

munication to the large, and populous, and fertile counties of the west as originally contemplated when the railway system was inaugurated. He need hardly say that the house had been always ready to adopt any means by which the Province might have a railway communication with the neighboring Provinces and States. Accordingly, the Government last session brought forward a proposition which they thought would accomplish, without burthening our means, the two-fold object of extending our road to the borders of New Brunswick and to the county of Annapolis in the west. The resolution authorized the Government to enter into contracts with companies prepared to connect us with the railway system of New Brunswick, at a cost not to exceed 4 per cent. for twenty years, on a capital of £10,000 a mile. At the same time they offered 4 per cent. on a capital of £5,000 a mile for the extension to Annapolis. The surveys that had been made of these lines had proved, they believed, that the resolution offered most ample compensation to any companies that might undertake the work. Under the authority of that resolution, the Government placed themselves in communication with parties who they had reason to believe would be disposed to carry out their policy, and the result of this correspondence has been to show that the provision offered was not quite sufficient. The difference in the terms, however, was so slight, as to warrant the house to carry out the policy which received their sanction at the last session.—

He went on to explain that the terms on which the offer of the International Contract company was founded, involved but a slight addition to the terms sanctioned last year, being the cost of dredging the river Avon, which was estimated at £40,000, and the provision of £100,000 of subscription for the line to New Brunswick. He believed that the affirmation of the resolution would entirely do away with the objections of the city of Halifax to taking the stock to this extent, but assuming that this sum had to be borrowed, it would only be an increase of two per cent., the offer of last year being to the extent of four per cent. As to the route of the railway nothing could be now definitely said, and that matter would have to be decided by the government upon a careful examination. He said that the debt of Nova Scotia was fixed by the delegates who represented the government at the Quebec Conference at eight millions in consideration of the resolution of last year in connection with railways. That increase to eight millions would have given the means to complete the Pictou and Western line, leaving the Intercolonial road to be dealt with by the government, but assuming that the colonies were to remain as at present the burthen entailed for the extension would not be more than £23,000 for the trunk line, and £23,000 for the western line, including the cost of bridging the Avon, or about £50,000 per annum. He thought there could be no doubt that the proposed extension would give us such an increase of trade and revenue as would compensate for the expenditure involved. He expressed surprise at the opinion enunciated on a former day to the effect that railway construction should be undertaken by the government, by Mr. Killam, who had long been laboriously maintaining the doctrine that such construction should be left to foreign capi-

talists and companies. He was glad to find that that gentleman's confidence in the government was so extended. He thought, however, under existing circumstances, it was not advisable to prevent these capitalists who were desirous of constructing our railways coming in and expending their capital.

Mr. KILLAM said that it had always been his desire whenever the question of railway extension was before the Legislature to express such opinions as he thought favorable to the prosperity of the Province. When the construction was commenced he thought it wise that the matter should be left to companies, but the other policy having been adopted he thought it would be well for the government to continue it in respect to the main Trunk line. It was estimated that the existing line would pay one per cent. above its working expenses, and there was every reason for supposing that the extended line would be still more profitable, while difficulties would be caused by having the railway under two distinct managements. If the lines were expected to pay four per cent. which the Province had offered would it not be well for the government to undertake their construction and realize whatever profit was to be made? He feared that by accepting the proposal the province would at the same time lose all the advantages that would arise from the increased prosperity of the country.

HON. ATTORNEY GEN. explained that the government were to have the power at any time to take possession of the railway by arbitration in the usual form. If we were to hand over the lines without giving any control to the government or legislature, then there might be something in the argument of the hon. member for Yarmouth. He believed that the time had arrived when we should deal with this question. New Brunswick was prepared to build to our borders, and there was this gap between Truro and Moncton which should be built at once. Connection with the railway system of this continent was, as all would admit, most desirable, as it would promote the best interests of this province. If the government could build the line directly out of the provincial funds, it would be a matter deserving of serious consideration, but under existing circumstances he was of opinion that it was the wisest policy for us to accept the best terms that were offered us by companies who were ready to invest their capital in the country.

Mr. ARCHIBALD alluded to the great importance of the subject under consideration, and then went on to say that when the matter was before the house last year, he had the misfortune to be absent, and therefore had had no opportunity of offering any remarks upon it.—Under these circumstances, he had listened to the observations of the Pro. Sec. that day with no little anxiety, for he was desirous of knowing upon what grounds he asked the house to consent to the very grave proposition which was contained in the resolution now before it. That hon. gentleman should have shown how the railways were to be constructed without crippling the resources of the country. He felt exceedingly disappointed that the hon. gentleman had not adopted the course which he should have taken as a Colonial minister, asking the house to incur such heavy liabilities.—Now there was no one in the house who had been a greater advocate of railways than himself—or was more committed to their extension