

and with all deference to the gentlemen who represented the Chamber of Commerce, that the best and most advantageous things for the City of Halifax have not been done. I think for one thing, there has been very little done to accommodate the local traffic of Halifax. Then there is another point which is perhaps not strictly before us; but the House will bear with me in saying a few words upon it. It is a matter in which some of the hon. gentlemen from the Province of Quebec are as much interested, or nearly as much interested, as those from the Lower Provinces. It will be remembered that last year the Government proposed to construct a branch of the Intercolonial Railway from St. Charles to Point Levis. That was with a view of giving the Intercolonial Railway a connection with the North Shore Railway so called, and the object of that connection was to make the Government independent of the Grand Trunk Railway, at least so it was represented in this House. Unfortunately, since last session those efforts of the Government have been frustrated and the people of the Lower Provinces, as well as those of the Province of Quebec, have been disappointed to learn that the Grand Trunk Railway has acquired control and ownership of the North Shore Road. There was just one other means of escape for the Intercolonial; that was the eastern railway which runs close to the south shore of the St. Lawrence from Montreal, as far, I think, as Sorel, and which it was intended to continue as far as Point Levis. I regret very much to learn that this road also has passed into the hands of the Grand Trunk Railway. It seems to me that it will be the duty of the Government to see if some means cannot be devised of giving this great Government Railway a connection independent of the Grand Trunk Railway; because everyone who has anything at all to do—who has any business to transact over the Intercolonial, must know that that railway is dealt most unfairly with by the Grand Trunk Railway. I know from the best authority that loaded cars going to the Lower Provinces over the Intercolonial are detained on the Grand Trunk Railway while that Company send down their own empty cars to Point Levis; that it is not an unusual thing for goods to be three weeks on the

road from Montreal to Halifax, the detention arising almost altogether on the Grand Trunk Railway. It appears to me that it is the duty of the Government, now that those misfortunes which I speak of have occurred, and that the roads which would have made us independent of the Grand Trunk Railway, have passed into the hands of that Company, to take the best possible steps to make the Intercolonial Railway, and the Lower Provinces independent of the Grand Trunk Railway. I understand that a proposition has been made—the Hon. Minister of Justice knows better than I—by the Grand Trunk Railway, to sell their road from Richmond to Point Levis. I do not see that that would put the Government in a very much better position than it is at present.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—
No such proposition has been made.

HON. MR. POWER—I know the thing has been talked about, and I wish to say that I do not think that would put the Government or the Intercolonial in a very much better position, because the Grand Trunk Railway would still hold the road from Richmond to Montreal. It is no doubt a very gratifying thing to people who do not stop to consider, to learn that there has been a surplus of some seven millions of dollars during the past year; but there are two or three circumstances in connection with this surplus which I think might cause the ministry to reflect. In the first place, the fact that the importations of the past year have been so very large, and the duties derived from them have been so immense, goes to show that the National Policy, one of the principal avowed objects of which was to shut out foreign goods from consumption in Canada, has been in that respect especially a failure. That is a matter which I think deserves a good deal of consideration. Then, again, while no doubt it is a very gratifying thing, that we are not going into debt, still to take seven millions of dollars, or almost that amount directly out of the pockets of four millions of people through customs and excise duties, besides taking a good deal more indirectly through the high prices paid for goods manufactured in this country, seems to me to be a matter not altogether for congratulation.