

founded—which they are not—they themselves in their Report give a complete reply to them all when they say :—

“The Sub-Committee fully understand that any legal or moral obligation arising under an Act of Parliament can in no way be affected by any consideration as to whether the legislation in question was generally approved or otherwise. Any obligation assumed by the Dominion is recognised as fully binding upon the country irrespective of the numbers supporting or opposing it.”

I therefore dismiss the matters referred to by the above quotation.

In dealing with questions of fact I am also compelled to notice a paragraph in the Report of the Sub-Committee, in which it says :—

“It is alleged by the representative of the Company that in 1894 they made application to the then Premier of Canada, Sir John Thompson, for a further extension of time, but that he replied it was too late in the Session to consider the question.”

From the use of the word “alleged” it might be supposed that the representative of the Company (namely, myself) had made a totally unsupported statement. Here are the two telegrams which passed, and copies of both are in Ottawa :—

London, 28th June, 1894.

“To the Right Hon. Sir John Thompson, Ottawa.

“We have now secured the capital to complete the Chignecto Railway and have settled with first-class firm of contractors to commence the works immediately if we receive an extension of time sufficient to complete them, say two years, for which I now apply on behalf of the Company.

“A. D. PROVAND.”

to which within a day or two I received the following reply :—

“Provand, London.

“Your telegram twenty-eighth, impossible to consider project this stage of Session.

“THOMPSON.”

Another statement in the Report also requires correction. To re-enact the Company's charter and subsidy, two Bills are necessary—a private Bill for the charter and a Government Bill for the subsidy. To renew the charter a Bill was brought forward in the House in 1896, but by a mistake of the draughtsman, it included a provision touching the subsidy question and was in consequence withdrawn and a correct Bill substituted. The Sub-Committee's Report (see page 21) refers to the two Bills and states that the second Bill was also withdrawn. This was not the case. The Bill was placed on the order paper by a vote of the House on the 27th March, 1896, was read a first time and remained there until the prorogation of Parliament took place on the 22nd April, no opportunity having arisen for its further consideration on account of the debates which took place on Bills which preceded it. Had the Session of Parliament not expired as above the Bill would have come on in its turn for Second Reading.