

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—And to make it a feeder of a very valuable territory to the Intercolonial.

Hon. Mr. FORGET—Is it to the knowledge of the hon. gentleman that the Canadian Pacific Railway made an offer for the road?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I do not know anything about the history of the road.

Hon. Mr. FORGET—The hon. gentleman said that the Canadian Pacific Railway wanted to buy it, and that the government considered that the Dominion had better buy it.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I say that representations had been made that the road would probably fall into the hands of the Canadian Pacific Railway. I said it was so reported.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—The hon. gentleman is in error as to the character of the rails. I was in the government at the time these rails were given, and as indicated by the hon. gentleman from Rothesay, when the rails began to wear out on the main line they were taken up and a better class of rails laid down. The rails taken up were put on the switches of the Intercolonial Railway and the surplus rails taken up from the old track were donated in aid of local roads, and this is one of them.

Hon. Mr. DOMVILLE—Only the branches.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Perhaps, but the rails they received from the Intercolonial Railway were given to them as rails that were not required, having been taken up and replaced by rails of a better quality. I have no doubt the hon. gentleman from Wellington will remember very well the transaction at the time.

Hon. Mr. McMULLEN—Yes.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Because the first rails that were given under such circumstances were given by the government of which my hon. friend the Secretary of State was a member, the government of the late Alexander Mackenzie, and the same policy was pursued by Sir John Macdonald's government after it came back to power.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I think I stated the value of the old rails given by the Intercolonial Railway was \$24,439.

Hon. Mr. DOMVILLE—That would not go very far.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That would be only worth old iron, and that is all the Intercolonial Railway could have done with them if they had sold them.

At six o'clock, the Speaker left the chair.

After Recess.

Mr. DOMVILLE resumed the debate. He said: This is entirely a provincial question. We have to consider first, is the railway built, second, why was it built, and, third, who built it. Without going into any elaborate figures, we find that the Dominion government gave a subsidy and the local government also aided the enterprise, and the government of the day, whether right or wrong, laid down a standard of what the rails were to be. They were to be fifty-six pounds, and fifty-six-pound rails were laid down. It would be a mistaken argument to take the position that the road was no good, because if that were true, where are all the other railways, and why are we trying to develop and open up this country? One would infer from the remarks of my hon. friend from Belleville (Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell) that this road was no good. Can we for a moment suppose that the Dominion government and the local government would have subsidized this company to the extent of \$774,000 to build a railway that was no good? We must inquire why that road was built. It cuts the Intercolonial Railway at right angles, and extends to Fredericton, passing through a fine agricultural country, as good as any we have in New Brunswick, excepting perhaps the river fronts. It gives a straight line from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Fredericton, and a short route for the transportation of fresh fish in cold storage to the United States markets. The whole of the Miramichi coast is interested in this line. Is there any one who will say, if that road had to be built to-morrow, that the 136 miles could be constructed for \$800,000? That would be only \$6,000 per mile. Why, the rails are worth to-day nearly \$3,000 per mile, and if the road is any good at all it is dirt cheap at the price named. I do not say that the road will not require repairs; every railway does. The Grand Trunk Railway which was built half a