway, it certainly could not operate it. How could you expect that a Canadian government could possibly, with any advantage to the country, operate the Canada Atlantic Railway. It is within the knowledge of everybody that at this moment three-fourths at least of the business of the Canadian Pacific Railway and three-fourths of the business of the Canada Atlantic Railway is American business. It is business connected with the western states and carried to its destination in the eastern states. The Canadian government could not compete for that business if we were to acquire that railway. At present the manager of the Canada Atlantic Railway has connections and agents in Duluth, Milwaukee, Chicago and other points in the west, and in New York, Boston and other cities in the east, collecting freight in the east for the western states and in the west for the eastern states. Now, would it be possible for the Canadian government to maintain those agents in American cities and keep connections there in order to collect that trade now passing over our territory? That trade is an advantage to our country and we want to keep it. In my opinion we must be the carriers by the valley of the St. Lawrence, not only of the products of our own North-west but of the American North-west and also the traffic of the eastern states. That American business we would lose. Not only that. In order to secure that trade, the Canada Atlantic has to maintain a fleet of steamers on the lakes. I doubt how far it would be advisable for a government to become not only railway proprietors but also navigators. We would have to manage a fleet of steamers. There is something more. The fleet maintained on the lakes for the purpose of

supplying traffic to the Canada Atlantic Railway is composed in part of American bottoms. It would be impossible to have the trade we have to-day unless it was carried in American bottoms. We can carry Canadian freight in Canadian bottoms, but you cannot take freight at Duluth, Chicago or Milwaukee or any of the western ports and bring it to Depot Harbour except in American bottoms. The bonding privilege of the Americans has been so devised as to make that a necessity. Therefore the Canadian government would have to become the owners of a fleet of steamers under American register. How would that work? The whole thing is so beset with difficulties that it would be impossible to carry it out as a government enterprise. Of course if you want to give up the American business and confine yourself to the Canadian business, the scheme of my honourable friend might be workable, but there is not a man in this country, not even my hon. friend, who would be willing that Canada should part with this American business. On the contrary we want to increase it. Therefore in my opinion, the scheme of my hon. friend in so far as the acquisition of the Canada Atlantic Railway is concerned, is not practicable.

My hon. friend asked a moment ago what are you going to do with the Intercolonial. His scheme would be to bring the Intercolonial to the shores of North Bay, but our scheme is to bring it, not merely to the shores of the Georgian bay, but to the city of Winnipeg, the heart of the provinces.

Another part of his scheme—one which, I think, he will have some difficulty in getting even his own friends to agree to, and I am not surprised that he would not put it into the concrete form of an amendment and ask his followers to swallow it—is this. He has seriously proposed that the Canadian government should acquire the Canadian Pacific Railway line between North Bay and Fort William. Why should he propose such a scheme? First of all, we ought to be thankful on this side for his having proposed the idea, made as it is, because it is a justification of our policy. But he admits that we must have railway communications between the east and the west. This is the very basis of the scheme we have submitted. My hon. friend has acknowledged that the basis is a good one. He justifies our scheme by proposing that we should acquire that part of the Canadian Pacific Railway line. But he does not want to have that connection between the east and the west in the way we desire. He has a scheme of his own. In what respect is it superior to ours? We have proposed to build a railway between the east and the west. In what respect is his scheme to buy the Canadian Pacific Railway from North Bay to Fort William superior to ours? Is it from the point of view of expenditure? Will the plan he proposes be cheaper

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