

CHIGNECTO POST AND BORDERER

SACKVILLE, N. B., JULY 26, 1894

NO SCANDALS.

The Liberals were in power at Ottawa for nearly five years; and during that time... There were no grave scandals; no charges of robbing the public treasury... All however has changed! No premier rests upon his arms all night now to keep the thief out of the citadel, but the thieves are within.

No there were no scandals during the Liberal regime of 1873-81. There was no Needing Hotel. There was no Fort Francis Lock. There was no Fort Pelly Works. There was no Ignominious Harbor Job. There was no scandalous payment of \$41,000 for alleged surveys to ex-Senator Foster.

There was no improper award of contract to one David Moore. There was no payment of over \$500 per acre to Adam Oliver and his friends for wilderness lands at Kamistiquia.

There was no subsidizing of the Speaker of the House of Commons with printing contracts.

There was no letting of contracts to members of the House and white-washing them afterwards. Yes! Everything was pure and clean and sweet under the Reform government of 1873-8.

SHIP RAILWAY.

The news comes from London that \$1,500,000 capital has been raised to complete the Ship Railway and the work has been let personally to Messrs B. Pearson & Co. The company suspended work in August, 1891, owing to the financial disturbances having carried down their contractor, Mr. Meigs. Until now the money market has not seemed to be in a condition to enable the company to resume, though it has made the most strenuous efforts to do so.

The company has spent \$3,000,000 and the total expenditure \$4,500,000 will stand against the subsidy which capitalized amounts to about half that sum.

The Government is now called upon to extend the time.

As Canada has paid out or expended nothing for the work, and has suffered nothing by the delay, it would be difficult to make out a good and sufficient plea in the minds of foreign and English stockholders, in which the Government can safely rest a denial of extension, and deprive them of the value of the money they have invested bona fide under the authority and sanction of an act of Parliament.

Very few public works of any magnitude are completed in which there are not more or less delays, but neither the history of this country nor we doubt of any other civilized one will furnish a precedent, where a contractor, has for delays originated from causes beyond his control, been made to suffer and mulcted the entire cost of his work!

If the Government reverses in this particular case the whole practice and policy of the past, investors abroad will learn to look upon Canada, as a country in which the Government keeps faith in good bargains and repudiates distasteful ones, where possible.

Now this is not the position we are satisfied either the people or the Government wish to occupy. A good name is better than much riches; it is an accolade applicable to a country as to an individual, and we are quite satisfied that the Government understands too well the importance of sustaining the honor and dignity and credit of this country, to permit even a semblance of breach of faith.

We quote the opinions of a number of papers this issue. No newspaper on either political side, so far as we have seen their utterances but condemns any proposed repudiation of this country's obligations to the Ship Railway Company.

A promising coal mine has been discovered in the neighborhood of Fredricton.

Juggins defeated Spraghill at Association football last week.

The sale of the "Tales" is in progress. Over three hundred have been sold for about \$40,000, which is more than the upset price. These islands were largely purchased by Canadians.

Work on the famous Woodstock bridge has been suspended by an injunction issued at the instance of the C. P. R. The bridge or its support crosses the C. P. R. track.

Monotonous papers promise new developments in the cases of Carter vs. Thompson and Carter vs. Hebert. It is said that the defendants in those cases will prosecute Carter, Hebert for assault and false arrest and Thompson for perjury.

It is now certain 140 persons went down with the Italian steamer Columbia, which collided with the Russian steamer Vladimir in the Black Sea a few days ago. All the evidence badly incriminates the Russian seamen, who deliberately abandoned the Columbia and crew and passengers to their fate, although the vessel floated an hour and a quarter after collision.

In a severe thunder and lightning storm two houses in Wellington, P.E.I., Saturday, were shattered. A man lying beside the stove struck by falling bricks from a side and stunned, and a horse was struck and stunned. F. S. Aresenault and wife, in their house at Abrams Village, were thrown out of doors and injured. The side of the house was torn badly. In some parts of the country deep trenches were torn in the road. The telephone lines were considerably damaged.

Abel Lewis, while engaged stoning up a well at Boundary Creek on Friday evening, met with a distressing accident which caused his death. The deceased was in the bottom of a well and it is supposed was struck by falling earth, in attempting to dodge it, inflicted fatal injuries. When found a few minutes after life was extinct, one side of the temple and cheek being crushed in. Death must have been instantaneous, as deceased made no noise, and the men who were at work above landing down stone did not know the accident had occurred until they looked for Lewis. The deceased was about 66 years of age and lived near Petticoats.

Chignecto Ship Railway.

Company Has Money and Contractors Ready to Proceed.—Leading Liberal and Tory Papers Join in Asking Extension of Time.—Honor and Credit of Canada at Stake.

(From St. John Daily Telegraph 17th.)
Chignecto Ship Railway Obligations.

The Chignecto Ship Railway was designed as a substitute for the Bay Verte canal, to unite the waters of the gulf with those of the Bay of Fundy. The canal has been agitated ever since the early settlement of the country, and was finally, after a voluminous amount of evidence had been taken, reported favorably on by the canal commission of 1871, as a part of the canal system of Canada, and the work was actually put up to tender by the government, but was postponed owing to a proposed change in the route. In 1875, the government appointed Hon. John Young and others to report on it. Two reports were made: one in its favor by the late Mr. J. W. Lawrence; Mr. Young reported against its commercial advantages in comparison to its cost, which was then estimated at from \$7,000,000 to \$14,000,000, according to the design. The government report, which has had much to do with prejudicing the public mind against this route, although it was subsequently found that his conclusions were partially based on an error.

He had obviously adopted some unauthenticated map for measuring his distance. He stated the distance between St. John and parts north of Bay Verte would be 225 miles, whereas it is over 600 miles. It is difficult to account for so stupendous a blunder. Afterwards the ship railway project was mooted, as a private speculation, to be assisted if successful by a government subsidy for a term of years. An act of incorporation was obtained in 1882 and English capitalists interested.

Sir John A. Macdonald gave a good deal of study to the project, and finally became an enthusiastic supporter of it. He made a personal canvas of public men and it was mainly through his instrumentality that parliament voted a grant of \$170,000 per annum to the company to be paid, commencing one year after its completion and successful operation, and ceasing, if at any time it failed to operate. The company, consisting mainly of railway men and capitalists in England, commenced the work in 1882, and continued vigorously. The company, however, was not to be a success. The company, however, was not to be a success. The company, however, was not to be a success.

APPEALING TO THE GOVERNMENT to renew it. There is an agitation to prevent its renewal on the ground that there are no adequate commercial advantages to be derived from its construction. It is singular that some of the most bitter opponents of the railway were strenuous in their advocacy of the construction of the Baie Verte canal, on the ground of its enormous advantages to the commerce of the Maritime provinces. Why the commercial advantages should be less to the railway, it is not easy to imagine. We do not know that the Government has any direct precedent to guide them in this case. The company is a contractor and has not fulfilled its contract. Sometimes in such cases the Government takes a contract off the contractors' hands, finishes it themselves and, after paying the cost of such work, pays the residue over to the contractors. If the Government had adopted this course the company could not probably complain, but it would hesitate to shoulder the entire liability of a work, the major part of which is already assumed as a matter of private enterprise. There are two ways of meeting the case; one is to stand on the strict terms of the contract, exacting the severest conditions of the bond on the precedent of the celebrated CASE OF ANTONIO VS. SHYLOCK.

leave the investors to their fate and the work to be finished after it is three-fourths completed. The other course is to continue the contract until the company can resume active work. There is a good deal to be said against the former course. While in all contracts, it is necessary to have time limits, there are not always of the essence of the contract, and it is clearly not in this case, because it is the company and not the Government that makes all the losses, by the delay. The Government pays nothing until the work is one year finished, and the longer that event is delayed, the further is the Government payment postponed. The Government not having a dollar in the work, sustains no pecuniary loss by delay and is scarcely in a position to take advantage of it, to declare the contract off, and compel the investors to sustain a heavy loss, for which they are in no way responsible. The preamble to the act of parliament granting the subsidy makes this declaration.

"In consideration of the advantages which would accrue to the maritime provinces and intercolonial trade of Canada generally, from the construction of a ship railway across the Isthmus of Chignecto," etc. "Her Majesty enacts," etc. This parliamentary declaration of the great advantages of the work was equal to a pledge of faith and confidence in the commercial character of the undertaking and an indirect invitation to capitalists to invest in it, and thereupon, after an investment of over \$3,000,000, this country cannot with any show of honor or decency, its promoters claim, now declare it has no advantages and abandon it and the capital invested in it. If it possesses great commercial advantages 10 years ago, it does so to day. If capital was induced by representations, backed by act of parliament to invest in it, then it is equally entitled to-day to fair and reasonable consideration, and any government having the public honor and credit of Canada at heart, cannot refuse to protect investments made under the solemn sanction of an act of parliament. The company is now appealing to the Government, not for aid, but simply for an extension of time, to enable them to complete the work. To refuse it would be

AN OUTRAGE ON THE STOCKHOLDERS in England and would leave an indelible stigma on the good name and credit of Canada in the mother country.

"Had the location of this railway been in the United States it would, we are confident, have been completed long ago, as its completion is regarded by engineers whose opinions are entitled to the highest respect, as

A GREAT SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT. In Canada there is, we regret to say, a feeling of apathy in regard to it which ought not to be. Its completion will be something to be proud of, as no doubt exists in the minds of those competent to form a reliable opinion, that it will be an engineering triumph. The railway was undertaken under very promising circumstances, and had it not been for the depression and suspicion of financiers in London, consequent on the fall of the Baring Bros., the company would have been enabled to float its bonds at a low rate of interest, and to have proceeded with the work to completion. The work was undertaken and pushed forward with earnestness and determination. Several millions of dollars were expended upon it, the structures being of the most substantial nature; but the crash came unexpectedly, and forced a suspension of operations. The large amount of money expended has, so far as we have no advantage either to the shareholders or the country. When this great work was undertaken, the Dominion Government realized the advantages

that would result from its completion and a subsidy of one hundred and fifty thousands dollars per annum for twenty-five years was provided for, but payable only on condition that the railway be kept in thorough repair and satisfactorily perform the services for which it is to be constructed. This subsidy was subsequently changed to \$170,000 a year for twenty years, and the limit for the completion of the works was extended from one year to one year and a half. When, owing to the suspension of the works, the subsidy lapsed. It now appears that a new proposal is about to be submitted to the Dominion Government. That it will be objected to, there will be little doubt, judging from the past. We trust, however, that any reasonable proposition will be favorably considered, and the completion and success of the railway being secured, a renewal of the subsidy will at least be the result. The way should not be constructed or prove a success the subsidy will not be payable. 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