

Grand Trunk Railway, and the connections with the Intercolonial Railway were all on the broad gauge, that the cost of changing the gauge of our railways in the Maritime Provinces would incur an expenditure of over a million dollars, that the Intercolonial would be delayed at least a year, and that it would cost a large sum of money to the country, he did not think that it was in the interests of the Dominion to make the proposed change. The time for fixing the gauge was when the Act authorizing the construction of the railway was passed. That Act fixed the gauge at 5 feet 6, and the Government have carried out that provision. To change now would cost so much money that the House should pause before agreeing to the motion of the hon. gentleman.

**Mr. SHANLY** said he had always been in favour of the four feet eight and a half gauge. He thought that when the matter was before the House last year the Government had a good opportunity of assisting the broad gauge lines of Western Canada to change by taking their rolling stock, which was a matter of very great consequence. If, before contracts had been given for the construction of rolling stock for the Intercolonial, the Government had entered into negotiations with the Grand Trunk and other broad gauge lines, they could have enabled those lines to bring their gauge down to the narrow, which must come about at some time or other.

He did not advocate the narrow gauge for its mechanical merits, but simply because it was the gauge of the continent, and he believed the loss sustained during the last 14 years by broad gauge line was much greater in amount than would be the whole cost of changing the gauge of these lines.

But although he held this opinion he believed that to change the gauge of the Intercolonial now, after immense contracts had been entered into, would only increase the blunder. In years to come when the rolling stock should be worn out, there would be another opportunity of buying up the present rolling stock of the wide gauge lines of the West and also enable them to change to the narrow, as without such aid as this it would be impossible for the Grand Trunk and other lines to change.

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE** said that although the remarks of the member for Grenville South (Mr. Shanly) had the greatest weight he thought they contained one fallacy. That member seemed to contemplate that all the rolling stock would wear out on one particular day, whereas there would be constant wearing out, and consequently there would have to be constant replacement.

**Mr. SHANLY** said what he had intended was, that if last year the government had decided to have no new stock for the Intercolonial, but to purchase that of the Western broad gauge lines, those lines could have changed their gauge, but that with immense contracts for new stock in hand, he did not think it advisable that the gauge should be changed.

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE** said that though there might be something in that, the question now resolved itself into this. The

hon. member contemplated as an inevitable necessity of the continental system the abrogation of the broad, and the adoption of the narrow gauge, though it might be a question of time, but would it not be better to face the necessity now? The question was not a political one, but should be discussed carefully and on its merits.

Not one fourth part of the necessary rolling stock which would be necessary was yet constructed, and therefore though a large amount had been expended, would it not be better to stop further expenditure until the matter was definitely settled. As to the difficulty alluded to by the Minister of Public Works (Hon. Mr. Langevin) that a narrow gauge would necessitate a trans-shipment at Windsor, that was a matter of no weight, for there was already the same difficulty on the Grand Trunk. Everyone knew the immense advantage derived from the New York Central, the Great Western, the Michigan Central and other lines, having a uniform gauge, the result of which was that cars from Hamilton could be seen west of St. Paul.

He had understood the Minister of Public Works to intimate that the Pacific Railway would be built on the narrow gauge. That road would have to connect with roads in Ontario and Quebec, and must, to form a great trans-continental line, have some Atlantic terminus, which could not be done unless the gauge of the Intercolonial were changed. There was a project to build a road from Quebec to Ottawa, to join ultimately the Pacific, and that road would doubtless be on the narrow gauge. It was intended also to construct a bridge over the St. Lawrence at Quebec, and with this accomplished there would only be some 140 miles of the Grand Trunk before the Intercolonial was reached at Rivière du Loup, and with this distance changed to the narrow gauge they would have, if the resolution were carried out, a continuous narrow gauge line from east to west.

As to changing the Government roads in the Maritime Provinces he thought the sum of \$1,000,000 named by the Minister of Public Works as necessary for that purpose must be a great exaggeration. The only difficulty in the matter seemed to be the interposition of the Grand Trunk, and the fact of that line not being in a financial position to change its gauge. He believed overtures had been made to the Government to assist them to effect that change, but in the present state of the indebtedness of that line to the country, the country would scarcely be disposed to lend the money required for a change of gauge. He thought it questionable whether it was not, after all, the wisest course to adopt that measure at once which the member for Grenville South (Mr. Shanly), the highest authority in the House, considered an inevitable necessity at an early day.

**Mr. SHANLY** had not heard what the Minister of Public Works had said of the cost of changing the gauge of the lines in the Lower Provinces but thought \$1,000,000 might very easily be used in such a work.

**Mr. WORKMAN** said it might be considered presumption in him to speak after the member for Grenville South (Mr. Shanly), but he had given great consideration to the matter. He was decidedly in favor of the narrow gauge principle. He mentioned the