

Terrebonne, that source is dry to-day, that the source of influence is now to be found in the county of Compton. Upon this report made by Mr. Light the chief engineer made the following observations:

"Query No. 1.—Mr. Light, on pages 2 and 3, expresses a belief that the maximum grade between Quebec and Moncton by way of Chesuncook and Harvey would be 35 to 40 feet per mile, and that the surveys of last season have established that the grades above mentioned can be obtained between Chesuncook and Harvey.

"Mr. Vernon Smith's survey, the only one made between Chesuncook and Harvey last season, shows maximum grades of 53 feet per mile.

"The line between Quebec and Chesuncook has not been surveyed."

I ask the Government why this line has not been surveyed? Was not the promise made last year, that all competing lines would be surveyed, that only competent engineers would be employed; and when one of the engineers employed by the Government says that further surveys should be made in order to do justice to all parties, what excuse can be put forward by the Government for not having this line in question surveyed?

Mr. COLBY. When did he say that? When did the engineer suggest that this survey should be made?

Mr. LAURIER. I will answer the hon. gentleman in the language of Mr. Light himself. In reply to Mr. Schreiber's statement, that the line between Quebec and Chesuncook had not been surveyed, Mr. Light says:

"I always considered that a survey of this line was most important, and strongly recommended to Mr. Schreiber that it should be made, by telegram dated 1st August, 1884. His reply was a peremptory refusal."

Mr. COLBY. Would the hon. gentleman like a copy of that telegram to assist his argument?

Mr. LAURIER. The hon. gentleman surprises me. The hon. gentleman is in the secrets of the Government, but why did not the Government take the House into its secrets, and not some members of the House only? Was the promise made only to certain members of the House, who happened to be in favor of a certain line? Was not the promise made to all the members of the House? The hon. member for Stanstead has certain preferences, for which I do not blame him, in favor of another line, but I have just the same right that he has to be put in possession of the secrets of the Government. I charge the Government with not taking this House in their confidence, and confiding to individual members the information they ought to have confided to the House, and that in not doing so, there was another breach of duty to the House.

Mr. COLBY. I asked for information and received it, and if the hon. gentleman had asked for information, it would have been given.

Mr. LAURIER. I act upon the information given us by the Government, but what I complain of is that the Government had supplied us with incomplete information, and what the hon. gentleman has just now stated goes further to justify the charge I have been bringing against the Government. What was the reason given by the Minister of Public Works for not calling for a survey of this line from Quebec? His reason was that he had taken a map and he had caused to be traced there the different lines, and he found such a difference in the angles that he had to give Quebec up. Here is his language:

"At all events, I asked the chief engineer of railways to prepare this other map, and to show on it the air line from Montreal to Louisburg, that is to say, the straight line from one point to the other. I have had that line drawn, and the Mattawamkeag route is contrasted here with the other lines passing through Quebec and the other portions of the territory, and the result is that this Mattawamkeag route is, at its greatest distance from the air line, distant 20 miles from it; that is to say, that the distance to the air line, from the point which is the farthest on the Mattawamkeag route from the air line, is 20 miles, whilst the most distant point on the other lines through Quebec is 80 miles from the air line. It is impossible that any calculation can show that a line which is 80 miles at a number of points from the air line can be shorter than the other line, which is, at its most distant point, distant about 20 miles from the air line. It stands to reason, though there are curves, that if

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instead of putting a curve, you draw a line from Montreal to the extreme point, and another line to the point where it reaches the air line on the Quebec route, and do the same thing for the Mattawamkeag route, you will find that that will make two triangles; and it is elementary that the longest side of a triangle is shorter than the two other sides. Therefore, if the distance from the base to the farthest point of the triangle is 20 miles, the route or distance of the two sides of that triangle must be shorter than that of the two sides of the other triangle, in which the distance from the base to the highest point is 80 miles. Therefore, with all my good-will to my native city of Quebec, with all the desire to do all I could do for it, facts are facts, truth is truth, and I must go by the facts and the truth."

Now, I ask if that was what was promised last year when the Government stated that they would have all the competing lines surveyed by thoroughly competent engineers? The hon. gentleman knows as well as I do, that railway distances are not measured on maps, that they can be measured only on the ground, not only in point of mileage, but in point of grades and curves which cannot be done on a map, and I say this is a dereliction of duty on the part of the Government, in not having a proper survey made, and deciding merely upon a map. I have no doubt that the hon. gentleman was quite sincere when he said his heart was almost broken when he had to decide against his native city of Quebec, but I cannot pity him or sympathise with him, because if he had taken the trouble to take even the insufficient reports he had before him, he would have found that the line by Quebec was actually shorter than the Mattawamkeag line: and perhaps it may not be even yet too late to take up these reports and figures, and change his decision, and thus prevent his heart from further falling to pieces, by doing justice to his native city. I invite the hon. gentleman's attention to the figures he will find in the report of the engineers. The chief engineer—I do not pretend to say that he is influenced—in the papers we have before us, reports the distances by way of the line by Montreal and St. John as 274 miles. But the engineer, in making up his distance, conveniently leaves out the existing railways out of the calculation, and strikes across the country a route which is not surveyed, amounting as he says, to 58 miles. I object to this mode of calculation, and if we want to have a fair calculation we must take the figures we have from actual surveys and existing railways, and not from the fanciful figures derived from imperfect information, as it always is imperfect unless based on actual ascertained facts. Now, the actual distance is calculated from Montreal from Bonaventure station, I imagine; but that is not right. The distances should not be calculated from Montreal, but should be calculated from Hochelaga, though that, perhaps, would not be fair if we are to make comparisons with the other line. I think the best starting point is to base our calculations from St. Martin's Junction, which would be the diverging point of the two lines. Now, what are the distances? The distance from St. Martin's Junction to Chaudière Junction, including the bridge over the St. Lawrence at Cap Rouge is 161 miles. The actual distance, as I find it on the time-table from St. Martin's Junction to Petite Rivière Junction is 155 miles, and from Petite Rivière to Chaudière 6 miles, according to a table which I have before me, so that the distance, between these two points is 161 miles. The distance from Chaudière Junction and Chesuncook is 105 miles. My authority for this is the report published by Mr. Light, page 18; but this part of the ground has not been instrumentally surveyed; we have to go on more or less probable figures; but I can give evidence that the figures—though not given on actual surveys, but only on barometrical surveys—cannot be very far wrong, because Mr. Vernon Smith, in his report, at page 27, says: "It is but a little over 100 miles from Chesuncook to Levis." Then the distance from Chesuncook to Harvey is 136 miles, upon actual survey; from Harvey to St. John, by the existing railway, the distance is 66 miles, making a total of 468 miles. Now, let us see what the distances are by the other line, the sub-