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Nec aranearum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quis ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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LEGISLATIVE NEWS.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, March 21.

EUROPEAN AND NORTH AMERICAN RAILWAY BILL.

The House went into Committee of the whole on a Bill to afford facilities to the construction of the European and North American Railway, Mr Hatheway in the Chair.

The hon. Attorney General addressed the Chair in explanation and support of the bill. He considered it a measure of very great importance. It was important, inasmuch as it contemplated making Halifax the great depot for Atlantic Steamers, and inducing travellers to and from London and New York to pass through this Province. It was also important that it contemplated a heavy charge upon the resources of the Province. Hon. members should turn their attention to it, and be governed by this: "do the advantages to be derived warrant the risk?" He believed the bill was guarded as much as necessary, and having looked into the subject and given his consideration, he had no doubt but the money would be well expended. When he enunciated his views, as leader of the government, after his return from Northumberland, he had declared against the government taking stock in railways. Since that, however, he had been called upon to enter into the subject now before the committee more minutely, and the result of that consideration, and the consultations with his colleagues, was that he had altered his mind so far as this railway was concerned, and he now thought that it was better to take stock in this railway than to offer a loan and take security on the line. It was evident that the government ought to do something for this railway if they wished it to go on. It had been urged upon his mind, and he acknowledged the force of the reasoning, that if the Province loaned a sum of money to the railway, and held the whole work under mortgage, it must hurt the sale of shares in England, for persons about to take shares would not like the whole line to be mortgaged to the Province for £250,000. Were they to aid by a loan, taking a mortgage on the line, and the undertaking should prove successful, the money would be repaid; but were it to fail the Province must lose its money. It would be precisely the same under the provisions of the present bill. The Committee would thus perceive that although he had altered his mind as to the details, the principle was pretty much the same; and he was surely right in changing his views upon the subject when he saw it was for the good of the country. The Province would be guaranteed thus: they would advance nothing until there was £10,000 subscribed and paid in, when the Province would advance a like sum: and so on pound for pound. This he thought was a sufficient guarantee, for people would not risk their money unless they saw good reason to believe that it would prove a paying undertaking.

His Honor the Speaker said he intended to support the bill, it being so very popular, the whole country crying out for it. He gave the hon. Attorney General great credit for bringing in the bill, especially because it was so popular; it would strengthen the government, and that was a thing all governments should endeavor to do: (laughter.) He differed with the hon. Attorney General in the mode of assisting this railway; he thought the Government should not take stock in the line, but loan money to the Company, taking security on the whole stock, as was done by the State of Massachusetts. He agreed with the opinions expressed by the hon. Attorney General on a former occasion, and regretted that he had altered his mind, he did not think the reasons he gave for doing so were sufficient. The inhabitants of Massachusetts were a knowing people; they managed their affairs better than we do ours, and he would like to follow their example. If the committee were in favor of the bill as it stood, he should not oppose it, although he would rather the aid was given by loan.

Mr Gray said he differed from his Honor the Speaker; he liked the bill best as it stood, and would give it his cordial and unqualified support. He was glad to have the opportunity of following so quickly after the hon. Attorney General, as he could now show him that the Opposition he had the other day characterized as "factious," was prepared to support the government whenever they brought down a measure that was actually for the good of the country. He would now tell hon. Speaker why the bill is better as it is. If the whole line was mortgaged for £300,000 currency, it would be impossible to dispose of the stock; it would be utterly useless to go to Europe to ask capitalists to take stock, while the whole line was mortgaged for that amount: (hear, hear.) He believed also

that the interests of the province could best be secured by taking stock in the line. The first point to be considered was, will the line pay? (The hon. and learned member here showed the geographical position of the Lower Provinces,—their eastern position situate close to the most expeditious sailing course to Europe—the interest felt in England, the United States and Canada, in the practicability of shortening the route from the old world to the new, &c.) Were Halifax made the depot for Atlantic steamers, and this line constructed, the said steamers would cease going on to Boston and New York, and this would shorten the sailing distance about 500 miles; and as it is well known that a railway car will travel two miles to a steamer's one—this, with the efforts made to shorten the distance on the other side of the Atlantic, would shorten the time of travelling from London to New York from three to four days. It must be also taken into consideration that these provinces from their geographical position were free from all competition, as no parallel line could be laid down in any other country. There was no risk in run, for if ever the travelling and traffic over the line should induce competition by laying the line another line through these Provinces, the shares must first be enormously high. Were this line constructed it would run within a short distance of Fredericton, to which there would of course be a branch; it would also intersect the line from St. Andrews to Woodstock, and thus in a short time most of the counties in the province would be connected by railway. What would have been said five years ago to the man who would predict what had taken place even in this province, in the establishing of telegraph lines. He would have been taken as a madman.—But what did they see? A line was in operation through the province, from Amherst to Calais, another line was in operation between St. John and Fredericton, which at present was the best stock in the country, and which would be continued to Quebec in the spring, and stock was subscribed for a line from Dorchester to Miramichi. These lines were the precursors of railways; just as surely as these telegraph lines were laid down through this province, as surely would railways follow. (The hon. member then went through statistics of travel between St. John and Shediac, and estimates of traffic, and also quoted from the Report of the Select Committee on the Shediac Railway in the session of 1849.) The line through this province was extremely favorable. There were a few engineering difficulties between Amherst and the Bend of Petitcodiac, but there were none between the Bend and St. John. When he stated that there were a few difficulties in the former district, he did not mean what would be regarded as difficulties in Europe or the United States. In England they tunnelled through mountains and undermined cities—Starting from Liverpool to London by the Birmingham railway, you plunged at once into a tunnel and passed underneath a portion of the city; while in Europe they are about to tunnel the Alps for a railway,—aye, tunnelling the very Alps!

It had been estimated that this line would cost £7,500 a mile, but he thought it could be built through this province, where the tract was so very level, for £5,000 a mile. He held in his hand a list of the cost of fifteen American Railways which he would read. (The hon. member here read the list)—From this it would be seen that only one out of fifteen cost more than £5,000 per mile, and that nine out of fifteen cost less than £2,500 a mile.—He believed he was right, then, in estimating this line at £5,000 a mile, especially as most of the farmers along the line had given the right of way through their lands. It would be recollected that the line north of St. John passed chiefly through intervalle lands, one acre of which was worth three or four acres of upland, and no better property could be adduced of the anxiety of the people to have this railway, than the fact of their voluntarily giving those rich lands for the line. There was one farmer who owned but five acres of intervalle, and the road running through would take the whole. He thought it hard at first to give it up, but at last concluded to do so rather than set a bad example and retard the undertaking. He knew there were people who considered this a wild project, but it was not so, if they could judge by the results of public works elsewhere. He would beg leave to quote an instance. When DeWitt Clinton was Governor of the state of New York, he planned and determined to carry into effect the Erie Canal. This great work had proved of such vast benefit to New York that Clinton is almost canonised; but it was far different at the time. His scheme made him unpopular; people cried out that the State would be ruined, and every obstacle was thrown in his way. Still he persevered. His great mind disregarded all opposition, for he saw in fatality the success of his gigan-

tic undertaking. The work was at length finished, and booming ran on at intervals along the line from Albany to Buffalo announced the Canal open. What has been the result? Why, the work has not only paid the interest on the outlay, but the income has nearly paid off the capital; in a few more years the canal will have freed itself, and from that moment the tolls will be sufficient to pay all the expenses of the State Government, including their splendid School establishments, and a man living in the State of New York will not be taxed one farthing towards the support of the government of his country! (hear, hear.) [The hon. member concluded his speech by showing the receipts on many of the American lines, and the rapid increase of travel and commerce wherever Railways are laid down, and inferring from these statistics that the same results may be expected here.]

Mr Montgomery was not opposed to the principles of the bill. He was willing to give such aid towards this railway as the state of the finances warranted, but he considered the sum contemplated by the Bill far beyond our means. If £250,000 sterling was given in aid of the railway, and £50,000 sterling for the St. Andrews line, making altogether £300,000 currency, the interest on which would be £21,500 a year. In addition to this, large quantities of land had been granted near the line. Now, if the crown lands were given away, and the province revenues pledged to this amount, where would the amount required for public services come from? It was evident that if these bills passed, that amount must be made up by increased duties and direct taxation.

Mr Crane would cheerfully support the bill. He had seen enough of railways to know the immense benefit every branch of industry derived from them. In travelling once between London and Liverpool, he conversed with a Manchester manufacturer, travelling to Liverpool to purchase cotton, who informed him that he expected to purchase his supplies, return to Manchester, and have his purchase safely lodged in his warehouse within six hours. Upon enquiring how long it would take him to effect this before the railroad was constructed, he was informed that it would then take from five to six days. This enormous saving of time, was of course a saving of money. He knew merchants and manufacturers in England who had doubled the amount of their property in a few years, and they ascribed their success chiefly to railways. An hon. member had spoken about the province giving wild lands to facilitate the construction of railways; but what then would it not increase the value of those that were left? He owned wild lands, and rather than not have this railway, he would give ninety nine acres out of a hundred, and consider the one acre remaining worth more than the whole is worth at present. If the line for some years should pay but three per cent., he should consider it an excellent investment for the province, because it would pay indirectly by increasing the population and the revenue—increasing the value of property on the line, and farm produce, and cause great benefit to the country by the expenditure of a large amount of foreign capital.

Mr Ritchie said he had given proof that he was in earnest in support of this measure, and that he thought it would prove a paying line, by taking £1000 worth of stock. When he first heard the hon. Attorney General enunciate his views upon railways, condemning the policy of the government taking stock, he said within himself, "Our Railway is done." Were aid given to the line in the shape of a loan, security being taken on the whole work, it would never have done to go into the market with it seeking capitalists to take stock. It would bear upon its face evidence that the government of the country entertained suspicions that the line would not pay. The capitalists would say—"You risk nothing, and you place all stock holders in a false position, for you advance a small portion of the amount and take security on the whole." He believed that a loan granted in that manner, would be injurious to the undertaking, rather than beneficial and he was very glad to find that the hon. Attorney General had seen cause to alter his mind. He would satisfy the Committee in reference to the interest taken in this line in Great Britain, by mentioning one circumstance: A house in Glasgow had offered to furnish the whole line, and take one half the amount in stock. Independent of the line becoming as it probably would, the great highway between the United States and England, that section of it from St. John to Westmoreland would connect the north of the province with the south—a trade would spring up between them—they would no longer be as strangers to each other, and their interests would no longer be conflicting. He also believed that when the first car would run over the line, the value of the land in the vicinity

would be increased twenty-five per cent. In travelling by Railway in the State of New York, he had been struck by the simple and convenient manner in which farmers conveyed their poultry, butter, eggs, &c., to market. A farmer living near the line, say fifty to a hundred miles from the city, brought his goods to a depot safely locked up in a tin box or case; he would see it placed in the train and then return and attend to his ordinary business on his farm. His agent in New York kept a key to unlock this tin case, disposed of the goods, purchased such articles as the farmer might require from the city, and in the evening the farmer received his tin case again with his marketing done, and the requisite articles enclosed. Let them contrast this with a farmer fifty miles from St. John, frequenting the market. He must keep a strong waggon and a good pair of horses, leave home the day previous, pay his own expenses and that of his horses on the road, spend most of a day in town, still having to pay not only his own expenses, but for his horses' feed, and then return home in the same manner—about three days of his own time gone, and three days' expenses for himself and horses, to accomplish what could be done by those living near a railway line, for a mere trifle, and without any loss of time.

Dr. Gordon was not opposed to the principles of the bill, but considered the sum named too large.

Mr English would support the bill, and for this reason: He saw that the people in the Eastern section of the Province were extremely anxious to have this road, and as the members from that section had dealt generously with the Western section upon former occasions, both his constituents and himself were willing to reciprocate their kindness, and aid them in what they have so much at heart. He had travelled a great deal by railway, and from all his experience had taught him, he did not think this would be a paying line for many years. He did not think it would benefit St. John much. He had seen towns built up by railways, and he had seen towns pulled down by them. He would rather have seen the terminus of this line at St. John than at Halifax, for by extending the line to Halifax, we should build up that town and benefit Nova Scotia at our own expense. As to the amount he did not think it too much. On the contrary, he should not be surprised if the province would be obliged to take more stock before the line is finished.—He would be quite satisfied, were the line finished, to see it paying expenses without any dividend, the first ten years.

Mr Johnson was favorable to the bill. Coming as he did from the North, he would be delighted to see the Halifax and Quebec line built, as it would pass through his County, but if called upon to select either that line or this as a Provincial undertaking, he would feel himself bound to select this, because he believed it would pay best (hear, hear.) In answer to some hon. members who thought the line would not pay, and that the Province would therefore sustain a loss, he would call their attention to one thing which had been overlooked during the debate—the railway would cause the population to be doubled in a few years, and consequently the revenue would be doubled. As to any effect this bill might have upon the Halifax and Quebec line, it would facilitate the construction of that line rather than retard it, as it would form a part of the same road from Halifax to Shediac; and when so much of the line was constructed, Great Britain might be induced to aid in making the rest. He considered our claims upon Great Britain for compensation for loss sustained by the withdrawal of protection, founded in justice, and of the same nature as were the claims of the West Indian Planters in 1832, when slavery was abolished. He would not say it was prudent for Government to take stock in Railways under ordinary circumstances, but this was a case of desperation; the country was suffering, and something must be done. When a physician found a patient in a lethargic state, he applied strong remedies, and tortured him to keep him alive. Just so was this case. The Province was in that state and he would almost consent to inflict torture in order to rouse her into activity. He was glad the government had brought this down as one of their measures—no matter how much it might tend to strengthen their position—for he would tell them plainly that if he could turn them out by opposing the bill, he would rather the bill should pass and the government remain (laughter.)

Mr Needham would shew the hon. member for Queen's (Mr Gilbert) an instance of the benefit accruing to farmers by railways, by telling him what was collected for freight in one year for carrying in milk by the railways to supply the city of New York.—The sum was no less than \$35,450.—[Mr Gilbert—Milk from the *Chalk Hills*!—No matter; the freight showed that an enormous