

Pacific Railway when a national railway is considered an excellent undertaking and it is in the public interest to keep it up? Far be it from my thoughts to deprecate the importance and national usefulness of the Canadian Pacific Railway, but I deny the truth of the assertion which seems to have become the pass word of some people, and which is summed up in this idea: No competition against the Canadian Pacific Railway! Private interest must make way to the general welfare, this applies to railways as well as to other questions.

Some hon. MEMBERS (Translation): Hear, hear.

Mr. PREVOST (Translation): The best argument which can be brought out to show that this line is a paying proposition, and should remain the property of the government, is that the Canadian Pacific Railway considers it sufficiently remunerative to purchase it.

I cannot think of any reason which might militate against the construction of the twelve miles which is under consideration in this resolution. The cost of this branch line would be in the nature of an investment rather than of an expense, for the day when the Laurentian railway will directly connect with Montreal, we shall witness both a large increase in its freight and the growth of its revenues a hundredfold, owing to its passenger traffic, both ordinary travellers and tourists.

Furthermore, the government will be providing a numerous population, with a useful public service and will besides have in operation one of the most important lines of the National Railways, since it places the metropolis in communication with one of our most beautiful and rich regions, and, it will, some day, be the connecting link so much sought for which will unite the metropolis with the Transcontinental that passes to the north of that part of our country.

Mr. ETHIER (Translation): I can but concur, Mr. Chairman, in the remarks made by the hon. member for Terrebonne (Mr. Prevost). We are neighbours, and as such, we have always been on very good terms. I intend to continue so, and, in the present circumstances, it is a pleasure for me to support his views. I have no intention of enlarging on the magnificent description that he gave us of the region which the Montfort railway crosses. I shall be content with pointing out to the House a district that he did not mention and through which must pass this twelve

[Mr. Prevost.]

mile line of railway, from Grande Fresnière to St. Jerome.

This project, Sir, is not a new idea and even before it was thought of building the branch lines, which are under discussion in the resolutions before the House, the preceding governments had understood the necessity of connecting the main line of the Canadian Northern, from Ottawa to Montreal, with the Ottawa to Quebec line. This project will be realized by the construction of this twelve-mile line, of which eleven miles happen to be in the county of Two Mountains,—which I have the honour to represent—and one mile is in the county of Terrebonne. Thus this railway will connect with the Montfort line, which is already constructed over a distance of thirty miles, as far as Huberdeau, and which it is proposed to extend, by another resolution, to St. Remy of Amherst, for a distance of two miles. I may add, by the way, that the province of Quebec's share is only twenty-nine miles of the proposed railway construction of 965 miles that this House is asked to approve.

I have already mentioned that this project is not a new one and that the late government deemed it proper and necessary to carry out this railway branch line. The government's engineers had made the survey. A number of locations were considered some years ago, and it was decided that the plans prepared by the engineers of the late government should be approved, and eventually they were accepted by the Railway Commission. The land was expropriated. The farmers were paid according to the value of the strip of land needed. Therefore, the only thing to do now is to build. All is ready. The necessary preliminaries to the construction of a railway line have been completed and the project is approved and declared urgent, useful and necessary.

What is, Sir, exactly, this twelve mile region? The main line of the Canadian Northern, between Ottawa and Montreal, crosses, at Hawkesbury, into the county of Argenteuil, and continues to Montreal, passing through the county of Two Mountains, the Grand Fresnière, St. Eustache and Isle Jesus. From the Grand Fresnière to St. Jerome, the distance is twelve miles. There is, at present, no possible means of transportation for freight and passenger traffic in this region situated to the north, on the Ottawa and Quebec line which passes through St. Philip of Argenteuil, Lachute, and continues to St. Canute, in the county of Two Mountains, and thence to St. Jerome, Joliette and Quebec. The traffic of St. Philip of Argen-