

# Nictaux and Atlantic Central Railway.

WEEKLY MONITOR SUPPLEMENT.

NICTAUX, May 12th, 1880.

A large and influential meeting of the inhabitants of East Annapolis was held today in the Nictaux Academy, which was filled to its utmost capacity with the solid men of Nictaux, Middleton, Albany, Springfield and New Germany.

The meeting was organized by the appointment of Thomas Banks, Esq., to the Chair; Dr. S. N. Miller was appointed Secretary.

After a few sensible introductory remarks by the Chairman, it was resolved, on motion of C. W. Shafner, Esq., seconded by Thomas G. Stearns, Esq., that each speaker should be limited to thirty minutes in addressing the meeting.

Mr. STEARNS, the President of the N. & A. C. R., was then called upon, who gave a sketch of the difficulties under which he has labored since the commencement of the railway, and in particular the trouble he has had, and is now having, in his endeavors to obtain an extension of time, in order to enable him to complete the road. He gave a full account of his several interviews with the Government, and of all the objections raised by the latter, and of all the restrictions imposed by them, which he maintained were sufficient to prevent the investment of capital in the enterprise, and in short to put a final stop to the building of the road. Mr. Stearns then stated that he had secured a syndicate of New York Bankers to finish the road, providing arrangements could be made on favorable terms with the Government for an extension of time, and showed that he had given ample security to the Government, not only for the completion of the road, but for its efficient operation afterwards. He stated also that he never has made, and never intended to make a cent out of the railway—his object being to have it constructed, as an aid to the efficient carrying out of Iron mining operations, and for the benefit of the Province, by opening up a fine section of country, the value of which, he said, was almost entirely unknown, outside of the Counties of Lunenburg and Annapolis. He then read the propositions made to him by the Government, which were as follows:—

*Provincial Secretary's Office, March 21, '80.*

1st. The payment by the company of the above mentioned awards, and all other debts due on the road, including the right of way.

2nd. The Government to be allowed to retain 50 per cent. of the accruing subsidy until the road is fully finished, and then to have first lien on the road for the full amount of the subsidy.

3rd. That the Province shall be at liberty to take the road at any time at a valuation from which shall be deducted the amount of subsidy paid.

4th. The road and its equipments to be kept free from all encumbrances and all mortgage bonds heretofore issued to be cancelled.

5th. In case of the failure of the company to fulfil its contract, or to operate the road after it is finished, then the road with all its equipments to revert to the Government.

Such proposals Mr. Stearns believed would not for one moment be entertained by capitalists, and unless a considerable modification of said terms were obtained, the road could not be completed.

C. W. SHAFNER, Esq., M. P. P., next addressed the meeting and stated that as his constituents wished him to use his influence with the Government, to obtain the extension of time, he would do so, but he first wanted Mr. Stearns to promise to see that all back claims were paid before resuming work, which Mr. Stearns immediately promised should be done. He (Mr. Shafner) also said that the Government required new securities for the fulfilment of the contract, and said that the bond now held by the Government (signed by about seventy-five of the wealthiest inhabitants of the County of Lunenburg) was not worth the paper upon which it was written, and "was about as valuable as a last year's newspaper." When asked by one of the audience why it was not good, Mr. Shafner could not answer. He thought that the previous Government had made a bad bargain with the railway company.—It was the duty of the present one to alter and amend it, or to make an entirely new one before the work should be re-commenced. He was "not inclined to ask the Government to grant an extension of time on so loose a charter as the old one; but he was willing to abide by the instructions given him by his constituents."

Hon. W. B. TROOP was then requested to address the meeting, and he at once commenced a defence of the action of the Government, in relation to the railway, characterized the former operations on the road as a swindle, and stated that the Government had imposed restrictions, and proposed terms to Mr. Stearns in order to make the company honest. He also said that the said terms were not like the laws of the Medes and Persians, that they (the laws) could and would be modified.

Mr. Troop's attention was then called to the final letter of the Provincial Secretary to Mr. Stearns, which affirmed that the Government would adhere to the terms of the memorandum of the 31st March, and he was asked to explain the discrepancy between that letter and his own statement, which he probably had not time to do before the adjournment of the meeting. Mr. Troop was then asked if he did not know that it was the settled determination of the Government, of which he is a member, to prevent the completion of the road. Mr. Troop declined to answer the question, and said that his oath of office precluded him from divulging the secrets of the Government. His attention was then called to a report that he (Mr. Troop) had boasted in the western end of the County, that he had succeeded in quashing the railway. Mr. Troop denied that he had said anything of the kind. Mr. Troop gave the meeting to understand that he was not opposed to the building of the road. He was then asked why he did not advocate its cause as did Messrs. Shafner, Smith and Ford in the House of Assembly if he were in favor of the enterprise. His reply was to the effect that, in his position as a member of the Government it would not become him to do so. Mr. Troop had probably forgotten that he had, in his place in the House, last session strongly advocated the re-establishment of a steam Ferry across the river at Annapolis, and he hoped the Government would favorably consider the matter, and "not take it out in considering." He could quite as consistently have advocated the Nictaux Railway cause as that of the Ferry. Mr. Troop was followed by several speakers who maintained that the terms proposed by the Government were apparently an endeavor to prevent the resumption of the work, and that this County wanted to know whether the Government was in reality opposed to the building of the railroad or not.

Mr. JOHN McLEOD thought that if Mr. Troop was in favor of the completion of the road, he should not retain his seat in a Government which was so opposed to the interests of his constituents.

Mr. SAUNDERS wanted to know what right the present Government had to withdraw the subsidy which was a free gift to aid the Company in building the road. It looked to him like what is generally called an Indian gift.

W. BEDFORD was then called upon and gave a clear and lucid history of the road, and of all the operations thereon, and of the difficulties under which the President continually labored from the commencement. He quoted Mr. Murphy's report to prove that the work already done was substantial, and corrected several statements by Mr. Troop and Mr. Shafner, in particular the statement of the former gentlemen, that about \$11,000 worth of sleepers which the company had purchased were yet unpaid for, and stated that if any debt still remained on the sleepers, it could not be more than a few hundred dollars. He said that Mr. Best came here as the Assignee only of Walker, Clarke & Roberts, and that he (Mr. Best) was not introduced to the Government by Mr. Stearns at all, that the Government allowed Mr. Best to go on with the work upon their own responsibility, independent entirely of Mr. Stearns. He said that, on behalf of the company, he had interviewed the Provincial Secretary, Mr. Holmes, and offered to give him the names of the parties who were now prepared to go on with the work, and informed Mr. Holmes that the Mercantile Agency would give him the standing of such capitalists in New York. Mr. Holmes, in replying, informed him that, that was a secondary consideration, that the company must first agree to the terms proposed by the Government, after which the government would enquire the standing of the said parties. Regarding the security given to the Government, he thought that the names of the parties who signed the bond, would be ample security on any paper whatever, as they, these said bondsmen, represented property to the amount of one and quarter million of dollars.

Mr. BEDFORD said he believed that the contractors who have now consented to finish the road would not, nor could they be expected to pay the bills of the former contractors unless they had a guarantee that they would be allowed to go on with the work. Referring to Mr. Troop's statement of what he owed, and that the accounts not already certified did not amount to much more than \$500 so that adjustment need not take two days. He proved that the terms offered to the Eastern Extension Company were much easier than the terms proposed to Nictaux & Atlantic Company—Mr. Troop's assertion to contrary notwithstanding.—Mr. Bedford's speech was a clear exposition of the position in which the railroad now stands, and of its relation to the Government, and on concluding was loudly applauded.

Mr. D. FRIENDAL of Middleton said the object of this meeting was, if possible, to

endeavour, to get the government and the railroad company to pull together, hitherto they show to have been pulling apart. He thanked Mr. Bedford for having so fully explained matters, and said: "We want the road" and thought the government should grant the required extension of time. He concluded by moving the following resolution which was seconded by T. C. Wheelock, Esq.

*Whereas*.—It is of great importance to the inhabitants of this County that the Nova Scotia, Nictaux & Atlantic Central Railway should be completed as soon as possible. *And whereas* in order to the completion of their said Railway it is absolutely necessary, that Mr. Stearns, the President thereof, should be allowed an extension of time sufficient to enable him to complete the work. *And whereas* we the people of Annapolis consider that the restrictions placed on the Company, and the propositions offered and adhered to by the Government, are vexatious and annoying, and intended not only to delay, but to put a final stop to the enterprise.

*Therefore Resolved*.—That the Government be requested and expected to grant such extension of time, as may be necessary to have the road completed at an early day, and on such terms, as will enable the promoters of the road to obtain the required capital for the purpose. Mr. Stearns agreeing to pay all just claims before resuming work.

The above resolution was enthusiastically received and passed unanimously.

Mr. Troop then said that the passing of that resolution placed him in a different position, and he would now do his best for the road.

O. M. TAYLOR, Esq., then addressed the meeting, said he was not one of the disappointed ones—did not expect anything better of the present Government. Thought that the exaction of the payment of right of way, by the Government, from the company was absurd, said that after the passing of the resolutions, our representatives could have no excuse for not pressing the extension of time on the consideration of the Government.

Mr. STODDARD said he thought, on seeing the conditions imposed by the Government upon the company, that we, the people, should take some action on the matter. He considered the restrictions very unfair. Thought the completion of the road of great importance to the southern portion of this county, and the adjoining county of Lunenburg. Thought that the payment of the back bills, and the retention of 50 per cent of the subsidy in the hands of the Government sufficient security.

Mr. HALLIDAY, of Wolfville, said the Nictaux Railway is not a mere local enterprise, it was calculated to benefit the whole Province. As an inhabitant of Kings County he could consistently advocate the completion of the road, and heartily sympathized with the people of Annapolis and Lunenburg in their endeavours to obtain it.

As some of the audience thought it would be well to give an expression of opinion, respecting payment of the right of way, the Secretary, Dr. Miller, moved the following resolution, which was seconded by C. W. Shafner, Esq., and passed unanimously:

*Whereas*.—A question having arisen as to whether the Government or the Company is bound to pay the right of way for the Railway.

*Resolved*.—That this meeting believes that the County will be perfectly willing to pay for the right of way, if the road be completed, but that unless the road is finished, the County will certainly resist the payment thereof.

The meeting was ably conducted by the Chairman, who several times addressed some very pertinent remarks to the audience. When Mr. Troop had said that the Government had now got Mr. Stearns in a position where they could hold him, the Chairman said that when he had a horse or calf to hold he managed to so place the halter on him as would give him complete control over the animal, but he did not believe in drawing it so tight as to choke him.

A vote of thanks was then given the Chairman, and the meeting dispersed.

THE HYDE ESTATES.—It may be of interest to the claimants in this city and Province to these estates to know that the Hyde Association of New York has decided to postpone the bringing of "a suit of discovery," as recommended by the ex-Governor Arny, to ascertain what money there is in the Bank of England belonging to them in Great Britain and America, until additional trustees are chosen. Ex-Governor Arny gives it as his belief that this delay will be fatal, and concludes to bring suit in his own name, and to associate with him all persons who may desire to participate, and who can furnish perfect genealogies within a month from this date. He says communications can be addressed to him up to June 1st next, at Santa Fe, New Mexico. He will leave this week for New Mexico, and expects to return to sail in the Inman line of steamers in the early part of June.—Ez.