

generally, but will make this province the envy of all parts of Canada from ocean to ocean.

As I have already intimated, there was very little attention paid in Nova Scotia to road construction up until the settlement of Halifax in 1749, because that really was the time when England obtained lasting control over this province and it was after that that the necessity was seen of building this road from Halifax to Windsor.

Early Construction.

Now, it may be of interest to members of this House, and I know it will be to the country, to look into the way in which these roads were constructed in order that we may, if possible, ascertain the view the people of the province took at that early day of the necessity for roads, and to compare it, if need be, with the interest at the present day with regard to the same matter. I find, for instance, in aid of one road at least in this province in 1749 or shortly afterwards, and in connection with the construction in different parts of the province of a few of the larger bridges—there were comparatively few bridges in those days—on one occasion at least a lottery scheme, something after the plan of the Louisiana Lottery, was started and the profits arising from that were used for road construction. I also find at that early date, before the coal mines were operated, because the people were forbidden to work at these coal mines, that a special dispensation was given to some Halifax men to mine coal in Cape Breton and the profits on that were used for the construction of the road from Halifax to Windsor. On another occasion a seizure of a large cargo of molasses was made—I don't know why in those days there should have been so large an importation of molasses, but at all events this molasses was seized and the proceeds used for road construction in different parts of the province. Of course there were some advantages in those days which we do not enjoy. These roads were largely military roads and constructed by soldier labour, labour which could be commanded, which cost very little; I think a shilling a day or something like that was paid to the soldiers who were responsible largely not only for the construction of the road from Halifax to Windsor but for the road from Minas to Port Royal. In looking this matter over and finding that road construction in those early days was performed in this way it has occurred to me that it would not be an improper thing in these days if we could utilize, not soldier labour in this country, but men from the penitentiaries, those who now compete with honest labour in various walks of life outside of such institutions.