

ultimately be the gateway of the great Pacific system. His interest in trans-continental communication never ceased from that time. In 1871-72, being still interested in some degree in the Canada Central, he urged upon Sir Hugh Allan the project of constructing the Canadian Pacific Railway, and he was actively engaged with Sir Hugh as provisional director, when a company was formed by that gentleman. The object of this was, in the first place, to secure its amalgamation with the corresponding company organized in Toronto by the Hon. Sir David Macpherson, and, afterwards, in the formation of the company which made the first attempt in England to raise money for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Mr. Abbott was one of the delegation of four,—composed of Sir Hugh Allan, the Hon. Adams Archibald, Major Walker, and himself,—which visited England in 1874, for the purpose of floating the bonds of the railway under the charter granted by Sir John Macdonald's Government in that year. In June, the delegation succeeded in procuring the signature of the late Baron Strousberg to a preliminary agreement for the construction of the line. That agreement, the negotiations for which were kept private, was immediately cabled to Canada, and, the next day, Mr. Huntingdon made a statement in the House of Commons, which was the inception of what is usually referred to as the Pacific Railway Scandal. The attack thus made upon the Government and upon the enterprise caused Baron Strousberg to abandon immediately the preliminary agreement that had been made, and the delegation returned to Canada unsuccessful in their mission. Subsequent events are well known to every Canadian. After a stormy session, a committee was appointed with power to examine witnesses under oath, but the law officers of the Crown having determined that this power was not legally justified, a commission was instituted to enquire into the allegations of Mr. Huntingdon. After a long investigation, the committee reported, Parliament was called together, and, after a debate of some weeks, the Government of Sir John Macdonald resigned office in October, 1873.

In this affair, Mr. Abbott had some prominence, as the confidential legal adviser of Sir Hugh Allan, and in that capacity he became cognizant of some of the transactions which were complained of by Mr. Huntingdon between Sir Hugh Allan and the Government. He was present on the occasion of the request of the late Sir Georges