

casion ; but I wish to say a few words as to the desirability of passing this Bill in its present form. As to some portions of the Bill I have nothing to say. One part of it deals with a road between Montreal and Quebec, north of the St. Lawrence. About that I have nothing to say. The only portion to which I wish to refer relates to the so-called "short line," and the point I wish to make is that the Government, in inserting in this Bill a provision for a certain line, have acted prematurely in fixing the route. I do not propose to argue that question at any length, lest it might be supposed that I was speaking without good authority on that point. I wish to quote an authority that I look upon as being as good as any in the Dominion of Canada. I quote from the speech of the hon. member from Grenville in the other Chamber. That gentleman, I think, is recognized as being at the head of his profession in this country ; he is also recognized as being an independent, honorable man, and further, he is a very decided supporter of the Government, having been elected only the other day as their candidate. I shall quote from the official report of the Debates in the House of Commons. There I find that Mr. Shanly is reported to have said amongst other things :—

"I am entirely unable to form any opinion respecting what may be called the engineering merits of the two lines."

HON. MR. PLUMB—Hear, hear.

HON. MR. POWER—That is the line selected by the Government, and another line favored by a number of gentlemen, more especially from the Province of Quebec, called the Combination Line. Mr. Shanly continues :—

"I am on general principles in favor of a thorough and complete examination, for I know that vast sums of money have been wasted in various public works of this country and elsewhere by not making complete examination."

Then he goes on to say that he had read the previous debate on the matter, and he concluded his remarks in this way :—

"As regards the plans and surveys and everything else, I say there is nothing before us which would enable any engineer decidedly to state that one line is a better line than the

other ; and therefore it is that I rise not to discuss the merits of the line ; but I feel I would be neglecting my duty, I would be false to my friendship, if I were to fail to rise and justify my friend who had not an opportunity of defending himself. And sir, because I think there is not sufficient information before us to enable us to judge as to the comparative merits of these lines I shall act upon that opinion and support the amendment."

The amendment was asking for further surveys. He adds :

"I have nothing further to say than this, that the proper course is to make a complete and thorough survey of the line before any subsidy is voted."

Now I think, appealing to the members of this House, I should be quite safe in resting my case simply on that declaration of a man who is probably the highest authority in his profession in this country. Fortified by that declaration of opinion I have no hesitation in saying that the Government are not justified in selecting the route which they have chosen, the route by Moosehead Lake and Mattawamkeag. I do not propose to enter upon any debateable ground as to distance. I simply take the authority of the report made by the chief engineer of railways and the figures given by his subordinates. Now, hon. gentlemen, I may first explain what the Combination line is. The Combination line is a line which would run from Salisbury, in New Brunswick, a station on the Intercolonial Railway some thirteen miles from Moncton, to Fredericton, and from Fredericton *via* Canterbury to the north end of Chesuncook Lake. When you get as far west as Chesuncook Lake, instead of going directly to Richmond, or instead of simply going to Quebec, or to the eastern end of the International Railway, there are two branches to this line. One runs up by the Etchemin to Chaudiere Junction near Quebec, and the other line runs north of Moose Head Lake to the east end of the International Railway. A great deal was said in the other Chamber as to the comparative merits of the northern branch of this line—that is the line running up to Chaudiere Junction from Chesuncook—and the southern line generally known as the Pope line. I shall not enter into that controversy, because hon. gentlemen here are probably quite as familiar with its merits as I