

confidence that the Government, whom I have supported for a long time, and whom I hope to support for some time longer, will do what is right in preserving our interests in this matter, even if the results should not in every case meet our most sanguine wishes. But I wish to impress upon them the advantages of St. John as a winter port—advantages which I could paint in colors equally glowing with those which have been applied to Halifax by the member for that city, were I possessed of his eloquence. We have no ice across the river, and we have a generous tide to carry vessels in and out of the harbor. I hope that, while the Government are forming schemes to bring the wheat and cattle of the west, from Yale to Kamloops, from Kamloops across the prairies to Winnipeg, and thence by Montreal to the sea-board they will not forget the interests of St. John as being the nearest point at which to reach the Atlantic ocean, by Canadian territory. While I do not blame the members for Halifax for seeking to enhance the interests of their city, I must urge the Government to deal fairly by St. John, and as that city is the nearest point at which the commerce of the west can be put upon the ocean steamships, I think it is entitled to be made the winter port. I hope that the Ministry will look into this matter and not ignore St. John entirely, because it seems to me that between the upper stone and the nether stone we are going to get crushed.

Mr. BOULTBEE. I do not know sufficiently of this question to treat it as well as it has been treated, but I cannot help feeling that many of the arguments put forward are correct. The object, as I understand it, of building the Intercolonial Railway, was not only the development of an intercolonial trade, but also to enable us to trade with ourselves through our own country entirely. If anything can be done by the Government by which our own trade with St. John or Halifax might be legitimately extended, I think it would be well, and I believe that we, in Ontario, would be willing to bear our share of any burden that might attach to us in giving any proper development to the trade which finds its issue through those ports. I wish I understood this matter a little better so as to be able to discuss it more intelligently. No doubt the hon. gentlemen from Richmond, Nova Scotia (Mr. Flynn), and Yarmouth (Mr. Killam), understand it much better than I do, but the trouble is that I do not know whether the present Government have been more favorable to that project or the late Government. The hon. member for Yarmouth, who is a nautical man, and thoroughly understands these things, seems to think that the only way of getting this measure is for members on the Ministerial side of the House to turn against the Government and lend their adversaries a hand. Well, if those hon. gentlemen are more favorable to opening up those ports, and if that was a matter so absorbingly important to do it to the exclusion of all other considerations, then, of course, a few members on this side of the House would not mind voting with them to bring about such a desirable change. Unfortunately, the hon. member for Yarmouth, in urging gentlemen to vote against the present Government, gave as a reason that these gentlemen are lying in wait to destroy the National Policy. If such a defection did take place, even for so great an object as opening up Halifax and St. John, we might, in the end, place those gentlemen in power and succeed in upsetting the National Policy. Then, again, we have got to give very careful consideration, whether a set of gentlemen, who deliberately set at naught the opinion of a vast majority of people, are possessed of sufficient judgment to deal with even such a question as the opening up of Halifax and St. John; because those gentlemen who have been so desirous latterly of having appeals to the people, through petition or otherwise, are deliberately setting at utter defiance the clearly expressed opinion of a vast majority of the people, an opinion that keeps gathering

Mr. DOMVILLE.

strength as time goes on. There are circumstances in connection with the tenure of power of this Government. There have been many bye-elections since they came into power, but instead of losing power as is usually the case as the years go rolling on, they have steadily gained, so that the Government is now numerically stronger in this House than it was when the present Parliament was elected. For these reasons, I think that, with all deference to the hon. member for Yarmouth, we would have, even in a matter like this, to stick to the Government, even though they are not as favorable to opening these ports as the Opposition. The hon. member from Richmond fairly characterized this Government as desirous of having Canada for the Canadians, but he seemed to express a doubt as to whether that was a wise policy, while he admitted that it is the policy of the present Government. For that reason, then, because they wish to have Canada for Canadians, because they wish to foster and carry out this National Policy, which is adding to our wealth and comfort and business position, I think we must, despite the alluring inducement offered by the hon. member for Yarmouth, stick to the Government still.

Mr. ROBERTSON (Shelburne). We have an illustration in the debate to-day of the good that public meetings in constituencies occasionally do. For the past two Sessions the hon. members for Halifax sat in this House, and this is the first occasion on which the winter port question has been brought under the consideration of this Parliament. They are driven to it by the action of their constituents at the public meeting held there only a few weeks since. At that meeting expressions of disapprobation at the course of the Government were publicly made by men who had, for many years, been identified with the Conservative party. As I listened to-night to the hon. member for Halifax, I thought that, in one particular at least I had been disappointed. I had always thought, until now, that the members of the Government, judging from their published statements, were friendly to this project, that they took a deep interest in it. The letter which was referred to, written to the present Minister of Railways, on the 9th of June, 1878, by the present Prime Minister, contained the following remark:—

"I would have liked to have had the opportunity of discussing the burning questions of the day, and especially those affecting the trade and commerce of the Maritime Provinces."

For nearly two years these hon. gentlemen have sat on the Treasury benches, and not one promise made prior to the election by the present Minister of Railways, or by the members for Halifax, or by the organs that represent them in that city, has been fulfilled by the Government. The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Daly) was the first to introduce politics into this question. He wanted to have a slap at the Mackenzie Government, on account of the location of the depot at Halifax. I believe that throughout Nova Scotia, the people have placed this question above politics, and for this reason: the representatives from that Province should unite in urging upon the Government the importance of taking such measures as will make Halifax the winter port of the Dominion. As was stated by the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Richey) prior to Confederation, the promise was made, that after the union of the Provinces, the Intercolonial Railway would be built, and that Halifax should be the terminus of that road for all the trade from the west, and that Halifax should be built up and become a great city. The promise was made that ere this time the population of that city should be doubled and tripled. But what is the fact? The population is hardly as large as it was prior to Confederation. The Intercolonial has not in any way proved the benefit to Halifax that was promised; indeed, the Intercolonial is of more benefit to Toronto, Montreal and Quebec than it is to Halifax, for it places the merchants of those three cities in ready access to one million