

It is represented to be very much of the nature of the country through which the Great Western runs westward of Hamilton over a great portion of the line. The best portion of the line is equal to the worst portions of the Great Western. Even at the cost of £7,000 per mile the expense of constructing the entire road would be a little over fifteen millions of dollars. The proportion of that payable by Canada would be about nine millions. I think it is extremely probable that when we obtain the report of the engineers sent out by our Government, it will be found that a very large portion can be constructed for much less than £7,000 per mile. But, whatever the sum may amount to, it is perfectly clear that without the road there can be no union of the provinces. (Hear, hear.) It is equally clear that on that road there is a very large proportion of the country that is exceedingly desirable for settlement, and that only awaits the opening up of some means of communication with the markets. Major ROBINSON reports that on one portion of it—and I confess that I was not aware of the fact until I examined the report more closely to-day—that there is a tract of country along the New Brunswick portion of the line not excelled for timber or land in any part of the world that he ever saw. (Hear, hear.) I do not propose taking up the time of the House by reading from this valuable report, but estimates are given showing the amount of population that these districts will support when properly settled. He shows that the country, if the road is once carried through, will be settled very rapidly. I do not, however, expect that that road can possibly pay as a commercial enterprise for a long time to come, and I do not desire to deceive myself or deceive any other person on that point. That it will be of importance more as a military work than for any other purpose, nobody can deny. In 1862, when I opposed the proposition to construct the road, I then felt that this was an argument that could fairly be used in its favor. Military authorities are still unanimously of opinion that its construction would be of great importance as a means of protection in case of hostilities. The most important reason, however, why it should be constructed, in addition to the military reason, is, that without its construction there can be no union of the provinces, and without a Federal union of the provinces we cannot hope to obtain a settlement of our sectional difficulties. The one is dependent upon the other, and I believe the people of Canada are willing

to accept the conclusion that this argument necessarily leads us to engage in the construction of that road. (Hear, hear.) I do not propose to-night to indulge much in figures relative to what our condition will be, financially, after this measure is carried out; but the honorable member for Hochelaga made some statements that I can scarcely allow to pass. He was understood to say that Lower Canada came into the union without any debt, and was to go out with thirty millions of dollars of debt, while only some twelve millions of dollars were expended in that section of the province. Now, sir, there has been spent altogether on the canals of Canada \$20,813,304.03; on roads and bridges in Canada West, \$562,866, and on roads and bridges in Canada East, \$1,163,829.34; on the government buildings at Ottawa there have already been paid over \$1,513,412.56; and on railroads there have been spent altogether \$29,910,825.16, or altogether about \$53,964,236.79. Now, I think that one-half of this enormous amount is fairly chargeable to Lower Canada. One-half or a little more than that of the works on which the money was spent are situated in Lower Canada, and, if we include the Victoria Bridge, it is considerably more than one-half. Besides these, however, there are quite a number of other items which I do not take into account. There is the Quebec Fire Loan, and a deficiency in a number of special funds that I will not take any notice of at this time. Then take it from another point of view. From a return made to Parliament, we find that the entire cost of improving the navigation in Upper Canada, including the cost of light-houses, canals, &c., altogether amounted to \$7,022,665.61; that the revenue derived from Upper Canada harbors and canals has been \$4,887,291.73; leaving a balance against Upper Canada of \$2,145,373.88. In Lower Canada, during the same period, the expenditure has been \$4,484,566.52, while there was a revenue of \$708,086.80, leaving a balance against Lower Canada of \$4,176,479.72. I give these figures simply to prove that the position taken by the honorable member for Hochelaga was entirely incorrect; but it would be superfluous to do that if I were to allude to one item which he gave when he was comparing the amount of debt that we would have to pay per head of our population, compared with that of Great Britain. The amount per head with us is about \$25, and he gravely told the House that the amount per head in Great Britain was only \$37, when every person