

that they will be finished before the end of 1876.

Item passed.

On item 76, St. Anne's Lock, \$200,000, in answer to Mr. HAGAR,

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said this vote was for the work under contract. The total estimated cost of the whole work, including the upper entrance and excavating shoals below, was \$466,200.

Mr. HAGAR—Is that all below the Locks?

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE—No; the upper entrance is included.

Item passed; also items 77 and 78. On item 79, Rideau Canal, \$8,000,

Mr. HAGAR asked the Minister of Public Works whether in view of the letters received by him written by Hon. Mr. LANGEVIN respecting the arrangement that was made between that gentleman when he was Minister of Public Works and the town of Perth, respecting the amount granted for a bridge across the Rideau Canal, the Government intended to pay the town of Perth out of this vote.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said the Government had not decided to pay that amount. The whole question in controversy was this: an arrangement was made by which the Government was to pay \$10,000 on condition that \$8,000 was furnished from local sources. The bridge was supposed to cost \$18,000. As a matter of fact it did not cost anything like that amount, and the Government felt themselves bound to pay only in the proportion of ten to eight. The town of Perth considered that they were only to pay whatever might be required over \$10,000, and that the Government were bound to pay \$10,000 although they were not bound to pay the \$8,000; but he was not able to take that view of the matter.

Mr. HAGGART said the Government could not have had any misunderstanding about the cost of this bridge because the engineer before the contract was let reported to the Minister of Public Works that it would only cost between \$12,000 and \$13,000. The understanding with the town of Perth was that the Government would give \$10,000, no matter what the bridge would cost.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said he had stated twice last session that the Government had not determined to give that

money, and he had not been able to see that the town had any claim to it.

Mr. HAGGART said in answer to a deputation, the Minister of Public Works had stated that he would take the matter into consideration.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said he had not stated so. The deputation brought letters which he had not seen before from the late Minister of Public Works, which the deputation said admitted that he had made a promise to give \$10,000. He (Mr. MACKENZIE) promised to look into that matter, but he held out no hope to the deputation that there would be the least likelihood of that amount being granted. He objected to persons out of office writing letters to endeavor to bind the Government to some verbal arrangement that did not appear on record, and he would not pay much attention to any such letters coming from ex-Ministers.

Mr. HAGGART asked if the Government would allow the town of Perth to bring an action against them for this claim.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE replied in the negative.

Item passed; also items 80 and 81.

On item 82, St. Peter's Canal, \$75,000,

Mr. McKAY (Cape Breton) asked when it was likely this money would be expended. The widening of this canal was a matter of very great importance to the people of Cape Breton, inasmuch as six or seven hundred vessels passed through there in the course of the month during which it was in operation.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said this was a re-vote. Last season the attention of the engineer in the Lower Provinces was chiefly directed to harbor improvements. Late in the year, however, he received instructions to proceed to this work, and he (Mr. MACKENZIE) presumed they were now about ready to receive tenders for the work, and they hoped to have it well under way during the summer.

Hon. Mr. MITCHELL said he had visited that canal four years ago, and he satisfied himself that it was of great importance to the trade of the Lower Provinces.

Item passed.

The committee rose and reported progress, and it being 6 o'clock the Speaker left the chair.

Hon. Mr. Mackenzie.