

my hon. friend across the floor of this House that if he thinks my object in propounding these resolutions is to improve the character of that investment, that as soon as these resolutions have become law I will make him an offer of my entire investment at St. Andrews at a very liberal margin under what it has cost me, so that the hon. gentleman will find that this circumstance will not be considered a very serious objection to these resolutions. Then, Sir, I say that the port of St. Andrews, by the proposed scheme, will be put in a position to compete with the port of Portland. At present the city of Halifax, with all our efforts, is handicapped with too great an increased distance to enable it to do so; but I do not forget that the city of Halifax will secure, by the construction of this road, an advantage which it does not now possess, because by taking the train through the city of St. John, and there taking the Intercolonial Railway, we will reach Halifax by a line between 100 and 200 miles shorter than we are now obliged to take. The hon. member for East Lambton (Mr. Fairbank), who dealt with this in an independent manner, and who has uttered sentiments with regard to this question that does his independent character, in my judgment, infinite credit, has touched two or three points of great importance, and I commend a consideration of his remarks to the leader of the Opposition. The hon. gentleman says truly that it is impossible to overrate the value to this country of anything that will bring the great commercial centres and the people closer together. I say that that hon. gentleman's breadth of view in grasping that idea, is well worthy the consideration of every hon. member of this House. Everyone knows that one of the great obstacles to Confederation was the remote distance at which we were from each other, that Halifax and St. John were so far from Montreal and Ottawa; and taking that view of the question any means that can be devised that will enable the population of the various Provinces, and the people inhabiting the commercial centres to be brought closer together by a saving of time or a decrease of expenditure, is a means more calculated to cement and consolidate our Confederation than any other measure that can be proposed. The hon. gentleman went so far as to say, in approving the policy of the Government in securing the thorough independence of the Gravenhurst branch, that he for one would be quite prepared, if necessary, to see the road built, owned and operated as a Government work. Now, I do not go so far as the hon. gentleman in my admiration of Government control of railways. There is a great deal to be said from that stand-point; but with all the means I have had of observing the management of railways and their operation, I believe they can be better managed by private enterprise than they possibly can be by Government. But I will go this far with the hon. gentleman: that if, to-morrow, it was found necessary to secure the complete independence of that link, it would be better to do it than to have it constructed at a greatly smaller cost, but without securing the thorough independence of that section of the road. Then the leader of the Opposition wants to know whether this is not bad news for the Intercolonial Railway. Well, Sir, he got his answer from the hon. member for Charlotte (Mr. Gillmor), who told him that if any means could be devised to carry on the commerce and business of the country with greater facility than can be done by the Intercolonial Railway, the better means should be adopted; that he should look primarily at the national development of the country rather than to the maintenance of this or that road. The hon. gentleman got his answer, but I may say to him from my experience as Minister of Railways that if we were choosing a line to-morrow for that railway, I would put it where it is. Notwithstanding its increased length, notwithstanding that by that line the ports of Halifax and St. John cannot compete with the ports of Portland and Boston, I say that I would still select the same route for the Intercolonial Railway, and for

this reason: It is not only a source of strength to the country, but it is required by the Imperial Government as giving them confidence in the continued retention of their Canadian possessions on this side of the Atlantic. Its being remote from the frontier gives it value as a military line. If we had not the Intercolonial Railway and were to-morrow seeking a line of communication between the various Provinces, I would not propose to adopt a line that would carry us through a portion of the State of Maine, because I know that at any moment we might, either commercially or in case of difficulty be cut off—one section of the country from the other. The construction of the Intercolonial Railway that the country was able to build and have maintained so successfully, gives strength and security to the country, and it opens up a vast section of the country along the northern shores of New Brunswick that could not have been opened up in the same time by private enterprise, and I believe, that from this time forward it will be no burthen to the people of this country in its operation. I say these resolutions contain the antidote to the bane the hon. gentleman sees in having a rival line to take away the traffic from a certain portion of it. These very resolutions contain the means of opening up branches in connection with the Intercolonial Railway and will bring into our country, through shorter lines, a traffic that we would not otherwise obtain. A vast amount of traffic will be brought over the line from Louisburg to St. John that never would come into our country at all unless we had these shorter lines. Therefore, I say that under these circumstances, so far from any injury accruing to the finances of the Intercolonial Railway, its position will be just as good or better after these resolutions are carried than it is to-day. I will just notice a remark that the hon. gentleman threw out, that the accounts of the Intercolonial Railway were balanced by an increased subsidy from the Postmaster-General. Now, I have seen the General Manager of the road. I thought I was quite right when I stated to the House that the Postmaster-General pays less to the Intercolonial Railway for the postal service performed than he does to any other railway. Having made enquiry of the General Manager, who has gone fully into this question with Mr. Griffin, and taken it up in all its bearings, I am able to disabuse my hon. friend's mind at once of the impression that any advantage has been gained in the arrangement of accounts between the different Departments of the Government, by the Intercolonial Railway. I am in a position to tell the hon. gentleman that the amount I have received from the Postmaster General, is less per train mile than was received under the late Administration, and that I am receiving a smaller payment from the Post Office Department than the late Government received. So far from the accounts having been altered in favor of the road, whatever changes have been made, have had distinctly the reverse effect. I desire to say a word with regard to the Napanee and Tamworth Railway. The hon. gentleman could not understand how it is possible for the Government, and the hon. member for West Middlesex (Mr. Ross) labored under the same impression, to look at anything except through political spectacles. I cannot blame the hon. gentlemen for taking that view, because hon. gentlemen opposite naturally judge the Government by themselves; they naturally imagine that we will be influenced by like passions with themselves, and they have, I dare say, too much reason to believe that there have been such things as Governments using railway subsidies in such a way as not only to give them power, but to increase vastly their majority and enable them to control the Legislature. I do not intend to go into that matter. But I also heard a rumor with respect to the Napanee and Tamworth Railway. The rumor was this, and it was stated to me by a deputation from that section of the country, who said that, although their road had not received a subsidy, Mr. Mowat