

unwavering opposition. In 1864 he moved a resolution which was to be found in the journals, embodying the grounds on which he based his opposition. During the last Session he also felt it his duty to give the Act referred to his strong opposition. However the policy was adopted by a large majority, which the Government was now carrying out. He might considerably annoy the Government by moving amendments, but he felt that with the majority they had at their back no practical or useful result could accrue; and his only course was to submit to what had been done as the deliberate act of the House. He had performed what he believed was his duty, and it was now hardly legitimate for him to oppose a measure which had taken place in consequence of the legislation of the House. But there was another reason which influenced him to pursue his present course; and that was, the fact of the absence of many gentlemen who ought to be present. In the first place the three members for Yarmouth had not come up, and they might be reasonably supposed to be opposed to all railways. Four representatives of Cape Breton—one from each county—were also absent. In view of the absence of so many gentlemen who might be expected to oppose the bill, it was idle to offer any opposition. He would add that he had never opposed this measure from sectional motives—from any hostility to the western counties. If any measure was submitted to the legislature, in which the interests of this section could be promoted, without jeopardizing those of the larger portion of Nova Scotia, he would be always ready to support it. He did not believe, however, that the benefits expected from this road would accrue, whilst it decidedly did not confer any advantage whatever on the more remote sections of the province. In a very short time, at least \$500,000 would have to be paid by little Nova Scotia in the shape of railway interest. In view of the fact that our trade relations would be disturbed by the abrogation of the reciprocity treaty, was it not the part of wisdom for the Government to hesitate before incurring such heavy obligations, and involving the country so deeply? He trusted that the sanguine anticipations of gentlemen would be realized, and that the grants for such necessary services as roads, and bridges, and education would not have to be cut down in the future to very small amounts, in consequence of the policy that the Government and House are pursuing.

Mr. McLELAN thought that the Government should hardly ask the House to pass such an Act without having some security of the character of the work that is to be built. The Province was giving the Company something like £300,000 as a bonus to build the road, and considering the character of the country over which the line would pass—72 miles of it being of no higher grade than 20 feet in the mile, and the other portion nearly a dead level—it was not impossible that it could be constructed for this amount. Was there not sufficient inducement for the Company to slight the work in the commencement, and then sell out of it. The Attorney General had said that this road was to be a continuation of the Railways already built. Might not the street Railway in course of construction in Halifax be called just as truly a continuation of the Provincial Road at

Richmond? Might not the Company propose to build a kind of tramway a little superior to the one in Halifax? It was probable from the fact that they had dispensed with the smaller rails, they would have no sleepers, and would construct a road of the character he had intimated.

Mr. ARCHIBALD repeated his belief that the character of the road should have been fixed. The whole argument of the Attorney General had gone to show that the gentleman in question were acting in good faith. "If, then, they were going to build us a good railway, what reason was there for not specifying it?" Under the terms of the present contract it was perfectly possible for this Company to walk eventually out of the whole affair, and throw upon their successors the burthen of the work. He did not mean to say they would do so, but what he felt was, that the Government had not exercised that amount of discretion that should have been expected of them.

Mr. LOCKE said, that as the contract had been entered into by the Government, it was useless to raise any argument against the terms. It was only left for gentlemen to put what faith they could in the Government. Although the act was passed last session, he believed that the Government had been too hasty; they should have waited and seen what would be the consequences of the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, before incurring any heavy liabilities. No one could deny, that the Railway would be merely a right of way for the people of Annapolis; it could be of no benefit to the other and larger sections of the Province.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL said that he was glad to see that the hon. member had been forced to yield to circumstances. Now it was well known that hints had been frequently thrown out that the Government did not intend to build the railway at all; and that their integrity and good faith were at stake. They were therefore bound as soon as the Legislature gave them power to redeem the pledges they had given for the construction of the work. He had given a good deal of consideration to the subject of the reciprocity treaty, and had come to the conclusion that the loss to the revenue would not be as great as some seemed to fear it would be. Looking at the character of the exports of the country—at the development of our resources—at the vitality exhibited in all branches of trade—at the prospect for new channels for commerce being opened up—he saw no cause for any apprehension whatever.

Mr. LOCKE asked if the Government were prepared to say that the country could for the next two years bear half a million of dollars interest on the railways, and still provide sufficiently for the other public services in which the people felt so deep an interest. He had attempted last session to get a small sum of 30 or £40,000 to connect Shelburne with Annapolis, but to no purpose. Steam communication was much wanted along our coast. But who could say when the country would now have it after the large obligations that were being incurred for railway enterprises.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL replied that the Government had given the subject the full consideration and had come to the opinion that the province was well able to undertake the responsibility imposed upon it.