

that by the 31st May it would be in a fit condition to carry the whole traffic, and this was under an arrangement that was so emphatically condemned a year ago. The question of our railway extension was involved with the question of Confederation, and the success of the Government in maturing the contract was to a great extent due to the fact that the Union of the Colonies had been secured. Too much praise could not be accorded to the Government in relation to the bill.

Mr. ANNAND expressed his regret at hearing the opposition styled obstructive, because they had discharged their duty in criticising the measure before the house. It was not correct to say that he was opposed to western extension, but he denied the right of the Government to insert any provision in relation to Troop's Point in the contract.

Hon. ATTY. GEN. said that the name was used in the contract which was part of the act of last year.

Mr. ANNAND denied that the act of 1866 authorized the use of the word. It was well known that the cost of construction would be cheaper on the north side of the river than on the south side, and that it might be a gain to the contractors to adopt the northern route; but looking to the interests of the country, and the probability of an extension to Yarmouth at some future day, he thought it should terminate at Annapolis. Troop's Point is a quarter of a mile above the ferry and deep water, and would therefore be quite useless as a terminus. This fact should have induced the Government to secure the line and terminus beyond the discretion of the contractors. It would, too, be of importance to consider this question in relation to the financial position of the Province under Confederation. The debt incurred by Nova Scotia beyond the eight millions would be treated as a loan, on which five per cent. must be paid to Canada; and as the country was in a transition state, he thought a little more enquiry should be bestowed on the subject. He assumed that the indebtedness of Nova Scotia amounted to considerably over five millions, in addition to two and a half millions for the Pictou railway and rolling stock. This, with over a million for the Annapolis line, would probably bring our debt up to nine millions. Assuming this to be the case, we would commence Confederation with a debt of a million of dollars, which would stand as a first charge on the local revenues. As to the bridge he would only say that as under the original agreement it was intended to give accommodation for foot passengers and vehicles, a great wrong had now been done to the inhabitants of Hants and Kings in not making such a provision as would give them a free passage over the river for all time to come. He thought the house should pause, and take up the question after fuller information had been given.

Hon. ATTY. GEN. said that there was no doubt a great deal in the suggestion of the hon. member, and that an estimate of the character asked for would be of value. But the present was not the time to bring up such an estimate. The Province had already incurred liabilities in connection with this railway, and must carry out its agreement. A proper time no doubt would come when the hon. member could have his wishes gratified. It was a great pity

that hon. gentlemen would not take the trouble of reading public documents before coming forward and making incautious and incorrect statements. If the hon. member would look at the act of 1866 he would find that it recited the agreement. (The hon. Atty. General here read from the act to show that the agreement was made part of it.) That being so, he went on to say, were they not justified in assuming that the house would ratify the agreement that was made conditionally, in case it should be shown to be the best line?

Mr. S. CAMPBELL said that it was the privilege of the minority to criticise the acts of the Government, for they were there for that purpose. The question he had to consider was not whether he was opposed to the Annapolis Railway or not, but whether the Government had performed their duty in a business-like manner. He contended that they had failed to do so. The hon. member had referred to the Act of 1866, but the articles of agreement recited the Act of 1865. They were bound by the terms of that act and should not go one iota beyond it. The house should not be asked to take the mere *ipse dixit* of the hon. gentleman, that the company had abandoned Troop's Point—it should be shown in black and white. He (Mr. C.) felt that it was his duty not merely to protect the rights of the people of Guysborough, but of the whole Province as well. When he saw an injustice being done to any portion of the people, he was bound to state his objections.

Hon. PROV. SEC. said that the arguments of gentlemen opposite shewed very clearly how difficult they found it to find fault with the Government. No observations could be more puerile than those that had been made in the course of the afternoon by the opposition. The house had solemnly pledged itself to the construction of the railway, and after a year's deliberation had re-affirmed that decision. The Government having been charged to make a contract for the construction of the line immediately set to work to perform the duty entrusted to them. They entered into a contract with parties to build a railway to Annapolis town or to Troop's Point, and the house, with that contract before them, deliberately re-affirmed their former decision, and authorized the carrying out of their agreement. Though the hon. member was told that the representatives of the Government, when in London, could only make the contract by leaving it optional with the company to go to Annapolis or Troop's Point—both of which points had been left by the house to the choice of a previous contractor—yet he now declared that they should not have entered into the agreement at all for the construction of the road, but should have deprived the western counties of that means of railway communication with the capital which they so anxiously desired, and to which the faith of the Province had been pledged. He felt it was the greatest compliment that could be paid to the Government for gentlemen opposite to take up the time of the house with objections and assertions which everybody must feel were perfectly puerile and unworthy the serious consideration of any intelligent man.

The house would remember that these hon. members once undertook to settle the railway