

the public, and produced a most agreeable surprise. He himself always approved of the narrow gauge as the most profitable, and had suggested it for the Intercolonial, believing it would not be many years till our English friends would see the necessity of changing the Grand Trunk Railway gauge. All was done that could be in reference to this matter; but no way of making the change appeared to the Managers and others interested, unless the Government furnished the money. The scheme of raising this money came from a quarter not expected, Mr. McEwan, and surprised and delighted us beyond measure. We did not imagine a scheme so sensible and useful to the Grand Trunk Railway could have been devised. It should have come up several years ago. The Government could not have foreseen it. The Intercolonial had to run in connection with the Grand Trunk, and had to conform to its gauge, or employ changeable or adjustable wheels, which had been found dangerous, and were dispensed with. He thought the Government had acted properly in this matter.

Hon. Mr. CARRALL said the opposition of the hon. member for Grandville (Hon. Mr. Letellier), appeared cynical and hypercritical. The Government could not well have acted as desired before the question of the gauges was decided, nor would it have been well to force an expensive and perhaps ruinous change upon the Grand Trunk.

Hon. Mr. BOTSFORD said he had always taken a deep interest in this question which he had brought before the country and the Government for the last four years. He felt much gratified that the Government had at last abandoned the broad gauge, and did not feel disposed to criticise their conduct severely, although it was to be regretted this wise decision had not been come to before. The Postmaster-General, in expressing his views as to the cost of this change, had not grappled with the subject of the merits of the respective gauges. He had not realised the saving possible to the country from the adoption of the narrow gauge three years ago, when the Commons, influenced by the Government, gave only a majority of two in favor of the broad gauge. It was well known three years ago that the narrow gauge was the best.

Hon. Mr. FERRIER—Ten years ago.

Hon. Mr. BOTSFORD said the European and Indian Governments had adopted the narrow gauge for their roads, three years ago, as equal to all the requirements of traffic. The difference in the cost of the

respective gauges, so far as we were concerned, lay not so much in changing the rails, or putting down an additional rail, as in the construction of the permanent way, in rock cutting and embankments. Not more than one-fourth of the work absolutely necessary for the permanent way of a broad gauge would have been wanted for the narrow. Furthermore, the iron bridge work required by the locomotives of the broad gauge far exceeded that necessary for those of a narrow road. The difference in the cost of the Intercolonial, as compared with its cost on the narrow gauge principle, was much greater than the Postmaster General set forth in his remarks on this motion. Moreover, there were competing railways between the great Canadian centres and the Maritime Provinces, which would be used for all time to come in preference to the Intercolonial. Therefore it was certainly incumbent on the Government, and the legislatures to favour the cheapest line possible. The Intercolonial, it could be proved to a demonstration, would never be more than a local road for the country interested. He deeply regretted then, that the Government did not make this change sooner.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY pointed out difficulties in the way of practical action in accordance with the hon. gentleman's views, including the broad gauge of the Grand Trunk, the main line of the country, and the controversy between engineers. He was glad to hear the Postmaster General say that, although there would be a third rail at the Halifax end of the road, there was to be none from Riviere du Loup to Moncton.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL said the Government would take up or remove the rail, making a narrow gauge from Riviere du Loup to Trois Pistoles.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY said that was wise. It would be better to make a temporary arrangement for the road from Moncton to Halifax, than lay a third rail from Riviere du Loup to Moncton. By the time the system was finished between these points, a good deal of the old rolling stock would be used up on the Halifax section. He did not see how the expense of this change could be serious. Certainly the alteration could not reach anything like a million as apprehended by some hon. gentlemen. He thought the Government scheme judicious.

Hon. Mr. FERRIER said the saving in the construction of the narrow gauge, involved ten and a half inches in rock cutting, and something in ties; but the