

THE EXAMINER EXTRA.

Charlottetown, Monday, March 27, 1871.

The Examiner]

DEBATES OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

(Continued from first page of this week's Examiner.)

SPEECH OF HONORABLE J. C. POPE ON THE RAILWAY QUESTION.

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT regarded the paragraph just read, as the most important in the draft address, and hoped that it would be discussed without referring to education, or other questions to which it made no reference. In listening to the hon. member for St. Peter's, he (Hon. Leader of the Government) could not but notice, that nothing brought hon. gentlemen so readily to their feet, as a question which was likely to result in spending money in their respective districts. His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, in his opening speech, informed the Legislature that the facilities for the transport and shipment of the products of the country were inadequate, and he believed that hon. Committee would readily admit the correctness and truth of what His Honor had said. They knew that the amount of produce raised in the country was rapidly increasing. He did not know of any country which, in proportion to its area and population, exported as much as Prince Edward Island did. The difficulty of getting the produce raised, to market, was annually becoming greater. The question is how could that difficulty be best met and overcome? The late Government imported a Stone Crusher, and had commenced to macadamize their roads, and deserved credit for what it did, but the process was slow, and could not meet the increasing wants of the country. Macadamizing a road within two miles of Charlottetown, now costs £2000 a mile, and further in the country, it would cost a much larger sum. Every year the farmer and shipper found these difficulties increasing, but the burden of the loss had to be borne by the producer. Vessels were detained four or five weeks in loading, and frequently the first part of the cargo became heated before the last was received. This, added to the risk and cost which he had to take into account, had prevented him from giving as high a price as he would have been able to do, if these difficulties had not to be contended with. The steam Crasher had been in operation for two years, and at the rate at which, by its means, roads were being macadamized, more than a century would elapse before the chief lines of roads in the country would be macadamized. The inhabitants of Crapaud were desirous of having some of their roads macadamized, but he honestly believed that if they calmly pondered over the whole question, they would come to the conclusion that their best remedy lay in the construction of a Trunk Railway, from which ultimately branches would be extended to several parts of the country. He would, however, observe first, that in connection with a Railway, the importation of a Steam Dredging Machine, merited the favorable consideration of that Committee, as better wharf accommodation, in several places, had become a question which could not be longer left unrequited. At Summerside, twelve or fifteen large vessels would be there at one time, and the wharf accommodation was quite inadequate to the demand. Timber, for the building of wharves, was becoming more difficult to be had, and hence, to build a block to the one at that port, would cost from £1000 to £5000, and, to a greater or less extent, the same was true of other parts of the country. He believed, therefore, that it would be cheaper, and much more profitable, to have the ground dredged in front of them, and to have the present wharves, in many parts of the Island, than to go on extending them farther out, and that when others would yet have to be built, it would be much better to dredge in front of them for some distance, than to build them out to the edge of the channel. He hoped that, if the Government included in the estimates a sum for a steam Dredging Machine, no objection would be taken, especially as no private individual seemed disposed to embark in such a speculation. With respect to the construction of a Railway, he would observe, that in all countries where Railways had been built, they met at first with violent opposition. The celebrated George Stephenson had been denounced as a madman, when he first urged the question upon the attention of his countrymen, but relying upon the correctness of the opinion he had formed, and the benefits such a work would confer, he pressed forward with undaunted perseverance, and they all knew how signal was his success. The receipts from the first Road built in England, from Liverpool to Manchester, the first year, was £70,000; the second year double that amount was received, and the following year about half a million, while the sum received from passengers considerably exceeded that which was realized from freight. In England, Scotland, and Ireland, they were continually extending their lines of Railways, which they would not do if their construction was doing an injury. It was universally admitted that Railways afforded by 15 per cent., the cheapest mode of travelling. The Railroads of England had cost £500,000,000 stg., or £16 sterling for each man, woman and child in the country, yet notwithstanding that enormous cost, if any public man would arise at a public meeting in England, or even in a private company, to denounce them, they would be looked upon as a madman. Time and money were saved by their means. He (Hon. Leader of the Government) went often to England, and really did not know, as his time was always limited when there, how he could get through with his business but for them. The distance from Liverpool to London was 220 miles, yet he could leave Liverpool at five o'clock in the morning, arrive in London at half-past ten, which gave him the remainder of the day to attend

to his business. The benefits which result from these facilities in the saving of time and expense, beside the numerous other advantages they afforded were immense, and as business was then carried on in the commercial world, no country could possibly keep pace with the times, without her Railways. In the United States there were splendid navigable Rivers, and they had also some fine Canals, yet they had built thousands of miles of Railroads, and were constantly adding to them, and surely the experience of two such great countries as England and the United States, was worth something to them. Canada abounded with magnificent Lakes, Rivers, and Canals. No country had better facilities for inland water communication, yet Canada built, and was still building, important and long lines of Railway. The Grand Trunk Road cost the people of Canada \$16,000,000, and to avoid discussion, were they to assume that not one shilling of that money had, or even would come back, yet no money ever spent in that country did so much good, or conferred such a permanent benefit. Much had been said respecting the advantages which Reciprocity, during its continuance, with the United States, had conferred upon the people of Canada. But those benefits would have been very limited indeed, had they been confined to those of her people who alone could cart the products of their industry across the American line, Canada, however, was not in that position; but having her Railroads, which extended far and near, all portions of that country participated in advantages, which would only have been beneficial to a few without them. Railways removed the disadvantages attending the distance of remote places from important marts of business, equalized the commercial and other privileges of a country, and contributed to the more general prosperity of the whole people. Hence it was that inland, corporate towns frequently imposed a tax upon their citizens for their construction. Nova Scotia built a line first to Truro, then to Windsor, next to Pictou, and afterwards to Annapolis, and was contemplating extending a line along the Gulf Shore, which would bring Cape Breton within reach of it. In New Brunswick, when the question was first mooted by her public men, it was contended by many that such an undertaking would ruin that Province, and impoverish their people. But, once having enjoyed a public Railway, and participating in the benefits it conferred, that Province arose to extend them in all directions. He (Hon. Leader of the Gov't) was aware that some of these lines had been built by private companies, but the line from Shediac to Saint John was constructed by the Government, while the Western was subsidized to the extent of \$10,000 a mile. It had been argued that this was too small a country for a Railroad, but much smaller ones had built them. The Island of Mauritius was but 26 miles long, and 32 miles broad, yet her people had built a Railroad, at a cost of £1,200,000, sterling, although they had little in shape of freight to transport over it, except Guano and sugar. Why, if this Island was not to have those benefits which such facilities afforded to the people of other countries, if they had to continue to plod on without them. Where could they find a country which had so little waste land as is on P. E. Island? Take, for instance, that tract of country in New Brunswick, which extended from Shediac to St. John, four-fifths of which was not fit for cultivation. It was not so with them, for, wherever a line of Road would run, it would be found that the land on either side could be all brought with comparative ease, under cultivation, and much of it would be susceptible of the highest culture. Nor was there any country where a Road could be built so cheaply. In England a line of R.R. generally cost more than £30,000 sterling a mile; in New Brunswick, £13,000, and in Nova Scotia £14,000; but on this Island an offer had been made to build one for £5,000 per mile, on the narrow gauge principle, and that offer included rolling-stock, fuel, wharfs, station-houses, &c., all complete. Unquestionably, the reasons why Railroads in Great Britain, the United States, the Lower Provinces, and elsewhere, cost so much, was, in a great measure, owing to the breadth of the gauge, which greatly increased the cost of construction, rolling-stock, and of working. But the advantages of construction, were becoming so apparent, that public attention was being rapidly drawn to their benefits, and the importance of their general adaptation to all countries. They were doubtless to be the Railways of the future, in proof of which he would read the following:—

THE GAUGE OF THE RAILWAYS OF THE FUTURE.

Under this head Mr. R. F. Fairlie, one of the ablest of English engineers, publishes an important article in the Engineer for Sept. 23, in which he argues with great force and clearness, that "every inch added to the width of the gauge beyond what is absolutely necessary for the traffic, adds to the cost of construction, increases the proportion of dead weight, increases the cost and danger of working, and in consequence increases the tariffs of the public, and by so much reduces the usual average of railways;" and that, taking the average of the circumstances under which railways are built, "the cost will be found to vary nearly as the gauge." He asserts that English railways have been built in flagrant violation of these principles, and illustrates his argument in favor of narrower gauges by an analysis of the business of the London and Northwestern Railway, the good management of which is "universally admitted." He shows that "if the gauge of this road were 3 feet instead of 4 feet 8 1/2 inches, its goods traffic could be handled at half the present cost, with half the present motive power, and in such a way as to reduce the present tonnage by one half, and to remove the necessity for the heavy expense that is now being incurred in the construction of a third line of rails." The goods traffic on this road is estimated at ten million tons per annum, requiring seventy million tons of train weight to haul it, but in order to avoid all risk of exaggeration, Mr. Fairlie estimates the dead weight at forty million tons, and the whole gross weight hauled by the engines at fifty million tons, at an average speed of twenty-five miles an hour. The average distance traversed by each ton is about thirty-eight miles, at an average cost of 1 1/2 per ton. The cars employed average four tons in weight, and carry one ton for every mile run.

"The speed in each case up to forty miles per hour is assumed as being equal. The cars for a line of three feet gauge weigh each one

ton, and carry a maximum load of three tons. Supposing that the same number of cars and trains were run on the narrow as on the broad gauge, it follows that the average one of merchandise now carried could easily be taken in a car weighing one ton instead of four tons, and that the gross load passing over the line for one year would be only twenty million tons instead of fifty million, while the same amount of paying load would be carried in either case. The haulage cost being the same, whether the tons hauled consist of paying or non-paying loads, it follows that the expense would be reduced to two-fifths of what it now is. This does not include the enormous saving in wear and tear which would arise from hauling twenty million tons instead of fifty million. From the foregoing the fact is established that the 3 feet gauge can produce twenty-five millions net out of a gross tonnage of fifty millions, while the 4 feet 8 1/2 inch gauge, to produce the same result, would have to haul one hundred and twenty-five millions, and at a cost increased in the same proportion.

If Mr. Fairlie's conclusions are correct, and they seem to be, they are of great importance not only to this country, but to South America, Asia, and Australia—in fact, to all countries not fully supplied with railways. He claims that these indispensable adjuncts of commerce and intercommunication, instead of costing \$100,000 per mile, as they are in England, India, and the British Colonies, generally, "can be made cheaply and at the same time thoroughly efficient; and those who aver to the contrary are, in fact, enemies to progress and to civilization. There is no country too poor to have railways sufficient for its requirements, and railways furnish the cheapest and most reliable mode of transport when they are not borne down by the results of incompetence, and extravagance which we so often see associated together."

Such reasoning he (Hon. Leader of the Government) thought, from such a source, was conclusive in favor of a narrow gauge, which had been offered to be constructed for the sum stated, to which the Government would only have to add the cost of the land through which the road lay, and the salary of a competent engineer, as a guarantee for the faithful performance of the work, and the salaries of commissioners to superintend and manage the whole. Next that hon. Committee remembered, that when the line of road extending from Shediac to the coast near New Brunswick, and connect with the American lines; it was easy to perceive that the people in all parts of the Island would then be placed within less than two days communication with Boston, and have direct access to every part of the United States. He would reiterate that he knew of no country where a Railroad was more required. The large cities of the American Republic were becoming so crowded, that fully one and a half million—in fact all who could—left annually for a few weeks with their wives, children and servants, and generally came north to recruit their health, and he thought it not unreasonable to suppose that in a few years after the Railroad would be built, fully fifty thousand of those would find their way to this Island, each of whom would spend, perhaps, as much as ten pounds in the country; and that such would yet be the result, he did not doubt, for there was no place in America possessing more healthy, and pleasant watering places than were to be found all along the North Shore of the Island. Large hotels would be built in many parts of the country, and in those and a thousand other ways it would be found that markets would spring up where their products of the country could be sold to an advantage to the producer never yet experienced. Nor would the classes alone which would be benefited; the merchants in all their towns, especially in Summerside, would sell much to those Americans. In St. John, the merchants told the Americans their best customers; probably, one-fourth of the Dry Goods sold in that city were bought by them, because on account of the high duties in the United States they can purchase their cheaper than at home; it would be so on this Island also. He (Hon. Leader of the Government) believed that in a few years, in those and other ways, the citizens of the United States would spend annually as much as £300,000 in this Island. Building a Railway was not like macadamizing a road, from the former there would be a large profit directly and indirectly received, but the latter would yield no returns at all. The increase in the value of property along on this Island would be far and above the whole cost of the Road. What he would ask, was they to do with the Western part of the Island? Along many parts of the Western road, the road was bad and hard to be kept in repair. Some fine tracts of land were still in the hands of the Government in that part of the country, which would be brought under cultivation if greater facilities for reaching a market were placed within the reach of those places. Most of the people on this Island had never travelled, and not having seen the benefits which those roads conferred, were not aware of their great utility; some parts of the country were settled, many of their young men were going away as no inducements were held out for them to remain at home. The average of the families in this Island might be set down at five, while in his district there was, in some instances, as many as twenty. (Laughter.) As a rule, in many places, they all moved away except those obtaining the homestead, as the others would not submit to the drudgery which the clearing up of a new farm imposed. But if the advantages of the country were equalized, those objections would cease to be made, and they would remain to enrich their own country by their own industry. (Applause.) As it was, the Western part of the Island had received large acquisitions from the Districts around Crapaud and Tryon. The hon. member for New London, (Hon. P. Sinclair) lived about sixteen miles from Summerside, and he (Hon. Leader of the Government) saw him bringing grain all that distance to market, which must have cost him at the rate of ten or twelve shillings a load to bring so far, besides incidental expenses, whereas, if he had had a Railroad, that cost him ten or twelve shillings to get to market, could have been brought thither for two or three shillings, independently of the time saved; and it was a well known fact, that it took a man the whole fall to thresh and get his crop to market, whereas, had farmers a Railway, ships could be brought into port at a later period, and be dispatched more readily

than at present; while farmers could occupy time then spent in hauling to market on miry roads, in ploughing and other necessary preparations for a coming season. He felt confident that in those and other ways a farmer would save five times the amount of any extra tax which the construction of a Railway would impose; most of the money which it would cost would be spent in the country, and as there would not be so much loss and risk for shippers, farmers would obtain a higher price for what they might have to sell. He saw a man with a stick of timber on his sled in the market a few days ago, for which he expected to receive eleven or twelve shillings, which cost him a day's labor to bring into market, but which on a Railroad could have been brought in for two or three shillings. In every way he looked at it he saw advantages which would result from a Railway, men would be more profitably employed, labor would be more in demand, while all the products of labor would unquestionably command better prices, and a certainty of cash payments in all parts of the country; much valuable wood which is now destroyed would be turned to account; while factories for the manufacture of many kinds of articles would spring up, which would open up a home market for an immense deal of valuable wood and other products that were now wasted or destroyed, because there are no means at present for rendering them available. (Yes, and Applause.) Settle the Land Question, said some first, but he (Hon. Leader of the Government) feared that if they took this view the matter, they would have to wait for a century, before the work would be undertaken. He could assure that Committee that the Government was anxious to buy the proprietors out, but it should be known that they could not be compelled to sell; but those estates through which the road would run should be taxed to some extent for its construction. The argument of several was that because it would cost so much the work should not be undertaken at all. This he (Hon. Leader of the Government) did not believe, but thought it better to commence as early as possible, and the sooner the better, for every year the lands of the Colony were increasing in value, and it would be more difficult to construct one hereafter than at present. It was said that the matter should have been submitted to the people at the polls for that he saw no special necessity, because if a dissolution, and a general election were to take place, no fair expression of opinion would be given on the question. Side issues would come up, and they would have the Escheat, Quill Rent and Education questions to say nothing of Confederation. When a man was returned to that House he was returned to represent the Island at large, and if the country as a whole required a road, and if they were satisfied that such road would promote the general good it was their duty to vote in favor of one. If any hon. gentleman on that committee felt convinced that such a road was required, and did not vote so, it would be because he had not the moral courage to do so. If the road had been surveyed and the line marked out it might be that those to whose door it was not brought would oppose it; and, therefore, such a course might have had the effect of defeating the object altogether, and other parts of the country, which are well situated for shipping, would also oppose it. When the Legislature raised the duties from five gradually up to eleven per cent, those who did so never thought it necessary to ask leave of the people at the polls. They did so because they saw the necessities of the country required it, and acted wisely. A small tax was nothing if the advantages to be derived therefrom were more than equivalent to the tax imposed. It was easier now to pay eleven per cent than five per cent some years ago. As to going in debt there was not one man in five thousand who had a money capital to meet the demands of all he undertook to do; if he had value he could not be said to be in debt; and in this undertaking he felt the country would have value, the beneficial results of which they could scarcely over estimate. He fully believed that in five years it would pay every shilling of the interest and working expenses. In Nova Scotia, when they commenced their Railroads, the first four miles the first year yielded a return of £800 the first 16 miles the second returned £1200 and the first twenty miles the third year, in nine months, returned over £2000. Would it not be the same on this Island where every man would have something to send, and on which people could be conveyed at a rate of a penny half-penny per mile? A man could travel to Summerside for what it cost him to feed his horse on the road. People who never saw a railroad, and who had prospered seemed to think that what did for their fathers was good enough for them and their children, he was not of that opinion but would wish to give to his fellow colonists the advantages which were enjoyed by others. Supposing the length of the road to be 100 or 110 miles, and that the interest would amount to Thirty thousand pounds currency a year, a small additional tax would raise £17,000, while the receipts from the road would meet in all probability as much more, while there would be an additional increase also from the increased traffic on the road, which would revolutionize the whole trade of the country as it never had been before, and if they did leave a debt for their children to pay they would save more sense than if they told like slaves all their days plodding on behind the age. Their local traffic would be considerable, two million bushels of oats would be transported on the railway. Live stock, limestone, mussel mud and other fertilizers for the soil would form articles of transport, from which considerable sums for carriage would be received. The facilities which a railway would confer would add so materially to the profitable time of their farms that they would be able to improve their products to an extent that would increase their profits in a few years to twice what they were then, so that the extra expenditure of £30,000 a year would scarcely be felt. Why it was not worth speaking about, and when told that they were not able to have a railway, he (Hon. Leader of the Government) thought if that committee or the country at large came to that decision it would not say much for their energy, pluck or public spirit. It could be built on

the credit of the country. Parties had offered to do so, and take Debentures redeemable in thirty years, at six per cent, which was not like taking money out of the country as had been the case with many of the proprietors who sold estates to the Government. The expenditure would, to a great extent, be made in country, which would thereby increase as had never before been the case, the circulation of money among the people. And when strangers were willing to undertake the work, to say that the country was not in a position to have it built would be wrong. As he had already observed, if a survey had been made, and estimates submitted before the Legislature had endorsed the principle, and concluded that a line should be built if attainable at a certain rate per mile, it would probably defeat the object altogether. If the Government should be instructed to proceed, commissioners should be appointed, with a competent Engineer to attend to those matters, while the Executive should take care that ample security would be given for the proper performance of the work, and also that the contractors should only be paid as the work proceeds. It would be far better to let the whole line to a company having capital, than to let it out in sections to small capitalists. The former would be able to go on without interruption and finish the line, the latter might proceed until their means were spent, and then be forced to throw up their contracts, as had been the case with some on the Intercolonial in the other Provinces. A company able to give ample security for the completion of the work could sub-let contracts all along the line; but the Government should know but one party in the matter. The population of the Island was about 100,000, and the interest per head would only be about six shillings a year, and so long as the credit of the Colony was good there would be no difficulty in paying it. If Branch lines should be extended to Tignish and Souris they would of course add to the length of the line, but the benefits which would result would fully justify these constructions. Much of the fish caught in those places, St. Peter's and all along the North Shore, would be worth five times what they now are to those who caught them if they had a Railroad. They could be done up in ice, and in three days be in the Boston Market, and as there was no duty on fresh fish our people would enjoy all the benefits in this important article of export, which could possibly result from the most liberal terms of Reciprocity, and as competition would be close, they would catch them and would not fail to obtain the highest price the Market would admit of giving. Property in Georgetown would increase in value; that harbor was open one month longer than any other on the Island, and with a Railroad the whole country would be a greater or less extent partake of the advantages which would unquestionably result from that, much time being added to the shipping season of the year. In the west, their agriculturists could spend all their time in the improvement of their farms which intervened between the harvesting of their crops, and the setting in of the frost, which would soon tell materially upon the increased products of every farm on the Island. Farmers would also find that they would receive a higher price for their products than they then did, and that prices would be more equalized. Pork was becoming a valuable and important article of export. With the facilities a railway would give, farmers could feed their pork five or six weeks longer than they now can do, inasmuch as in many parts of the Island shippers, unless they obtained it at a certain time did not care to have it at all, especially those who wished to ship immediately after purchasing, which is generally the case—quick returns being the order of the day. He hoped the committee would see the matter in the light he did, and not look upon it as a party question. Any hon. gentleman who did so would certainly do himself and the country an injustice. He (Hon. Leader of the Government) believed that the majority of the people were in favor of the undertaking, and as soon as proper arrangements were made and submitted, he hoped the opinion in its favor would be so strong, that the Government would be authorized to go on with negotiations for the undertaking. Although the interest would probably be made payable here or in London, he believed one-half of the amount would be taken by parties in Charlottetown, where capital to so large an extent was seeking investment, that even some of their Judges were investing in the Savings Bank, which showed the great demand existing for safe investments upon public securities. Building the Road would put considerable sums of money into circulation. Nor did he think it would be found that in any one year, more than £15,000 of the interest would be paid in London. In no way in which he (Hon. Leader of the Gov't) looked at that important question, could he see any reason to doubt the propriety of going forward with the work. (Hear, and applause.)

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN.—There was no paragraph in the Draft Address as important as the one under consideration, for the matter contained, materially affected the interests of the whole Island. If the building of a Railway were carried out, it would involve the Colony in a debt which would require a long time to discharge. The expense of its construction had been reckoned at £5000 currency, per mile, and the total sum required for a trunk line throughout the Island, say 120 miles long, would amount to £600,000. Before expending that sum, the company undertaking to build the road, would require a good and sufficient guarantee for the payment of the interest. It had been found by experience, that it generally required one third more than the estimated cost, to complete a Railroad, and put it in good running order; this extra cost would therefore have to be provided for. This Island was a fine country through which to construct a line of Railway, and it might possibly be undertaken without the consent of the majority of the people; but he, for one, could not give his consent to it, without again appealing to his constituents. The section of the country which he represented, would receive little or no benefit from a trunk line of Railroad, and therefore he would not support the undertaking at the present time. If branch lines, running to all the principal places in the Island, were to be constructed, it would materially alter the case; but even then, his constituents would not be benefited very considerably, for they had harbors all around, and their productions could be

shipped at nearly all periods of the year. It was not likely that a farmer would haul his produce to a Railway station, while he had a shipping place within a mile or two of his farm. He could not see that a Railroad would benefit the country to the extent which had been described by those hon. members who had spoken in favor of the undertaking. Taking our geographical position, good harbors, wharves and bridges into account, it was not to be supposed that our farmers would encourage the construction of a Railroad, which would incur an annual expense of eight or ten shillings per head on our population, and from which they would reap little or no benefit. Increased taxation was a dangerous thing to undertake, and therefore it was the duty of every hon. member of the House to consult his constituents before consenting to it. The Hon. Leader of the Government had not stated what compensation would be allowed for the land upon which the road was to be built; and it could not be expected that any farmer would allow his farm to be cut up, without being fully compensated for the value of his land. He believed that the owners would set a high value upon their lands; and if a fixed valuation were set upon them, expensive law suits, in many cases would arise, which could be settled only in the Supreme Court. The cost of law suits, would, he believed, form a very considerable item in the expenses of a Railroad. He was of opinion that the expenses of construction would be increased fully one-half by the price of land and cost of law suits, &c. After the road was constructed, there would not be sufficient employment for it, for more than a few weeks in autumn, when it would be employed carrying produce to market. The returns from the traffic would not pay its working expenses, and therefore would contribute nothing towards the payment of the interest of the money expended in its construction. He therefore thought it well for the members of the Committee to consider the matter well before giving their support. It should not be hastily undertaken for it would require the interest of the Colony. As to procuring a dredging machine, he highly approved of it. Many of the wharves under the control of the Government required extending; and he was of opinion that money would be saved if their sides were deepened by dredging. Even if the purchase of a dredging machine cost as much as a stone-trasher, he would give it his support. If the maadaming of our roads at £1500 per mile, went on no faster than it had, he did not know when all the roads on the Island would be finished. But he believed that if the waters were deepened around the public wharves, they might be made available to vessels of the largest size. Vessels could not get the accommodation they required, and if a Railroad were constructed, he was afraid other interests would suffer. He thought the country should have time to think before such a work as the building of a Railroad was undertaken, for it would require a very long period to pay the principal cost of a road, and a great deal said about the construction of a Railway, but he had not heard how the money was to be procured to pay for it. This building of a Railroad for such a small Colony, was one of the most extraordinary undertakings of which he had heard. No nation in the world, of which he had heard a portion to the number of its inhabitants, had a Railroad starting from Tignish, and crossing the Hillsborough river and passing on to Georgetown, would be a greater undertaking for this small Colony, than any Railroad built by any other country in the world. For every hundred pounds owned by our agriculturists, English capitalists could produce millions, and therefore, the building of a Railroad in England was a comparatively light undertaking. What would be wise policy there, in reference to Railways, would be ruinous here, in this small Colony, where all the people are comparatively poor. Most of the money in the Colony, when they came and settled here, possessed little beside the clothes on their backs; while the aristocracy of England had been heaping up riches for centuries. A Government officer, with a salary of two hundred pounds per year, was accounted a very rich man forty years ago, in this country; he was reckoned a grandee. It would be quite time enough to commence the building of a Railroad when the people are in a position to pay for it, and that might be fifty years hence. To build one hundred and thirty miles of road, at the rate spoken of by the hon. member, would require a sum of £600,000, including all expenses, not less than three quarters of a million of money; but he (hon. Mr. D.) could not see that it had been proved satisfactorily, that it could be built for any such sum. To think of building a Railroad here for £300 sterling per mile, when we know that in England it costs £1000 of much lower, it costs £27,000 sterling per mile, seemed to him to be most extraordinary. Most of the iron would have to be imported from England, and of course would cost as more than they had to pay for it. The natives, too, got much higher wages in America than the same class gets in England—indeed labor here is procured for one-half of what it costs here. Everything that would be required for the construction of a Railroad would cost less than it does here, except wood; and therefore it did not seem reasonable that the road could be built here at a cheaper rate. Before such a matter was to be undertaken, estimates should be made by a competent person, to give a possible sum; the idea of the cost of £300 sterling per mile, it could not be built for less than £120,000 currency, per mile.

Hon. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT would guarantee that the railroad could be built with all its equipments, and cars in complete working order for the sum of £50,000 currency per mile; and as far as he himself was concerned, provision might be made in the Act that the total cost shall not exceed that sum. If the road would cost more than £5000 per mile, he would oppose its construction.

Hon. R. DAVIES said, that the Hon. Leader of the Government, himself, was not very well posted in reference to the cost of a railway. If we reckon the distance from Tignish to Georgetown, at 120 miles, and the cost at £10,000 currency per mile, in order to make everything complete, it would require a total sum of £1,200,000 currency. Now allowing that the whole Island be sold at one pound per acre, it would only just about pay for it. It would require a tax of one shilling per acre per year, to pay the interest of that sum of money. Calculating at that rate, to pay the interest would require a tax of 25 annually per hundred acres for every farm of a hundred acres had a tenant settled upon it. The Hon. Leader of the Government was, therefore, going too far, to call upon that House to guarantee their support in carrying out such an extraordinary undertaking. To pay the yearly interest of the debt which would be incurred in building the proposed railroad would require 720,000 bushels of oats at two shillings per bushel. The rail road question had only been mooted during the last few weeks, and the people had not sufficient time to consider the matter properly. They (hon. members) were not the men to say they were the men of to-morrow. Like the young Americans, they were too fast for the times.

A SMALL REQUEST FROM THE ABORIGINALS.
We publish a letter which requires only a few words of explanation. It will be a surprise to our readers to find that so correctly written a letter was penned by one of our Micmacs.
Martin Francis is doing a good work amongst the Micmacs of Lennox Island. The Government justly recognized his services, by giving him £75 per annum. He is growing old, and he [100 per cent.] of teaching.