

agriculture as if there had been carriage roads, or as they might have done in the more civilized parts of the country. But that is no reason to throw discredit on the efforts made in those days; on the contrary, it is a reason to praise the efforts made by the missionaries and by the other pioneers of colonization in the Saguenay district. This question of the Saguenay cannot be a party question; it is a question that interests all the inhabitants of the country, whether we belong to the right or the left; and, consequently, in answering the hon. member for Chicoutimi upon this question, I must not consider it as a party question. The Lake St. John Railway, of which the hon. member has just spoken more particularly, is an undertaking that has a future before it, and I am satisfied that as the North Shore Railway, now called the Occidental, took over twenty years before it was finished, the Lake St. John Railway will also have its terminus, and that it will arrive at Lake St. John, as the North Shore Road has arrived at Ottawa. But if railway enterprises have all had their difficulties, the Lake St. John Railway has had advantages that the North Shore Railway has not had, because we have seen capitalists put their capital into it, in order to construct a part of it in the direction of what is called Lake Edward, which is on the line of the Lake St. John Railway. Now the hon. gentleman wishes to know whether the Government propose, or are now able to help this road. The question has already come under the notice of the Government, and the Government are not in a position to solve the difficulty at present. We have necessarily been absorbed with the great question of the Pacific Railway, which has also occupied Parliament, and we have been obliged to put to one side important questions, of which this is one, to devote ourselves to the great national question. Now to what extent we shall be able to help local lines—for their construction is a local undertaking on account of the services that are necessarily expected from them—is a question that has not yet been decided upon by the Government; and the hon. member cannot expect to have an answer upon a question of this kind in the absence of the hon. Minister of Railways, who, I regret to say, is very ill to-day. As to the other works alluded to by the hon. member, the works suggested by a missionary some time ago, I am convinced that the hon. member will have nothing to find fault with if I ask him to wait twenty-four hours for the answer. The Estimates will be placed upon the Table to-morrow, as I had the honor of informing the House last Friday, and the hon. member will see by the Estimates what we can bring down. If he does not find all he has asked for, he will have to wait, not twenty-four hours, but twelve months. I must congratulate the hon. member upon the researches he has made with regard to the Saguenay. His speech certainly does him great credit and will remain in *Hansard* as a monument of his work, and, at the same time, it will prove of great worth to all those who wish to make themselves acquainted with the progress of the Saguenay.

Mr. LAURIER. Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that the hon. Minister of Public Works, and also the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. Landry), have quite misunderstood the remarks of my hon. friend the member for L'Islet (Mr. Casgrain). In speaking as he did, the hon. member for L'Islet had not the intention of depreciating the merit of any one of those who have taken part in the colonization of the Saguenay. On the contrary, it would be unbecoming of any man to entertain such an idea of any one. When the hon. member for L'Islet spoke as he did; when he said that financial disaster had accompanied the efforts of Mr. Hébert, I did not understand—and I am convinced that such was not his intention—that he wished to depreciate the efforts that had been made, but that he only desired to show what had been the difficulties of the undertaking. The hon. member for L'Islet had only the

Mr. LANGEVIN.

intention of remarking that the hon. member for Chicoutimi (Mr. Cimon) had made a quite involuntary omission, and that this omission was that he had forgotten to mention, among the promoters of colonization of the Saguenay, one of those who had contributed the most to its development, namely the Hon. Mr. Price; and the hon. member for Chicoutimi will himself admit that this gentleman was one of the first promoters of the colonization of the Saguenay. Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to say with regard to the merit of the question now under discussion. The hon. member for Chicoutimi will allow me to say, however, in all sincerity, that he has set forth the situation with a skill and with researches that do him credit. I think, however, that his work would have been more complete and more meritorious if he had refrained from speaking of the former Government, of the Liberal Government, with such bitterness. As the hon. Minister of Public Works remarked, this question is not a party question, it is a question that interests the whole Province of Quebec; it is not even a question of races, it is not even a question of nationalities, it is a question that interests all the inhabitants of the Province of Quebec; and I can state that upon this point the interests of the Province are identical with those of the Dominion, because it is in the interest of the Dominion that all the parts of this country that are fit for colonization should be colonized with the least possible delay. The valley of Lake St. John is evidently fit for colonization, according to the information laid before this House by the hon. member for Chicoutimi, and that is enough to make of this question a national question in the largest sense of the word. It would have been better, in my humble opinion, if the hon. member had spoken less bitterly of the former Government. The former Government would have been as happy as the present Government to have been able to help the work that the hon. member for Chicoutimi desires so heartily to carry out, but there are, now, obstacles in the way of the present Government, and I speak of this question without any reference to party, for I know that there are obstacles, and everybody must know that there are, in spite of the desire that the Government may have to aid the road. These obstacles existed before, and with much more force under the former Government, because now the country is delivered from the financial crisis that existed when the former Government was in power. For my part, I do not hope for a solution of this question this year. The hon. Minister of Public Works has put off the hopes of the hon. member for Chicoutimi another twelve months; I should be happy if those hopes were to be realized twelve months hence. At all events, I would advise him to be patient, and to repeat the well known words: "Knock and it shall be opened unto you; ask and you shall receive." I think the hon. member should renew his request, not only this year, but next year, and that even then he will not obtain what he now asks for.

Mr. VALLÉE. Mr. Speaker, as seconder of this motion I will add a few words to the eloquent remarks made by the hon. member for Chicoutimi. I have already expressed, on the floor of this House, my opinion upon the question now under discussion. I always understood that the great obstacle in the way of the Government was, as the hon. Minister of Public Works has remarked, that the road was a local rather than a Federal road. Sir, when the Company asked me to raise my voice in this House in favor of this road, I understood that it was a serious obstacle, for here our principal duty is to look after questions respecting the whole Dominion as Federal questions. When, for the first time, the Quebec and Lake St. John railway was spoken of in this House, I must admit that it was a purely local question, and we were perhaps wrong in bringing it before this House, and especially to urge upon the Federal Government to grant us a subsidy. But now the situation is chan-