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The plan agreed upon at the Portland Convention, he believed, was the only one that could be legitimately or profitably carried out. The idea was, to carry out this work in separate sections, by different communities, all working in subordination to one general plan, so that a continuous line of railway, under private management, should eventually extend from the cities of Bangor, of Portland, of Boston and New York, to the Eastern shore of Nova Scotia, upon the Atlantic Ocean.

The beauty of the plan was, its simplicity, its coincidence with the natural laws of trade: its adaptation to the wants of the people of Maine, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The idea was purely commercial. Railways for military or political purposes, were neither in accordance with the spirit of the age, or of the spirit of railway progress. They have never been successful, and they never will be. Railways require, in order to success, the application of private selfishness, individual thrift and energy in their management.

It was with a spirit like this, and with opinions like these, that the resolutions of the Portland Convention were adopted. In accordance with these views, have been the proceedings of the committee. In Maine, our application for a charter was promptly responded to by the Legislature, and the necessary survey at once undertaken at the expense of the State.

In New Brunswick, similar measures were adopted, and every thing done that the most ardent friend of the Railway could desire. So that from the city of Portland East, to the boundary of Nova Scotia, the way has been prepared for the carrying out of this great work, as far, and as fast as private enterprise shall supply the means. It is questionable in my own mind, whether any resort to public credit, is either necessary or desirable. New Brunswick, however, tendered further assistance, to the amount of \$1,250,000 in subscriptions to the stock, and a free gift of all the ungranted Crown lands lying within *five miles*, on each side the line. Had Nova Scotia adopted a similar policy the road might be looked upon as secured. Had the Nova Scotians gone home and gone to work, as the people of New Brunswick did, the history of the enterprise would have been a continued series of successes and of triumphs.

Unfortunately for the scheme, in Nova Scotia, political matters are paramount to all others. Among the men who had given the readiest support to the plan for calling the Portland Convention, was the Hon. JOSEPH HOWE, well known as a political leader in Nova Scotia. Mr. Howe expected to have been present, or rather agreed to be present, at the Portland Convention, but was prevented by official engagements. His intimate political friend, Hon. Mr. UNTAKRE, the Attorney General of Nova Scotia, took an active and influential part in its proceedings, and was appointed one of the Executive Committee for Nova Scotia.

The ministerial party in Nova Scotia were thereby regarded as fully committed to the plan of the Portland Convention. On the return of the delegation to Halifax, the Hon. Mr. Howe seeing the enthusiasm for the Railway which he had kindled among the delegation, and anxious to share the honor of taking a leading part in its management, introduced into the public meeting called to receive the Report of the delegates, a resolution of the most extraordinary character, proposing to have the Railway undertaken as a government measure, by the colony, and built at the expense of the government.

This one unfortunate step has given a new turn to political affairs in British North America, if not seriously retarded the progress of the Lower Provinces.

Having become committed to the plan of a government Railway, Mr. Howe felt the difficulty of carrying it out; or of securing a majority of the House of Assembly of the Province without the co-operation of the Home government, and he goes out to England to raise money to build Nova Scotia's part of the line of our road.

Recollect, that at this time the Quebec and Halifax line had been abandoned. The plan of the Quebec and Halifax Railway was started in 1845, as a rival

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