

the government. He was disposed to object to this resolution because it departed from the policy adopted by the government when the system was inaugurated in times gone by, and he thought that this was a view of the subject which deserved consideration. They had only to look back for a short period and see what had taken place in Canada in order to appreciate the effects of placing the control of the public works of a country in the hands of large and influential corporations. He objected then to the scheme because it would introduce into this country something of the same kind. The effect of this subvention of these two lines of railroad would be that the company receiving it would necessarily be brought into close connection with the government of the day, and to a large extent would be subordinate to them and under their influence.

These lines of railroad would run through various counties of the province—Colchester, Pictou and Cumberland on the one hand, and Hants, Kings and Annapolis on the other.—They all knew then how many representatives would be directly interested in their construction—no less a number than sixteen would be more or less interested in their completion. He would ask then whether it would conduce to the best interests of the country, or the independence of the legislature, that so large a proportion of the people's representatives should be in a position to be influenced by the companies who would receive this subvention, and who, again, must necessarily be so closely connected with the government of the day. He had listened with great interest to the financial picture of the affairs of this country, so ably drawn by the hon. leader of the opposition, and he thought that the house would agree with him that there was no gentleman in that house or the country whose opinions were more entitled to respect upon questions of finance than that hon. gentleman. The hon. Provincial Secretary had on some occasions been rather severe upon the hon. member for Colchester, as regards his skill as a financier; but from what had taken place recently between them upon another question of great public importance, he thought that he was not in a position to question his accuracy now. He did not wish to make any invidious comparisons between the leader of the opposition and the present Financial Secretary as regards their financial capacity, but, as one was comparatively new to the business and the other had made it his study for years, it followed that he must necessarily have more acquaintance with the subject, and his opinions were therefore entitled to greater weight.

The member for Colchester had referred to the past financial position of this country, and to our prospects for the future, and he had called upon the hon. members for Halifax and Richmond to dispute the position he took. The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Tobin) had since addressed the house, but he had not ventured to controvert the assertion he made, that the present was not the time to embark in these works. The member for Richmond (Mr. LeVesconte) had not yet spoken but, from what had fallen from him on a previous occasion, when the sale of provincial debentures was under consideration, he did not think that he would be inclined to disagree with the opinions of that hon. gentleman. On a previous occasion the

hon. Prov. Secy. in reference to the fisheries said that his (Mr. C.'s) constituents had better look round, and find some representative better acquainted with trade and commerce than he was. He thought that he had better apply his remarks to his own government and to his Financial Secy., and get somebody more conversant with the intricacies of finance than that honourable gentleman from his previous training could be expected to be. He thought that it was a lamentable defect in the composition of the present executive that it did not possess a single individual amongst its members in any way identified with the trade or commerce of the country. He may be told that there was one gentleman who had formerly been engaged in trade, but from what he knew of that gentleman's connection with the late government he did not think that his judgment approved of entering upon the scheme of railway extension now proposed altho' from his being a member of the government he was to a certain extent committed to it. It was well known that the government was principally if not entirely carried on by the two or three members of it who sat at the table of that house, and that in point of fact they were the real dictators of the affairs of this country. He could easily fancy then how the opinions of the hon. gentleman, to whom he had alluded would be set on one side and everything would be made subservient to the political necessities of those who held seats in that house.

Reference had been made to the time when railroads were first commenced in this country, and to the fact that our revenues were then comparatively insignificant. That, no doubt, was the fact; but it must not be forgotten, that our obligations were also much less then than now. The liabilities we have already assumed, including the Pictou line, amount to something like four-fifths of the entire revenue of 1851; but it seems that this is not enough for Nova Scotia to bear, and we must add this additional burden for the construction of branch lines to Annapolis and the borders of New Brunswick, which will make the entire amount to be borne by the revenues of the Province about \$500,000 a year. Now blue nose was a very good natured fellow, no doubt, but it does not do to push a willing horse too far; and he cautioned hon. gentlemen how they committed themselves to a scheme which was going to entail such heavy burdens upon the people. He had no wish to condemn railroads in the abstract; he believed that when a man had plenty of money, he had a right to spend it as he pleased; but where a person is only possessed of limited means, he stands in a different position, and should only spend his money upon necessities, and not upon luxuries. That was just the position the province was in. Railroads, no doubt, were a great convenience, but if they could only be obtained by the sacrifice of other important interests they should be left alone.

The government should make themselves acquainted with the wants and necessities of the country before they talk about every service being properly provided for. He should like to take some of them over some of the roads in the county he represented, and show them the inconveniences under which the people labored, and the grievances which he had so often and so unsuccessfully brought to their