

HON. MR. ABBOTT—The cost of that bridge is not computed in this grant, but the Government contemplate an arrangement to allow the railway to run over that bridge.

HON. MR. MILLER—Do the surveys show that by using that bridge 27 miles can be saved?

HON. MR. ABBOTT—Yes; that is the statement.

HON. MR. MILLER—Seventeen is the outside.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I know that my hon. friend, and a good many hon. gentlemen have heard a great many statements about the length of this line, its cost and its character, and all the particulars of it; but I have been inquiring into it myself, with a view of giving to the House exact information on all these points, as far as it can be got, and I have satisfied myself that—unless somebody connected with the Railway Department is stating what he knows to be absolutely false—I am giving to the House the exact particulars of what is going to be done. I have the maps here, and the report of the engineers. I have had Mr. Schreiber with me, and discussed all these points with him exhaustively, and what I am quoting from is the note I made during the interview of the statements he made to me. He showed me what satisfied me, in various ways, that at all events it was to the best of the judgment of Mr. Schreiber and his two engineers that these figures have been made, and I know that they are correct, and there will be a saving of twenty-seven miles. The cost of the road is estimated by Mr. Schreiber and by his engineers at \$16,000 per mile. Of course, hon. gentlemen will understand there has been a sort of preliminary agreement between the Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway as to the running of this road. If this line should be built they undertake by this agreement to keep it in repair, to equip it and to run it during these twenty years—in fact, forever; but from the end of the twenty years of course the interest of the Government will cease in it. At the end of the twenty years the company will pay in the future, as a rental for that

piece of road, \$73,400, which I understand to be just \$10,000 more than the subsidy which is at present appropriated to the road; that is, the additional \$10,000 is agreed upon, I suppose, with a view of covering the interest upon any unexpected increase in the cost of the road. The equipment of the road will cost the Government nothing. The repairing of it and equipment of it will be done by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, if the agreement is approved by Parliament. It has not been laid before the House yet, and it is of no value until it is approved. That is the understanding with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company—at the end of twenty years they shall pay \$73,400 a year, in perpetuity, for the use of this section of the road, and will run it and keep it in order. As to this \$16,000 a mile, I have heard the wildest statements made with reference to the cost of the road, I have stated what the engineers have told me as to the results of their calculations and measurements, that it will not cost more than the amount I have stated, and I think it may be fairly retorted to gentlemen who speak of \$30,000 a mile that they have not made a survey—that they have not even made such a preliminary survey as these engineers have made, and however wise and clever they may be in other respects, they are not so competent to form an estimate of what this road will cost as the men who have gone over it, surveyed it, measured it and made plans and profiles of it. I think, therefore, any one who is disposed to give the Government credit for good faith in the matter, and to give the Government officials credit for having stated what is true, and not wilfully deceiving the country and the House, will attach more importance to the estimate which they make than they will to the mere conjectures and guesses of gentlemen who say: “Well, this is a rough country, and it must cost more than \$16,000 a mile to build this road.” In confirmation of what I say I may state that the Fredericton Branch Company have offered to undertake the contract of building the road for \$16,000 a mile, which is the estimate made by Mr. Schreiber; and Mr. Schreiber told me, within the last couple of hours, that he had very carefully gone over the whole