

hon. Minister, the very large quantity of 105,223 tons were sent over the road, being an increase of about 70,000 tons. Although the lowering of the rates was an experiment, still the revenue to the Government was increased by about \$1,000 on that one item alone. Then, with regard to sawn lumber. Although lumber was not one of the commodities of the Island, still a very large quantity is sent over the railway. I was in conversation with a gentleman last summer who owns a large saw mill, and he told me that last year, for the first time in the history of the railway, he was able, in consequence of the lowering of the rates, to send his lumber 100 miles. I find that, in 1880, only 1,589,412 feet of sawn lumber were sent over the railway; while in 1881, in consequence of the reduction in rates made by the hon. Minister, there were sent over the railway 2,901,314 feet, or an increase of over 1,000,000 feet of lumber, giving an increased revenue to the Government of about \$1,000 upon that item. Then, with regard to cordage and tan-bark: in 1880, 1,498 cords were sent over the road, but in 1881 an increase of 500 cords had taken place, giving an increased revenue of \$400 or \$500, thus establishing clearly the success of the experiment of lowering the rates, which would justify the Minister in making a still further reduction in the rates for other articles. The principal commodity of the Island is oats. The farmers almost exclusively raise oats, and these have to be sent over the railway late in the fall; but from 1880 down to the present time I regret to say that no reduction has been made in the rate for the carriage of oats. Last fall an attempt was made to increase the rates over a short distance of the railway, and I find that, notwithstanding the great increase of prosperity which has taken place, the quantity of oats carried over the railway has largely fallen off. In 1880, 575,441 bushels of oats were sent over the railway; in 1881, 412,526 bushels were sent over the road, showing a falling off of over 100,000 bushels, while other articles, notably roots, potatoes, lumber and cordage, have largely increased. This shows clearly that the farmers of the country are not able to send their oats over the railway with profit to themselves in consequence of the high rate, and, therefore, they resort to navigation. In 1880, the revenue arising from the carriage of oats was \$12,422.64; in 1881, the revenue was \$8,89.02, showing a falling off of \$4,000 on that item alone. These facts show the necessity of a further reduction of the rates on oats. In fact, we cannot send oats over that railway with any profit for a distance of more than twelve miles. I think it is most important, not only to the people of the Island, but to the Government, to lower the rates. This will increase the revenue, undoubtedly, as has been clearly shown by the articles experimented upon. With regard to the carriage of passengers over the railway, I may say that the accommodation is of very poor description. The railway being a narrow gauge, the cars are quite contracted, and there is not sufficient room even for two passengers on each seat. Still we are charged on that piece of railway the same rates as are charged on the Intercolonial Railway. It is well known to all that, with steel rails and a solid road-bed, passengers are carried quite smoothly over the Intercolonial Railway; but on account of the sharp curves and steep grades on the Island Railway, passengers are very much shaken up and disturbed, and it is not very good for the health. I trust, therefore, that the Government will view this matter as I do, and will make such reductions in the passenger rates as will meet the views of the Island people. I think the result of the experiment already tried in lowering freight rates will justify the Minister in making further reductions.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. There is, of course, no objection to this motion, and the papers moved for by the hon. gentleman will, as a matter of course, be brought down.

The subject of this motion will receive the careful consideration of the Government. I will be only too glad to find that, by reducing still further the rates on the Island Railway, the net results will be improved. If that can be shown, and if there is good reason to believe that by a reduction in the rates we can improve the net results, which I regret to say are still very unfavorable, it will be a matter of very great pleasure to me to recommend such a reduction. But it is a well known fact that the people of Prince Edward Island have perhaps a larger amount of railway accommodation in proportion to the population than any other people in the world. It is equally well known that it costs a large sum of money to give those railway facilities to the people of Prince Edward Island, and regardless altogether of the cost of the work, the operating expenses of the railway on the Island are still very largely in excess of the entire income. Still, of course, I believe the hon. gentleman is correct in saying that the reduction which has been made, has had the effect of decreasing the very large margin that previously existed between revenue and expenditure, and if it were found that by further reductions we could still more decrease the disparity between revenue and expenditure, I shall be only too glad to effect an improvement in the operations of the road by a measure of that kind.

Motion agreed to.

ADMINISTRATOR OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Mr. KILLAM moved for copies of all correspondence, telegrams and cablegrams between the Government and any person or persons, and of any correspondence, telegrams and cablegrams between any persons, the originals or copies of which may be in possession of the Government, and of all Orders in Council, and of any documents or papers in possession of the Government relating to the appointment, or proposed appointment of an Administrator of the Government, or of a Deputy Governor, to act during His Excellency's absence from the Dominion in November last. He said: In moving for this correspondence, I am not charging the Government, as I might have done, with any dereliction of duty, or with any assumption of prerogative that does not belong to them. But I think it would be interesting to the public, and to members of this House, to know what took place last autumn, when His Excellency was about leaving for Europe, and the manner in which the gentleman on the Treasury benches treated him, compelling his remaining in the country for a fortnight. The reports which appeared in the press of the country in relation to the matter, are interesting, and are such as to excite the curiosity of any one who cares to look into the matter. I am not bringing the question up out of an idle spirit of enquiry, but simply to state the principle, that I do not think it is a proper thing for the Government of this country to assume powers which, I think, hon. gentlemen opposite assumed in this matter. If, however, they are clear of blame, the correspondence will, of course, show that fact distinctly. About the 20th of October last it was announced that His Excellency was about leaving on a visit to the Mother Country, and that a meeting of Council was to be held for the purpose of appointing an Administrator. On the next day it was announced that His Excellency was unwell, which we all regretted to hear, and unable to leave, as he had intended. This was officially contradicted, and it was stated that the matter had been entirely arranged, and that he was going on the next Friday. We heard soon after that his departure was still further delayed, that he would not leave for two weeks, and that General MacDougall was to come to this country to act as Governor. Now the letters patent are perfectly plain, and it seems odd that such occurrences should have taken place as those to which I refer.

We have a system of government which may be imperfect in itself, but which, it is clear, cannot at all be misunderstood. Hon. gentlemen opposite seem to have misunderstood it entirely. I do not say they did; I do not charge them with having done so; but I think they did, and that they attempted themselves to appoint an Administrator of the Government, practically to appoint their master, and in circumstances in which he might be their servant. I believe, with some others, that we live under a very good constitution; that we are well off in this country; that our system is a good one, and that while we have a Governor General appointed by the home authorities we are as happily situated perhaps as some republican countries which have the privilege of electing their own Presidents or Governors. There are those who, like my hon. friend from Victoria (Mr. DeCosmos), think that we might grow our own Governors General, but while we are living under this constitution I think those who profess to enjoy the confidence of the people should observe the system under which they live, and should loyally carry out its provisions in letter as well as in spirit. I do not think that hon. gentlemen opposite did so on the occasion to which I refer, and I believe that if the correspondence is brought down it will show that they placed themselves in a wrong position. I believe, with the hon. member for Victoria, that it is a proper thing for the people of this country to consider whether or not we should have greater privileges in this way, and I think the hon. member for Gaspé (Mr. Fortin), who I regret to see is not in his seat, would agree with me in any steps we might take in the direction of securing additional liberties of that kind. I do not think, however, that it is proper for the Government of this country to assume the right to appoint their Governor General as hon. gentlemen opposite did on the occasion to which the motion refers.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. There are no papers, and therefore we cannot bring any down.

Mr. KILLAM. Does the hon. gentleman deny that there was any correspondence on the subject with England, and that they were informed by the home Government that they could not take the course they proposed to take in relation to the appointment of an Administrator in His Excellency's absence?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes, I do.

Motion negatived on division.

REPORT OF INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Mr. DECOSMOS, in moving for the report of the Inspector of Fisheries for British Columbia for the calendar year, 1881, said: I understand that such a report has been received at the Department here, and as it contains important recommendations bearing upon the fisheries of British Columbia, I think it very desirable that it should be laid before the House at an early day, and afterwards referred to the Printing Committee, so that it may be printed and distributed among the members. The hon. Finance Minister, the other day, alluded to the take of the fish of Canada as amounting to \$6,000,000. I have private information that the take of the fish and fur-bearing animals taken from the sea in British Columbia amounted last year to \$1,500,000. At the eastern side of the continent some \$80,000 or \$90,000, I believe, are spent for the protection of the fisheries and for fish-breeding purposes, while at the western end of the Dominion some \$2,000 or \$3,000 only were spent last year. Without going into the necessity for spending a larger sum of money, I will at this time simply move for the return.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. KILLAM.

SHIPPING DISASTERS IN INLAND WATERS.

Mr. SPROULE moved for a return showing the name and number of all boats or sailing vessels lost on Canadian inland waters, since 1870, with the value of property, the number of lives lost, and the known or supposed causes of the losses. He said: I move for this return in order to bring before the Government and the country the subject of the great annual loss of life and property in our inland waters, with the hope that something may be devised to prevent these disasters. Year after year some very extensive losses are chronicled. In 1879, the *Waubuno*, which ran from Collingwood to Parry Sound, was lost, with all the passengers and crew; and at the litigation which took place in connection with the loss of that steamer, the fact was brought out that she was allowed to go to sea in an entirely unseaworthy condition. If the Act regulating the appointment of inspectors requires the inspector to examine the hulls of boats as well as the engines, probably a large portion of the loss of life and property might be avoided. The Chairman of the Board of Steamboat Inspection, in his last report, says:

"The loss of the steamer *Waubuno* on the 22nd of November last year, with all on board, led to the recommendation by me of the appointment of an inspector of hulls of steam vessels, such person to have supervision over their seaworthiness as well as over their construction. The loss of two steamers this year under, as far as we can judge, like circumstances, and about the same time of the year, the one on the 6th and the other on the 24th of November, draws attention again to the importance of such an appointment."

The propellor *Zealand*, one of the vessels alluded to, was lost off Long Point, Lake Ontario, with all on board. The propellor *Simcoe* was lost on the 24th of November, off Manitoulin Island, Lake Huron, on her way from Chicago, and twelve of the crew were lost. On the 24th May, 1881, the steamer *Victoria* was lost on the Thames. Those persons who had the privilege of being at all acquainted with the nature of the circumstances and who examined the hull afterwards, came to the conclusion that the loss was very largely due to the imperfect way in which the boat was built; and if inspectors were appointed with instructions to examine the construction of boats, not only their boilers but also their hulls and every part of them, and have some superintendence over their loading, many calamities would be averted. It is a well-known fact that, although the boiler of the boat might be all that could be desired, the strength of the boat must be measured by its weakest plank. In many of the other cases we have this result, and that when an examination was made it was found that vessels had been allowed to go to sea without proper protection to life, in the shape of life-boats, and had the inspection gone far enough this fact would have been disclosed. In regard to the *Waubuno*, witnesses had declared that some of its planks were rotten. On the 24th November last, the steamer *Jane Millar* was lost while proceeding from Beaverton, on the Georgian Bay, towards Manitoulin. In that instance it appeared that the disaster occurred owing to the vessel being overloaded on the top deck, having a large amount of water in the hull, and no ballast in the bottom to steady the boat. If inspectors were instructed to see that vessels were properly loaded, a large saving of life and property would annually be secured. After obtaining the returns for which I ask in this motion—and I desire to obtain them at an early day—I propose to again bring the subject before the attention of the Government, and offer, if possible, some suggestions as to what remedies ought to be devised for the purpose of preventing these annual losses. When the Government's attention has been called two or three years successively to these disasters, it is high time some steps were taken to amend the Steamboat Act, so that inspectors should be appointed, not only to inspect the boilers of vessels, but their hulls likewise; that inspectors' visits should