

the Acts of 1884 and 1885—if they had refused to comply with the terms of those Acts, and declined to adhere to their offer of a subsidy for the construction of this line, then I could understand how a breach of faith could be charged against the Government in connection with it. But if a breach of faith can be charged against the Government under the circumstances in which this Bill is placed before us, namely, that a company cannot be got to build the missing link, for which a subsidy is offered, then how many breaches of faith are the Government guilty of every Session? We know that for years past we are, every Session, called upon to deal with large numbers of subsidies granted to railways in different parts of the Dominion, many of which do not prove feasible and are never carried into execution, many of which lapse for want of sufficient aid, and for other causes. Would it not be most unreasonable to say that in all cases of this description where the Government agreed to grant a subsidy to a railway, they should be bound to step in if a company cannot be found to build it under the terms of the subsidy, and to construct it as a public work at the expense of the country? That contention is too absurd to be maintained for one moment. I have not seen this phase of the question put anywhere, although this question of the faith of the country being pledged for the construction of this work has been put forward as a strong argument, and I think was the most effective argument used elsewhere, and the one which obtained a majority in another place in support of the Bill which is now under our consideration. There is nothing in that argument, and I do not believe it will have any weight with hon. gentlemen in this House who will give the subject the slightest reflection. It is unfortunate, in a matter of this kind, that there is so much contradiction in regard to the facts of the case, and although the hon. gentleman comes here armed with surveys and estimates from parties whom he considers reliable, I am not disposed to place the same implicit faith in the surveys and in the officers of the Government, who are asked to make reports to sustain a policy which the Government seems bent upon carrying out, and which they, as the servants of the

Government, would feel themselves more or less bound to aid. I do not charge want of faith against the public officials, but I say almost unconsciously, knowing what the desire of the Government is with regard to the construction of this railway, they would naturally be disposed to carry out that policy rather than make a report which would be hostile to it. I want to call the attention of the leader of the House to one of the circumstances in connection with a similar subject—in connection with this very Short Line in my own Province. A Bill was passed by this Parliament providing for the construction of a portion of the Short Line in the Province of Nova Scotia, and it was at that time represented, and represented on authority just as good as that which my hon. friend places before the House now, that the distance to be saved was four or five times greater than it turned out to be when the road was completed. What guarantee have we that similar results will not be shown when this road has been built and an accurate survey of the line is made? The history of the Short Line in Nova Scotia, a section of this very same road, warns us not to be too ready to take the statements of Government engineers, especially where only a very imperfect survey, admittedly, has been made, and where the Government is desirous, of course, of minimizing the cost and the distance as much as possible. We all know that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company—and I shall speak now of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company as the owner of the Short Line—that when they arrived at Mattawamkeag they at once said that they would not construct the third section, or the missing link between Harvey and Salisbury. They said they did not want it; that they would not use it if it was built, and that it would cost—not counting the necessary bridge across the River St. John—\$3,500,000. It may be that the estimate of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company was made upon even less data than that of the Government which was submitted to the House to-day. But allowing that there was some exaggeration in the estimate of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and putting the cost of this road, as you may fairly put it, I think at \$3,000,000, including the bridge, we want to know, and we should be con-