

with a view to their own interest and to their party's interest, then I say the contrary result is likely to occur, and that the railway, instead of being a nourisher of the Treasury, becomes a drag upon it. Inasmuch as the evil day comes when interest must be paid, nothing is made on the road, and the consequence is poverty, taxes, a Bill for railway subsidies, and another Bill entitled the "Customs Act," which grinds down the population of the whole country to a pitch which is melancholy to contemplate. I do not wish to occupy the attention of the House on this point. One of my chief objects in rising to address the House at all was that I might have an opportunity of calling the attention of the House to what the Australians have been doing, and I speak on the authority of Sir Charles Dilke. I would have brought this work and read the passages to which he refers to this House, but it so happens that my own copy of the book is packed up, and the three copies which belong to the Library are so much in demand that I could get none of them this evening, so I had to trust to my memory on this point. I hope that the Government may some day or other think over those things. I have heard it intimated that there was an intention on the part of the gentleman who leads this House so successfully of making an Australian tour last summer. Although the tour did not take effect then, I believe there are still hopes that a mission will be sent to the Australasian colonies next summer, and it will be a subject, perhaps, worthy of investigating as to how those great lines of Australian railways have been and are managed. I throw out these hints with the greatest deference in the world, believing that a better system of management is possible, and one more consonant with the original intention of the British North America Act, and I think it is a thing which the Government and Parliament of Canada ought to consider very maturely and thoroughly.

HON. MR. ALMON—I think the Conservative members, at least some of them I have spoken to, are determined to support the resolutions which have been brought forward with regard to these subsidies, but still very unwillingly they do so.

HON. MR. MCKAY—Speak for yourself.

HON. MR. ALMON—They feel that this measure ought to have been brought down very much earlier, and we feel that this country is spending a very much larger sum of money than we ought to spend. The hon. gentleman from Lunenburg speaks of our having a surplus in the Treasury. We do not want a surplus, and we do not want unnecessary railways built to please Tom, Dick and Harry in the House of Commons. I am speaking for myself and for several other gentlemen with whom I have spoken. A number of us feel that it would be unfair to throw out these Bills now, or attempt to throw them out, if we are unable to do so: but next Session, notice, I trust, will be given to the members of the Government that Bills for the expenditure of public money must be introduced earlier in the Session, to give an opportunity of discussing them. I feel that I shall be obliged to support the Government in this instance.

HON. MR. REESOR—I would ask the hon. leader of the House whether he will give some satisfactory explanation as to why the appropriation was made to build a railway from Woodstock to Chatham? We have two leading lines, if I understand rightly. We have the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway running east and west of these points. There is a through line. Why we should want a short line running alongside of these two main trunk lines, a distance of 80 or 90 miles, seems almost inexplicable, and it is to be feared that there are too many of these appropriations made in the same way—that is, to build railways where they are not really needed. If these appropriations were made to open up new sections of country I do not think there would be any objection to them, but where so many of them are made for lines that are not needed it seems to be too bad, at a time when the country is running in debt every year to pay the interest on the present debt, to make such expenditures. We are increasing our indebtedness at the rate of ten or fifteen million every year, and the exports of this country are not sufficient to meet the interest on our public debt or other debts. We want to get out of debt. I know that some hon. gentlemen say that we have built the Intercolonial Railway, and the Canadian Pacific Railway,