

hon. member for Quebec County had proclaimed himself so entirely free from improper influences in connection with elections, for undoubtedly the contests in Quebec County in 1872 and 1874 had been extremely pure; and consequently the fact that his hon. friend so readily suspected other people of improper motives was no matter for surprise. His hon. friend from Charlevoix had also had his little fling in the political direction; and he was afraid that there were grounds for the belief that it would gratify his hon. friend very much if the site was chosen at any other place than Quebec.

The Government from the very first, however, had taken the greatest possible pains to obtain accurate information concerning the various sites proposed; he had not been satisfied with this, and he had given his personal attention to the matter. He had weighed the representations of the Engineers, Harbour Commissioners and other gentlemen interested, altogether apart from local motives. The engineers had recommended Point Lévis as more suitable, in many respects, than the River St. Charles; and they had also pointed out that the commercial advantages were undoubtedly in favour of the latter location, although physical difficulties were in the way. They had to consider the amount of ice which would be encountered, and many things besides the question of mere cheapness of construction. The hon. member for Quebec County was quite right in his statement that the whole country was interested in this matter, and the Harbour Commissioners were very properly to be consulted in this regard. The Government would, in any event, not be influenced by political considerations; having the general interest of the country solely in view, they could not, of course, please both sides, but as soon as possible they would obtain all the information which the Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department could supply, and this would be done before they could think of committing themselves to a formal opinion touching this important matter.

By these considerations the Government must be guided, and he could only assure the House no time would be lost. They hoped the examination would be

completed in time to take advantage of the earlier part of this season in commencing a work of so much importance to the interests of the whole country. In connection with such matters it seemed very undesirable to be bringing up mere political speeches, which were well enough, perhaps, delivered at an election, but totally unsuited to business matters in the House.

Mr. MASSON agreed with the Hon. Premier in his remarks relative to the location of the graving dock, but he was unwise in taunting the Opposition with discussing this question from a political point of view. That had been done on this occasion by the hon. member for Lévis who had, in the most unjustifiable manner, dragged old feuds and scandals to light as if there were no scandals at the present day. The hon. member was indiscreet in his zeal. He said the Government were greatly embarrassed, not so much by the reports of the engineers, as from the fact that they had rights and advantages on the side of Lévis, but numbers on the side of Quebec.

Mr. FRECHETTE—I did not say so.

Mr. MASSON—Perhaps the hon. member did not mean to say so.

Mr. FRECHETTE—The hon. gentleman never heard me say so.

Mr. MASSON said he had noted the words, but must have done so incorrectly. The hon. member had said it was a God-send to the Conservatives, but proof had been furnished to show that it had been used by the Liberals. He (Mr. Masson) advised the hon. gentleman to use his influence with the Government to have this settled immediately, and he might be assured the Conservatives would be very glad to have this question removed from the arena of political discussion.

Since the opening of Parliament, proof had been furnished of a fact that was well known to the country—that the great party of purity had at last consented to adopt such means to carry elections as they had always been disposed to believe only poor Conservatives who were mortals and not angels, resorted to. Another feather had fallen from the cap of the Liberal party.