

more than might be anticipated from so great a change as that made. They had taken pains to satisfy themselves of the working of the present Act, and he believed he would be able to shew the House from the report of the Superintendent of Education that under that Act a great improvement had taken place in the common school education of the Province, not only by a large increase in the number of children attending school, but also in relation to school accommodation. There could be no doubt that one of the difficulties experienced, and he referred to it with regret, was, that any measure brought forward as a government measure, would invite a good deal of hostile criticism on the part of the opponents of the Administration. He did not in this remark make special reference to the present Opposition, for he was aware that he had received vigorous and determined aid from some gentlemen opposite, and in every county the most enthusiastic supporters of the new law were to be found among their opponents, but merely had reference to the fact that any measure so brought forward invited a great deal of hostility. Looking at that feature of the case, and anxious to separate the question, as far as possible, from political considerations, in order that it might commend itself to the body of the people, the Government believed they would be consulting the best interests of the country in leaving any alterations to be suggested without a reference to party feelings. He believed that a great change and improvement had been effected,—that the difficulties to be encountered would steadily fade away, leaving the general education of the country in a progressive state. The Government believed that the act might be materially improved, but that it would be better to leave the matter open in the way proposed. He did not intend to shrink, for a single moment, from taking his share of any responsibility arising from the introduction of amendments.

Mr. LOCKE enquired whether the Government were not prepared to bring down any measure, or whether they intended merely to rely on the suggestions of members?

Hon. PROVINCIAL SECRETARY replied that the Government, having obtained the adoption of the leading principles which they held, it would be a violation of the pledge given to the House if they were to press, by Government influence, any changes considered necessary.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mr. CHURCHILL presented a petition from James A. Smith, an aged teacher, praying a free grant of land.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL laid on the table copies of correspondence relating to the erection of a small light on St. George's Island, in Halifax harbor. This had arisen, he said, from a representation of the fact that danger existed to vessels entering the harbor by night. He also submitted an application made to the Government by the Cunard Company, and a report thereon from the Superintendent of Lighthouses.

The papers were referred to a Committee on navigation securities.

Mr. TOBIN referred to the fact that the island was under the control of the military authorities and suggested that applications be made in that quarter.

Hon. ATT'Y. GEN. answered that the work could not be done without the concurrence of

the military authorities, but he had been informed that no difficulty would be made on their part. A very inexpensive light would be sufficient,—the maintenance being the principal consideration.

Mr. COFFIN said that this matter should have been before the House previously. A light in the locality alluded to was very much needed in the navigation of the Harbour, and if any difficulty were experienced in its erection he thought there were other points equally suitable for the purpose.

Hon. ATT'Y. GEN. laid on the table papers connected with investigations conducted by the Postmaster General in reference to abstraction of money from three money letters,—also documents connected with a robbery of the mail in Digby County.

The papers were referred to the Post Office Committee.

WINDSOR AND ANNAPOLIS RAILWAY.

The House then went into Committee, and passed the Windsor and Annapolis Railway Bill with some slight amendments.

RAILWAY MATTERS.

Mr. TOBIN gave notice to the House that the Railway Committee would meet on Friday next at 11 o'clock, and urged the necessity of promoting the business before the Committee. He trusted all parties having claims to pass before them would bring them forward by at least ten days' time. By that means all reasons for complaint would be removed.

Mr. LONGLEY stated, in answer to the hon. gentleman, that the Railway Report would be ready in a few days.

Hon. Mr. McFARLANE supposed that parties having business before that Committee would be entitled to the usual fourteen days' notice.

PETITIONS.

Mr. ANNAND presented two petitions—one from Jeddore and the other from Pope's Harbor, on the subject of Education.

Mr. BALCAN, a petition from Tangier on the same subject.

Mr. MILLER, a petition from the inhabitants of Little Arichat asking for a grant for the erection of a light house. He referred to the importance of the harbor.

Mr. LONGLEY presented two petitions; one from Annapolis on the subject of trawl fishing, and the other from a man asking aid for a house of entertainment.

THE TRUNK RAILWAY.

Mr. ANNAND asked the Government if they had received any intimation from the other side of the water that might give reason to believe that operations for the construction of the trunk line of railway to New Brunswick would be retarded, in consequence of the tightness of the money market.

Hon. PROV. SECT. replied that the parties who entered upon the contract for the construction of the line in question were to be incorporated in England, under the limited liability act, and therefore did not require the passage of such a bill as was before the House. He was very glad to be able to say that no information had been received of any intention on the part of the International Contract Company to recede from the engagements they had made with the Province.

The House then adjourned until the next day at 3 o'clock.