

solidation of the roads with the Intercolonial. In the face of those facts, patent from the public accounts under his hand, how the hon. gentleman could wish the assertion sent to the country, that there was a deficit of \$900,000, was perfectly surprising. There was no other inference to be drawn from the figures and facts but what he (Mr. Miller) had stated. With regard to the question of policy, it might be that his hon. friend had made his motion, to give an expression, of his opinion on another subject—that of Government railway, which might, at a future time, engage the attention of the House. He spoke of the cost of the railways in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia as facts that ought to prove a warning to any Government, in undertaking the construction of railways as public works. He (Mr. Miller) could only say that circumstances must, in every case, control the policy and dictate the prudence of a Government undertaking public works. It would not do to apply the principle in every case which we might apply in any isolated or exceptional case. With respect to public works, one principle might be good in regard to one subject and not so good in relation to another. If it was not sound policy that a Government should undertake, under any circumstances, the construction of a railway, would it not be as sound policy for a Government not to undertake the construction or enlargement of canals, or the completion of works which private enterprise was insufficient to achieve. He could not perceive a difference between these cases. He would be sorry by his vote on this motion, or by his silence, to lead to the conclusion that he was opposed, under any circumstances, to a Government undertaking public works, whether railways or canals. (Cheers.) With reference to the remarks of the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Dickey), he had admitted that in the majority of cases, if private capital could accomplish and complete public works, it would be far better to leave them in the hands of private enterprise. But where it was not sufficient, then it might become the imperative duty of a Government to take the construction of these works into its own hands. As regards Nova Scotia, he differed with his hon. friend (Mr. Dickey) as to the policy that had the sanction of its people. Although a young man at the time the railway policy was initiated, and although that hon. gentleman figured, to some extent, in the railway discussion of that day, he could not agree with his version of the circumstances connected with

the initiation of the policy of constructing railways in that Province as Government undertakings. He could recollect that the Government had exhausted all the means in its power to induce private companies to undertake the construction of our railways, and had failed. On that occasion the party to which his hon. friend belonged, led by the late Judge Johnston, contended for the very policy which had been advocated by his hon. friend today. He and others then said it would be possible, and he undertook to induce British capitalists to come into our Province and build our railways as private works, if the Government would give the opportunity of doing so, by putting the requisite legislation on the statute book. The Hon. Mr. Howe, the leader of the Government, said he would accept the proposition of the hon. gentleman and his friends, and let his own policy stand over for a twelve month, and if the capitalists came in he would be satisfied. A year passed away, and was lost, when it was found indispensable on the part of the Government to take this subject into its own hands. The result had proved a great boon to the Province. Though he had lost money directly by those railways, they had been indirectly of incalculable benefit to Nova Scotia. (Hear, hear) Not alone as to the expenditure of money in the Province had they been advantageous, but in opening up facilities for trade, and developing the country. Within a few years after the construction of those short lines of railway our tariff was doubled, and our people did not feel the increased taxation in consequence of the increased stimulus given to trade. In fact, when we commenced the construction of our railways our *ad. val.* duties were 6½, and when they were raised to 12½ per cent, to meet our railway debt, they were borne as easily as the lower rates, for the reasons he had stated. Therefore, he did not believe it was unsound policy for the Nova Scotia Government of that day to construct our railways as public works. With regard to our branch lines, however, if the Government of Canada had any desire to get rid of those portions of the N. S. roads, which were not, now, he believed, paying a profit, although run at but a small loss, there was an easy way of doing so. The late Government, with great advantage to a large section of Western Nova Scotia, agreed to give to a company that portion of the road extending from the junction of the Intercolonial to Windsor, as a bonus, to help them in extending further westward the Annapolis and Wind,