

## REPORT.

The Railway works at present under construction in Nova Scotia, and to which the foregoing Letter and Minute of Council refer, embrace the Trunk or "Main line," which commences at Halifax and runs north-easterly to Truro at the head of the Basin of Mines, a distance of 61 $\frac{1}{10}$  miles; and the Windsor branch, which leaves the Main line at a point 13 $\frac{1}{10}$  miles from Halifax, now called the Junction, and thence runs westerly to Windsor, on the Avon River, a distance of 31 $\frac{1}{10}$  miles.

The construction of these roads, as public Provincial works, was authorised by Act passed March 31st, 1854, and by a subsequent Act of the same session, provision was made for obtaining the necessary funds for building them, by authorising the contracting of a loan by the issue of debentures on the pledge of the revenues of the Province,—the said debentures to bear interest at six per cent. per annum, and be redeemable in twenty years.

The first of these Acts provides for the appointment of a Board of Commissioners and a Chief Engineer by the Governor in Council, and confers upon them all the requisite powers to carry on and complete the works.

The Commissioners are authorised to draw on the Receiver General for all monies that may be required for the purposes of the Act, but are restricted not to expend a larger sum, nor incur liabilities to a larger extent in any one year, than £200,000.

The work was commenced on the Main line June 13th, 1854, and on the Windsor branch in July, 1855, and has been prosecuted without interruption up to the present time.

In February, 1855, the first four miles from Halifax was opened for travel. On July 27th, 1855, the road was opened to Bedford, 8 miles from Halifax. In January, 1857, an additional 14 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles, extending to Schultz's or Grand Lake station, was brought into use; and on the 3rd instant, 9 miles, extending to the Truro road crossing, was opened;—making 31 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles of the Main line completed and now in operation.

The Windsor branch was passed over by a locomotive and car on the 30th December last, but as part of the grading and ballasting remains to be done, and the turntables and water stations are yet in an unfinished state, it has been deemed advisable to delay opening it to the public until these works are further advanced.

On the remaining thirty miles of the Main line to Truro, about two-thirds of the work is done, and there is nothing in the character of that remaining to be accomplished to prevent the entire road being opened for travel by the first of November next.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ROAD.

For the first 25 miles, from Halifax, the Main line passes through that range or belt of rocky and broken land which runs along the Atlantic shores of Nova Scotia. It is characterized by a rugged and uneven surface, full of rocky gorges and deep bogs, generally unsuited for the purposes of agriculture, while the timber with which it is covered is of stunted growth and of little value. Beyond this, or soon after pas-