

It is hardly necessary to point out that with the ever increasing speed of railway locomotion the value of such a reduction in distance will every year be growing less. But even at present we doubt if many people in Nova Scotia will feel like supporting an expenditure like that contemplated for the Short Line Railway, to secure a reduction of only 130 miles in the distance to Montreal. It may be worth the money, but there are people who will persist in thinking that it would be possible to make a more judicious use of our means."

The table of distances which I submitted to the House in March showed that the Central Route would shorten the distance from Montreal to Halifax over 200 miles, that it would make the distance from Montreal to Moncton 467 miles, to Halifax 654 miles, and to St. John 425; and the report which we have of the survey made of that portion of the line in question which was surveyed confirms the figures which I then gave, and no one has attempted to show that they are incorrect. I may say now, feeling certain of what I am saying, what I ventured to state then, from the information in my possession, that there are no serious engineering difficulties in the way. I presume hon. gentlemen who are interested in the matter have looked over the reports of the various engineers who were employed to make those surveys. As to these particular ones I shall quote from page 32 of the report—this is the report on the line from Chesuncook Lake to Canterbury, by Vernon Smith:—

"On the whole the route proposed presents a very favorable line for the construction of an economical first-class railway. On the profile shown there is no gradient exceeding 1 per 100, or 53 feet per mile, and no curve of over 4° or 1,433 feet radius. With the exception of three places, each of less than 6 miles in length, there is no necessity for even this gradient. By slightly increasing the earthworks, I believe that on a re-survey the objectionable points may be greatly improved, and that the whole distance from Harvey to Chesuncook may be covered with gradients not exceeding 35 feet per mile, and with no curve exceeding 3 degrees or 1,910 feet radius."

It appears, from the summary of grades and curves annexed to Mr. Smith's report, that the line in those respects is an exceptionally favorable one. Mr. Smith gives a careful estimate of the cost of the road—that is the cost of the whole road

from the end of the International to Canterbury—and he makes the average cost per mile \$16,217. Hon. gentlemen will see that that is a cheap road, and the reports of Mr. Duffy and Mr. Smith show that there are no difficulties in the way, very few bridges to build, and that the gradients are favorable. When the matter was under consideration in March there was a good deal said about an all-Canadian route. The surveys have shown that those routes, in addition to being too long to be by any possibility called short lines, are replete with engineering difficulties. We really do not need any other all-Canadian route than we have. We have the Intercolonial which is a very good all-Canadian route. On the former occasion I made a comparison between the International and the Central routes, and I gave a table of distances by the International route. At the time I had given the benefit of the doubt to the International; and I find on referring to Mr. Schreiber's report that the International line instead of being 460 miles to St. John, as I made it, is 472, and that instead of being 701 miles to Halifax, as I made it, is 720.

HON. MR. PLUMB—That shows the disadvantage of the hon. gentleman bringing those questions down before he is sure of the correctness of his figures and making some statements concerning it.

HON. MR. POWER—There is this difference between the hon. gentleman and myself: I do not make a practice of making statements that I am not fairly informed about, and in making the error I made it against myself. There was just one portion of the road the length of which I had no means of finding out, and I made that less than it really was.

HON. MR. PLUMB—You stated it as a fact: you were giving us information then as you are now.

HON. MR. POWER—My hon. friend does not know what I stated.

HON. MR. PLUMB—I have it before me. The hon. gentleman stated it as a fact.

HON. MR. POWER.