

to believe that a company road, a road owned by a company under the management of Mr. Wainwright, who very probably would have the same relation to this road he has to the Grand Trunk now, a gentleman who says he must have four-tenths of a cent per mile per ton to clear himself, is going to carry wheat to the port of Halifax at less than nine-hundredths of a cent per ton, and I presume the Intercolonial cannot carry freight to-day at nine one-hundredths of a cent without loss; why, it is asking us to believe what is incapable of belief.

Therefore, I cannot avoid the suspicion which I hold with great regret, that there is a strong tinge of political character in connection with the project which the right hon. gentleman has laid before the country. I am afraid it was more for the purpose of carrying elections than for carrying wheat that the right hon. gentleman introduced this measure, and I have a strong conviction that it is going to have that effect, but it will be the return freight that will be realized, the return traffic. Instead of carrying elections for the government, it may have the effect of carrying the elections against the government; and if the project were really conceived and introduced in that spirit, it would be only a fitting condemnation to be pronounced by the people upon the government if the government were defeated on this measure. If it were a matter of great national importance, if it were for the welfare of Canada, if it could be shown that it would add a dollar to the wealth of Canada, or be of any advantage to a large portion of the citizens in any part of the country, then I would say that it deserves support and the government deserves commendation for having courage enough to propose so great a scheme. But if it be what it appears to be now, a project conceived for the purpose of influencing the people to support an administration which felt they must go to the country with some project, which felt that its record as it stood at that moment was not sufficient to commend it to the country; then, Sir, I cannot, for my part, support that measure, nor can I conceive how any man can support it. As I have said, it involves an expenditure by this country of what is really an enormous expenditure even if Canada were a wealthy country. It involves at one stroke an addition to our debt of \$175,000,000, to a debt which is already over \$250,000,000, which has been created in the course of over 100 years. It is, relatively speaking, an enormous addition to our debt, and we are not likely to realize any good results from it. The consequence must be that if the matter presents itself to the people as it presents itself to my mind, they cannot assent to it. To a certain extent I believe, from the manner in which the right hon. gentleman introduced this measure, he had a hope that the greatness of the scheme would attract support, that the younger, the more adventurous and

the more daring spirits of this country would say: Yes, this a great scheme; this is a thoroughly Canadian scheme. It shows boldness, it shows continental powers, a conception of continental courage in undertaking such a scheme, but, when the younger men or the older men come to look at this measure in its details they will surely hesitate to believe that it is always and throughout going to maintain that character. It is launched with a good deal of éclat, it is launched with a great deal of what I might call demonstration on the part of the right hon. gentleman and his administration, but it is not proceeding, so far, to maintain that character in which it made its appearance in this world. When left to itself, when left to stand upon its own merits this scheme has failed. It is practically a failure up to this point. It was not defeated by the action of the opposition in this House. It was criticised by the opposition but it passed safely through this House, it left this House exactly as it came into it, but when left to itself, when it had to take its place before moneyed men, when it had to take its place in the money markets, when it came to find the capital that would enable the whole scheme to be realized, it became a failure and practically collapsed. Now, the scheme comes back to this House certainly no better, certainly not improved, as far as the people of Canada are concerned, and still, if the members of this House pass this measure again, if again it should through them receive the assent and support of the people of Canada, what guarantee is there, what probability is there that even then it will be a success? If it failed before why should it not fail now, and if it be that this measure has not found itself with the strength that would enable it to continue its existence after it passes out of the protection of the government why should this country be called upon to vote for this measure this year when no additional argument has been advanced from the government benches, or no satisfactory explanation given of the fact that the measure as conceived by them last year and perfected by them last year when left to itself promptly and summarily developed into an absolute failure? That character is stamped upon it, to my mind, and the right hon. gentleman and his associates bring to this House a measure in which are concessions made to a company every one of which goes to show that the company upon whose strength they depended for the completion of this measure and for its realization was incapable of the task which it undertook to perform. Every concession made to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway is virtually a concession made to the Grand Trunk Railway Company and if the Grand Trunk Railway Company were unable last year at a time when matters