

Mr. BOWELL. It has never been widened, has it?

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) No. And from Charlottetown eastward for 12 or 14 miles and a little westward of Summerside, making 60 miles out of 115. The original rails remain over the greater portion of the road. They have run this as economically as possible, and have actually taken the rails out of the sidings and put them on the main road in lieu of the worn-out rails there.

Mr. BOWELL. They are old iron rails?

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) Yes, laid in 1873, and they have lived already more than the life of an ordinary rail. They have actually cut off the bad part of the end of some of the rails and brought the rails together. A short time ago I took a trip over the road and entered into conversation with many of the conductors and section-men and others on the road with a view of informing myself as to its condition, and I learned that there was a prevailing impression that, unless these rails were removed and steel rails substituted for them, there would in the near future be a serious accident, that it could not be avoided, that the rails were worn-out and had almost carried the last car they could carry, and every day the men were expecting that an accident would happen. In fact there have been some accidents, though happily not attended with tragic results.

Mr. BOWELL. From that cause?

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) In one case it was certainly from that cause. I saw the chief engineer and told him the reports I had had on this subject, and that I was afraid, from the serious manner in which this information was conveyed to me, and judging the weight to be attached to it from the manner in which it was imparted, that unless he did something very soon he would be liable to hear of a serious accident, probably involving the loss of life. He affected to treat the matter lightly. He said these section-men were in the habit of making up that kind of story in order to get a better class of rails; but, from the manner in which they told me this, I am satisfied that it is essential for the safety of the lives of the passengers on that road that these old rails, which were very light at the first—as the chief engineer will tell you, for he was the contractor for the road—should be removed, as they are absolutely unfit for use. I think the hon. gentleman should see, if it is possible, that the remaining portion of the road should be relaid with steel rails.

Mr. BOWELL. I will call the attention of the chief engineer to the statement the hon. gentleman has made and to the importance of having an immediate report upon the state of the road in order to prevent the accidents which he fears may occur.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) I called attention at a previous stage of the session to the fact that, while I made these statements, the department had been officially informed by the superintendent that the condition of the road was excellent. I said I had gone over the road and I believed that to be true as to the general condition of the road, but that, if it embraced the rails, it would be misleading the department, and that the chief engineer should be asked to report upon the subject.

Mr. BOWELL. One would scarcely conceive it possible that the chief superintendent would report

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.)

the road in an excellent condition if the rails were not fit to be run upon.

Expenses connected with the drill and training of the Militia..... \$250,000

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. No doubt the Minister of Militia received all imaginable varieties of counsel last night, but every hon. gentleman who spoke, I think, agreed that whether I had been a little too severe on these camps of instruction in alleging that, practically, they only gave five or six days' instruction, there was very little doubt that, in so far as the rural battalions were concerned, the time for drill, spread, as it was, over intervals of two years, was far too short to be of practical service. Now, the hon. Minister, in the few remarks he made, admitted that it was true, but he did not appear to have considered any practical plan for amending that fault. All he said was that if he had plenty of money at his disposal he would give longer instruction, and keep them out for 15 or 16 days if he could. Now, I have some doubts whether we can afford to spend more money, although we might use it better. After all, a million and a-quarter here, and seven or eight hundred thousand in the North-West, is a large proportion of our available resources—altogether about two millions a year, not to speak of the expenses of headquarters here—about two hundred thousand dollars, I dare say. As I say, two million dollars is a large proportion of our available funds at the disposal of the Finance Minister, which, as everybody knows, are vastly less than the nominal funds, owing to the immense amount of our fixed charges. The question, I think, will resolve itself into this: Whether this million and a-quarter could not be better expended. Now, without desiring to speak authoritatively on this subject, in particular in the presence of the hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Denison), I really think that the Government ought to consider one, or two, or three plans—either they ought to reduce the number of the militia to such strength as would enable the force, such as it is, to be kept in a state of reasonable efficiency by passing, as has been done in other countries, successive terms of three or five years, or whatever time the men choose to serve. Or they might adopt another plan which has a good deal to recommend it, they might insist on the commissioned and non-commissioned officers being drilled and kept in a state of reasonable efficiency every year, even if it was not found practicable to summon all the men of the rural battalions. I think we might also, without detriment to the service, make a pretty decided division between the city corps and the rural battalions; they could be treated, without detriment to the militia service, in a different way. There is no doubt that these city corps are very desirable to maintain for many reasons, wholly apart from the question of our being called upon to fight for our lives and our country against our neighbours to the south of us. There is no doubt that when you have large cities in which there is apt to be an element developed more or less dangerous, it is in the interest of the cities in particular, and of the country in general, that in these large places a tolerable military force should be, in case of emergency, at the disposal of the civil authorities, and both here and elsewhere good results have arisen from that precaution. I do think that the Minis-