

wedge, and the establishment of a principle on this subject should be carefully looked to.

MR. TOBIN said it was well known that the House did not adhere to principles; that a principle on one subject was laid down last year, and the most gross violation of it was established that was to be found in any Legislature in the world. The Committee on Trade and Manufactures laid down the principle that machinery should not be imported free of duty, and yet a large majority of the House, he alone sitting in opposition, allowed one individual to introduce his machinery free of duty and even allowed him an exemption of the property he was importing for manufacture. There was on the other hand an individual who was born in the country and who had given the country the benefit of his talents and enterprise in building up a large establishment but whose application to get a remission of his duties was positively refused. Unless principles were abided by, therefore, the less that was said about them the better; no one regarded the establishment of a principle as of more consequence than he, but partial legislation was a violation of duty on the part of the House that ought not to be sustained.

MR. PRYOR said that the right of a subject to petition the legislature was always regarded as a most sacred one and he should much regret this memorial being thrown out without a hearing. It might be referred to the Committee on Railways, and if it were found that the applicant had no claim for compensation the decision of the House could be framed accordingly, but it would be most unwise to reject a petition approaching the House in a respectful manner and setting forth a grievance.

MR. ARCHIBALD said that he did not oppose a reference to Committee. He was sorry to hear gentlemen charged with want of principle, and, however applicable the accusation might be to the government side of the house, he thought it should not be so universally applied by a member who himself seemed most anxious that the course taken should be such as to bring the house into the category described. Whatever action was taken in this instance would have to be taken in every other instance of the kind, and therefore he had felt it his duty to give a caution against the adoption of a principle. He was not sure that a person carrying the public mails for a length of time, and performing his duty well, had not a fair claim for compensation when the government, from motives of public policy, extended the line of railway.

MR. LONGLEY said he thought that most members would have some difficulty in seeing upon what principles the claim was founded or could be sustained. He was not aware of any circumstances that gave to these individuals a right to ask compensation for an interference with their arrangement caused by an undertaking such as the tram-road. They had purchased two or three omnibuses, but not under any special conditions, and they ran the same risk in purchasing stock for such an enterprise as Messrs. King or Hyde did in purchasing property to the value of thousands of dollars on the stage lines in connection with which those persons would probably suffer a severe loss on the completion of the Railways. He thought the soundest policy would be to reject petitions which it would be inconvenient

to respond to in the way expected by those submitting them. There was no doubt that the Messrs. Conlon would find some means of disposing of their stock, and at any rate the house was under no obligation in the matter. He would be the first to favor the petitioners in any way in his power, knowing them to be truly deserving and worthy persons, and was as anxious as any member to respond favourably to their memorial, but he felt confident that no one could make out a case for them in this particular.

HON. ATTY GEN said that it did not seem to him that the principle referred to was to such an extent involved, and he thought that each case must rest on its merits without its favourable consideration opening such a door as had been mentioned. The circumstances under which this claim was made seemed peculiar,—the Conlons being the parties who had, in fact, extended the railway operations into the heart of the city; and without knowing any of the particulars connected with the origin of their business he thought them entitled, in the first place, to a hearing; and if on that hearing they established their claim, the House should not shut its ears to any proposition of recompense. The Committee could enquire whether there was anything to take the case out of the general rule that private interests should yield to the public requirements, and it was time enough, when the house heard the facts, to give judgment.

The petition was referred to the Committee on Railways.

#### HARBORS IN RICHMOND.

HON. PROV. SECRETARY laid on the table a Report of Mr. McNab, C. E., on the deepening of certain harbors in Richmond County.

MR. LOCKE said that the House was often told how little was being done for Cape Breton; but it was seen that the greater part of the time of the house was occupied with the business of that part of the country, and now they were asking to have a harbor made in the middle of the Island.

MR. MILLER replied that the time of the house could not be better occupied than in paying attention to the wants and rights of the Island. He thanked the government for the promptness with which they had attended to the petitions of his constituents in this instance, and expressed himself gratified to find that the opening and rendering navigable of the two principal harbors mentioned in the report would be so feasible at so small a cost. As to the first, Grand River, even the hon. member for Shelburne, if he visited that flourishing locality, would be the first to rise and advocate the opening of the harbour. It was situated about fifteen miles from St. Peter's, and there was not a harbor of any description fit for the accommodation of the smallest class of vessels in the vicinity although it was a place of resort for fishing and several other purposes. Not only was Grand River valuable as a fishing reserve, but it was one of the finest agricultural districts in Cape Breton, and its usefulness and prosperity were much retarded by the want of any means of getting produce to market. He was also happy to find the engineer speaking as he had of this harbour, and thought that money could not be more advantageously expended than in adopting his suggestions. Whenever the lead-