

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT BEFORE THE COMPANY WAS BROUGHT OUT IN LONDON.

The accompanying map of Nova Scotia, on which the position of the railway is marked, shows that the object in view in constructing it was to shorten the journey from ports on the Gulf of St. Lawrence to ports in the Bay of Fundy and also further south, by transporting vessels by the railway across the Isthmus of Chignecto, thus avoiding the necessity of going out into the Atlantic and round Nova Scotia, and effecting a saving of several hundred miles. From the time when the provinces of Canada were federated and became the Dominion of Canada in 1866, an increasing interest was taken in opening a route across the Isthmus of Chignecto in order to effect this purpose. The idea took practical shape in November, 1870, when a Royal Commission specially reported upon the feasibility of a Ship Canal across the Isthmus, and strongly recommended its being carried out. The Report said that the creation of a trade channel across the Isthmus would justify its construction at almost any cost.

The Government intended to carry out the work with public money, and in 1872 and 1873 the Conservative Government then in office voted money to commence construction. The Liberal Government, which came into office in 1874, continued this policy and also voted money for construction. The work was first estimated to cost \$5,317,000. Subsequent surveys, however, placed the cost at a much higher figure, indeed some of the estimates were as high as nine or ten million dollars, and these increased estimates led to a postponement of the scheme. Meantime Mr. Ketchum, a Canadian civil engineer, placed proposals before the Government for a Ship Railway instead of a Canal. These were submitted to Mr. Collingwood Schreiber, C.M.G., Chief Engineer to the Canadian Government, and his Report is quoted in an Order in Council, approved April 10th 1882. As the subsequent Acts of the Canadian Parliament were passed on the recommendations contained in this Order, it is set out on page 45.

The Order in Council shows that before Parliament was asked to grant a subsidy, the Government were entirely satisfied as to the advantageous character of the Ship Railway proposals. It states in brief:—

1. That for many years great importance had been attached to obtaining means to shorten the water distance between the St. Lawrence and the Bay of Fundy.
2. That with this object the scheme of a Ship Canal had been kept in view since 1825.

