

gentleman, with his usual ability had so clearly justified the attitude of opposition he had assumed to this resolution, and shown it to be the duty of every man who regarded the credit and welfare of the country to oppose it, that it was unnecessary to go over the same ground. He could not, however, refrain from alluding to the impropriety of the course pursued by the government, in delaying the consideration of this important question—the most important, financially, that had engaged the attention of the house—until this late period of the session, when some of the members had returned to their homes, and there was no probability of its receiving that attention its importance demanded. Too much of the business of the house was done in that way. On the subject of railway extension, he would say that if the province was justified at all in entering upon any further expenditure, the line to the borders of New Brunswick, to connect with the railway system of the United States, should be the first to receive consideration, and he was not prepared to say if that had been proposed by itself, whether it would have received his opposition, provided he could be convinced the country could bear the burthen of its construction without injury to other important services. But there certainly could be no doubt that the finances of this province would not admit of the construction of both lines at the same time even if they were admitted to be necessary to the public convenience. With regard to the Annapolis line he could only look up it as an accommodation to one or two counties at the expense of the whole province. Party necessity or political expediency might secure its construction, but those who helped to place this liability on their constituents would yet have to meet a day of reckoning. The Finl. Sec. endeavoured to shew in supporting the Railway policy of the government that certain services could be cut down, some of them of the most vital consequence to the country. Thus admitting that we must hereafter either lose our public grants or be more heavily taxed. He thought that if there was no other reason for opposition if the Finl. Secy. was obliged to admit that he could not expect to meet this expenditure, without depriving them of some of the most essential services the province required, that of itself ought to be sufficient reason to deter gentlemen from voting for this resolution, and he begged them to be warned in time. He had promised not to make any lengthy observations and he should not do so. He had risen principally to make these explanations in consequence of the position he had taken last year, and because the remarks he then made had not been reported. He would ask gentlemen from all parts of the province, and particularly these representing the more remote sections, whether they were prepared to assume the enormous liability this resolution proposes,—a liability which would cramp our resources, and weigh upon the industry and energies of our people for the next twenty years. He for one was not prepared to do so; and in voting against the resolution he considered he was acting with a due regard to the interests of the whole province, and those especially who had elected him as their representative. The adoption of this policy, it was admitted, would lead either to the increase of the tariff or the reduction of

those grants which have been always considered essential to the interests of the country. Their constituents might not complain until they experienced that result; but when railway interest had absorbed all the revenue, and nothing was left for roads, schools, navigation securities, or other services, gentlemen around these benches would then hear their reproaches. Instead of diminishing the grants to these sources as intimated by the Financial Secretary, he contended they should be increased from year to year with the increasing wants of the country. In that view of the case, then, he did not think it was wise or prudent, but on the contrary the most reckless folly, to incur this heavy expenditure. He would be ashamed to show himself among the people of Cape Breton, who are already so largely taxed for railways in Nova Scotia proper, from which they derive little benefit, if he voted for this resolution. He could be guilty of no greater injustice towards them than to add so largely to the railway burdens they now so unjustly bear. In comparison with this question every other of a financial nature before them this winter was simply insignificant, and no small considerations should influence the course of gentlemen in regard to it. The hon. member concluded by referring to the haste with which this measure was pressed through the house. It took years before the Pictou railway bill was placed on the statute book; and here they were asked with scarcely any discussion on consideration, to pass a measure involving an annual liability of something like \$230,000, in addition to \$350,000 which they would at least have to pay on the completion of the Pictou road. He trusted that gentlemen would pause before they committed themselves to this measure, and would, at all events, wait until the Pictou road was completed before they incurred fresh liabilities—which he was convinced the province was not at present in a position to assume.

Mr. BLANCHARD said that he did not agree with the member for Richmond in his idea, that the government in introducing this measure were influenced by a desire to assist the confederation scheme. In his judgment, the government, by taking this step, had put confederation out of the question for at least 20 years to come. When these proposed lines of railway are completed, the debt of Nova Scotia will amount to \$11,085,000; and if he understood anything about the terms agreed upon at the Quebec Conference, the Province was to be admitted into the Union with a debt of \$8,000,000—anything beyond that was to be borne by the Province individually—and would have to be raised by direct taxation. Therefore he could not see that the government were serving the best interests of confederation by the introduction of this measure. At this late period of the session, when most of the members had returned to their homes, and those who remained were not in the humor to listen to long speeches, he did not intend to address the house at any very great length, but he would refer, shortly, to some of the remarks made by the honourable Financial Secretary. That honourable gentleman stated that he based his calculations upon the assumption that the revenue for this year would be the same, if not larger, than the last. On a former occasion he (Mr. B.) had made the assertion that at no time did our