

interested position when I stand up to-day to defend the north shore line, I who live on the south shore. I must say that I am not sectional, and if I were, I would perhaps have some reason to favor the south shore. But I hold myself above these considerations, to see only the general interest above private interests. But at the same time I desire to rectify the remarks made by the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Hall) and the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Colby), remarks which he made in good faith, I hope, but which are not correct. These gentlemen do not know the line of the River Etchemin. All that I have asked is reports by competent engineers. In this, Mr. Chairman, I do not find fault with the Government, for I know that they have been well disposed towards myself and towards my county as regards the barometric surveys. It may be there are special reasons, unknown to me, for having refused more than that, when more was asked, but still I could not get satisfaction. I have not had the advantage of visiting the location, but it seems to me that the Government, when they submitted these reports, might have made them more complete. The hon. Minister of Public Works has given us the distances between Montreal and St. John, Hervey and Halifax. How is it that the Government should have come to such an important decision, when it is found, by the discussion which has just taken place, from both sides of the House, that it is almost unanimously admitted that all the reports of the engineers were false, that some 130 miles of the line which has been chosen as being the shortest line are yet unexplored, and may, in some places, have grades of more than 100 feet? All this may be supposed, for it has been stated that the engineers have exaggerated the reports and deviated from the route. I appeal especially to the members from the Maritime Provinces, so that they may not suppose that I am dealing with the question from a sectional standpoint. It is a federal question, and my county has signed petitions, praying that the line should pass where the interests of the Dominion should be best promoted. How is it, I say, that the Government appropriates such a large sum without these correct reports, and especially when the result will be to isolate from the Pacific trade the whole district and the city of Quebec, that old city which possesses such a large and magnificent harbor, that city which is so richly endowed by nature. Still the Government decides this important question in the sense indicated by their resolutions, and we find in Mr. Schreiber's report, a report which was quoted very often here to-night, that over 130 miles of the International line have never been explored. But if, later on, the railroad could not go through there, owing to insuperable engineering difficulties, and we are not sure that that will never happen, where would we be? I am in favor of the short line; but I am in favor of a surveyed line, whatever it may be. However, I must say that I am not in favor of a line which, according to competent engineers connected with the Administration and under the control of the Minister of Railways, has not been surveyed. Why should Mr. Schreiber be more credible than Mr. Light, Mr. Smith or Mr. Sullivan, who have given locations on maps, which have been distributed to members of this House? In such a position, Mr. Chairman, I feel ill at ease, and it seems to me that the Government might have postponed the question until reliable surveys should have been made. It is evident that if all the reports which are in favor of our line are taken away from us, all I have to do is to resume my seat, and to submit to that which is inevitable. According to competent authorities, I had considered Mr. Light as an able engineer, and as a man capable of making an honest and comprehensive report to the Government and the country. It seems that I was mistaken. That is just possible; but I should like to have the proof of my error. If we go across the Maine boundary and if we strike Lake Chesuncook; if it is esta-

blished by Mr. Vernon Smith's report that on certain distances there are grades of 50 feet per mile, which may be brought down to an average of 35 feet, and when we see Mr. Schreiber pretending that the valley of the Etchemin River has grades varying between 53 and 84 feet, I, who have been living in that district for the last fifteen years, say that I am inclined to think that Mr. Light is right, in the present case. And yet I do not wish to force my opinion upon the House. I simply ask that before a question of such importance for the Maritime Provinces and for the district of Quebec is decided, especially when the line which I am patronising goes through the northern part of the State of Maine, which is the best timbered part of that State, and whose lumber must all come through the Province of Quebec, and when that line is 71 miles shorter on American territory than the International line to the south would be, I say that in the face of these considerations we should have instrumental surveys to determine which is the shortest and the most favorable route. Let it be proved to me that the International line is the shortest and the most advantageous, and I, with my whole county, will be ready to accept it. But it is not with such reports as those which are now before the House that I will accept the verdict of those who patronise the Sherbrooke and Mettawamkeag line. It has been pretended, in the course of the discussion, that Mr. Light had made a false report; and yet Mr. Schreiber has said somewhere, while criticising Mr. Light's report (page 7), that the distance from Montreal to Hervey *via* Quebec was 248 miles. This, he added, should be 406 miles. The words "to be built" had been omitted intentionally, no doubt. It seems to me that I have a perfect right to think that Mr. Schreiber is not more credible than Mr. Light, even if there should be a doubt on that point. If these reports are so contradictory, let us re-establish the position and let us have reliable surveys, and if the conclusions at which we arrive are in favor, with due regard to the general interest of the country, of a line other than our own, I am ready to say to the Government: Let it be adopted, and we will be satisfied. I am very sorry to contradict the Minister of Public Works, but it is not I who contradict him; it is an engineer's report. In the first report submitted to this House is found the description of the different lines. Mr. Light gives a comparison between the different routes for the proposed short line between Montreal and the ports of St. John and Halifax, that is to say, by two lines, one by Sherbrooke and Megantic, the other, the combination line, *via* Quebec. Here is the tabular statement which he gives:

Description of the line.	<i>Via</i> Quebec & Difference		
	Sherbrooke.	Combina- tion Line.	in favor of Quebec.
From Montreal <i>via</i> Megantic and Passadumkeag, to St. John.....	525	481	44
do do do .....			
to Halifax. ....	801	710	91
do do & Mettawamkeag, to St. John ..	481	481	10
do do do .....			
to Halifax .....	767	710	57
do <i>via</i> combination line, to St. John .....	491	481	10
Grade, maximum per mile .....	74	40	34
Curve, minimum .....		4 degrees.	
Highest point above the sea level .....	2,000	1,200	800
Power of traction .....	20 loaded cars.	40 loaded cars.	20
Cost, including bridges over the St. Lawrence, <i>via</i> combination line, to Chesuncook .....	10,240,000	8,470,000	1,770,000
Cost, including bridges in both cases, from Mettawamkeag <i>via</i> combination line to Hervey.....	11,200,000	10,500,000	700,000

Now, we have the bridge question. I shall not deal with it lengthily, because it is very late; but it would seem to me that the question of the connection between the northern and southern shore can be easily solved. The part with which I have dealt has reference to distances. I have given fac-