

connection between Deer Island and the mainland. On Deer Island we have a population of 1,700 people who have no communication whatever of this kind with the outside. I think the estimated cost of this work was about \$3,500, equal to an interest account of \$85.50 a year. This line would probably prove self-sustaining, as among those islands they do a business of some \$300,000 or \$400,000 a year. Their business is principally with the town of Eastport. It certainly is desirable so far as possible to facilitate the business of this community by giving the people direct communication, so that they may be kept in touch with the markets where their fish are principally sold. It is certainly an idea that should be taken up by the Minister very soon. I hoped he had put some amount in his Estimates for this purpose, and I trust he may yet see his way clear to do so in the Supplementaries.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. I cannot give any promise. We are extending our lines as quickly as possible. It is a question of money.

Mr. FOSTER. It is a question, too, of distribution. The plea that has been made by the hon. member for Charlotte (Mr. Ganong) is a good plea. There are some points there that ought to be attended to.

National Art Gallery.. . . . . \$2,000

Mr. ROSS ROBERTSON. Is this amount of \$2,000 spent every year on this National Art Gallery.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. No, not every year. We are not very far advanced in the way of art.

Mr. ROSS ROBERTSON. Who makes the selection for the National Art Gallery?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. We have an artist in our department, Mr. Taylor, who, with the assistance of some of the officers in the department, has made the selections in the past. Since I took office, I have not bought anything.

Mr. SPROULE. Is this amount for the purpose of buying pictures?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. Yes, and to pay the caretaker. I understand that my predecessor bought a picture, the Death of Nelson, for which he paid \$1,000. I have not bought any yet, but I am negotiating for the purchase of a picture by an artist of London.

Mr. ROSS ROBERTSON. It seems to me that the Minister, in selecting specimens of Canadian art for the National Art Gallery—and I may say that I approve of having a gallery of that kind—should be assisted by experts in selecting these pictures. They should not be bought upon the mere word of any single gentleman in the department, or through the friends of artists who are only too anxious to sell their pictures. We ought to have in the National Art Gallery

Mr. GANONG.

the very best work Canadian artists can produce. I think the Government would do a commendable thing in spending more money in patronizing Canadian artists. We should have the very best work by the very best artists, and we should also have the best experts and judges of art to select those pictures.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. My hon. friend is perfectly right, but it might be a little difficult to find those experts. I would be glad to have a private conversation on the subject with my hon. friend.

Mr. HUGHES. I would suggest to the Minister that a very fine expert is the hon. member for East Toronto (Mr. Ross Robertson).

Temporary clerical and other assistance, inclusive of services of all persons required who were first employed after the 1st of July, 1882, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Civil Service Act..... \$25,000

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. When I took office I reduced the expenditure too much, and I find myself short.

Mr. HUGHES. How many clerks were dismissed?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. I do not think there has been one dismissal.

Mr. SPROULE. Have they been continued on year after year in contravention of the Act, and are some of the employees still on the list?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. This is another case where I took things as they were left. This is to make regular the employment of persons who have been employed since 1882. But then there was a law allowing the employment of a certain class of men, and the money has always been voted that way.

Mr. SPROULE. This \$5,000 additional, is that to increase their salaries or to employ others?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. If the hon. gentleman will look at past estimates he will find that in 1895-96, for the same purpose, Parliament voted \$30,700; in 1896-97, \$24,500. I thought I could get on with \$20,000, but I find I cannot. The hon. gentleman will find, if he examines my estimates, that the expenditure so far as the civil service is concerned, has been reduced by more than \$125,000.

Mr. SPROULE. In one year the hon. gentleman asked for \$25,000, in the following year he asked for \$23,000, or \$2,000 less, and then for the succeeding year \$20,000 was voted.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. There is an additional vote in the Supplementary Estimates for 1895-96 of \$4,000.