

year for twenty years at 4 per cent. with sinking fund, does not represent about \$5,000,000 capital. Last year I entertained the same views as to the commercial utility of the line, which I still hold. I never thought we could divert traffic from Boston and Portland during the winter months to Canadian ports, for besides the climatic difficulty, there is the difference in distance to contend against. Though last year I was willing to vote \$170,000 a year, to meet the wishes of the members of the Maritime Provinces, I did not believe it would have the effect of securing to Canada the traffic which now goes by Portland, Boston and even New York. If I could see that the building of this line would make any great difference in the trade of the Maritime Provinces, I would be willing that we should expend a few millions of dollars to obtain that result, but I believe the advantages by Portland and Boston cannot be overcome by building a line which, though 100 miles shorter than the existing lines in Canada, will still be too long to compete against Portland and Boston lines. I, therefore, cannot give my sanction to the expenditure of so many millions, for the mere purpose of giving to the Maritime Provinces a road which, after all, will only be of local advantage. We have already spent \$42,000,000 in building the Intercolonial, which is our chief means of communication with the Maritime Provinces. To maintain that road costs us \$2,000,000 a year, which, some years, is met by traffic returns, and in other years is not. There is no doubt that the result of building this short line upon the traffic of the Intercolonial would be such that the revenue of the Intercolonial will fall far short of the expenses. I believe the short line will take at least one-half of the Intercolonial traffic, so that we will be called upon to pay, not merely the \$250,000 asked to-day, but a million dollars a year to meet running expenses of the Intercolonial. For these reasons, I cannot give my consent either to the purchase of the North Shore road or the construction of the short line; and as to the proposition of the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Laurier), to have further surveys made, I do not see any advantage that will accrue from spending another \$30,000 or \$35,000 on new surveys.

Mr. TASCHEREAU. The question which is now submitted to the House seems of such great importance to me, and will be also of such importance in the discussion on the hustings at the next general elections, in the district of Quebec, at least, that I cannot let it pass over without giving some of the reasons which induce me to vote in favor of the Government's resolutions. In the district of Quebec, two great questions are agitating the public mind: the first is the question of the summer terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which Quebec desires to possess within its limits; the second is the question of the short route, which the population of that city and of some of the neighboring districts claim with loud voices. The first question seems now settled by one of the resolutions laid before the House, which guarantees, in the most formal manner, the prolongation of the Canadian Pacific Railway line to Quebec, where it should find the summer terminus; and, had it not been guaranteed in that way by the Minister of Public Works, I certainly would not vote for the resolutions altogether. Upon that question there should be then no difficulty in voting for the resolution, and reproaches should reach no one who would vote for it. The second question, the question of the short route that the present resolutions definitively determine, *vid* Sherbrooke, is a more ticklish question, and will surely excite dissensions in the minds of a good number. It is quite certain that, besides having the summer terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, should the old city of Quebec become one of the links of the short route, and connect Montreal with the ports of the Maritime Provinces by a bridge over the St. Lawrence, between Cap Rouge and St. Romuald, the

Mr. GIROUARD.

old city of Quebec would derive from these immense advantages, and would, in the near future, see added to the list of its glorious titles the more lucrative title of a rich, commercial, manufacturing and maritime city. But, Mr. Speaker, let us consider, first, that the question of a short route from one point to another is not a question which can be decided by the law put on the Statute Book, but is a question of geography, laid down by nature itself. And I don't see anything else in the resolutions now submitted than this: that the Government, at the instance of the people of the Eastern Townships and of the Maritime Provinces, is going to subsidise a line of railway from Montreal to the Maritime Provinces *vid* Sherbrooke, like it has subsidised the North Shore Railway, from Quebec to Ottawa, like it subsidised the Lake St. John Railway, the Quebec Central Railway, the Rivière du Loup and Edmundston Railway, in the Province of Quebec, and so many other railways in other Provinces. If it is not the short route, will that subsidy make it? Certainly not. If the short route is *vid* Quebec, sooner or later the trade will find its way through this last-named city. Like the water that has been diverted from its natural channel always seeks after its natural course, and, if not prevented by artificial work, always ends in finding it, the trade may, for some time, be diverted from its natural channel, which is the shortest, but will always end in finding it also. And, Mr. Speaker, nature cannot give all to the same place. If nature gave Quebec one of the finest ports in the world, if it gifted Quebec with one of the most magnificent sites of the world, surrounded it with so many charming places, who can blame nature not to have put this admirable city on the shortest route between Montreal and Halifax? And as it is this route that we are trying to find, because the trade, blind and unpoetical as it is, instead of seeking on its way after beauties of nature, charming and adorned places, looks always after the straight line, which is the shortest way from one place to another, we must then adopt, to subsidise it, the route which is proved to us as meeting the most the needs and exigencies of trade. It is here no question of sentiment, but a question of business; it is no question of predilection for one place or another, but a question of commercial necessity. In fact, it is a question of commerce, which has its own indisputable rules. Then, we must not look at it and judge it through the prism of our personal sympathies, but with the severe and impartial eye of business men. For my part, then, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the personal sympathies that I might have for the city of Quebec, which is dear to me for more than one reason, notwithstanding the fact that I desire, as much as any one, its progress, its prosperity and its material grandeur, I cannot, after having seriously studied the papers and reports laid before us, attentively listened to the reasons given on each side, do otherwise than give my assent to the resolutions which contain the choice of the short route through Sherbrooke. And what I stated before is the first consideration upon which I based my opinion, a consideration merely of general interest, completely disengaged from sectional and local interests, which may sometimes lead the mind in a false direction. In the second place, I must recollect that I am here, not as a member of the city of Quebec, but that I represent here the county of Beauce; that this county is formed partly with Eastern Townships directly and largely interested in the completion of the International Railway, which goes through them; that this line crosses a part of the county of Beauce, which part would derive great advantages from the prosperity and of the success of this line. If a part of the county of Beauce has its market at Quebec, another part of the same has it at Sherbrooke, and that is the new part of the county which requires the most for its development, easy access to markets and real marks of encouragement. And, besides, will not, after this, the