

Mr. EMMERSON. If my hon. friends have not sufficient knowledge, we will go on with some other item and there is no use taking up time dwelling on this any longer.

Mr. MONK. I am very glad to see that the minister takes that view, because it seems to me that the demand of my hon. friend is a most reasonable one.

Mr. EMMERSON. Without expressing any opinion on that subject I shall defer to the request.

Mr. MONK. Since the minister comments on the reasonableness of my hon. friend's request, I may say that for my own part there is not one of these items upon which it seems to me we should not have had ready for us twenty times the information that my colleagues have succeeded in extracting after extraordinary efforts of patience and perseverance. I do not apply that remark particularly to my hon. friend (Mr. Emmer-son). I admit that his is a difficult department and that those items were of some difficulty, but I will say this on behalf of those whose duty it is to criticise and to inquire into the reasonableness of these votes that if we had the full information at our command which any business man would demand before authorizing an expenditure aggregating \$3,000,000 it would greatly facilitate the work of this House. Here is an urgent item for repairs for which we voted last year \$10,000 on the assurance that that would complete the work. But what do we find? It was found insufficient. Representations were made to the minister by people who knew something of the locality and if the minister believed that these works required to be hurried as was stated by the hon. member for Cape Breton, the law indicates a way to provide for cases of that kind. The minister had only to conform himself to the formalities of the statute. He might have obtained a special warrant and not have put us in the position we are in to-day, but he went ahead without the authority of parliament, without any authority whatever, and contrary to the law in urgent cases, purchased this large amount of wood and to-day, instead of dealing with a work which we sanctioned last year, costing \$10,000, we are called upon to spend an amount immediately of \$70,000 which I have no hesitation in saying, from what experience I have had and from what the hon. gentleman who preceded me has stated, will cost a good deal more than \$70,000 and when one of us, deprived of every information to which we are entitled on a job of that magnitude asks for fuller information and for a delay of a few hours in order that parliament may be able to exercise its right to intelligently control these expenses, the minister, who has been treated with a great deal of leniency in regard to his estimates, flippantly remarks that he would rather

not be called upon to express an opinion as to the reasonableness of that request.

Intercolonial Railway—Semaphores at stations, \$2,500.

Mr. EMMERSON. This provides for eleven mechanical semaphores and for two electric—magneto semaphores at two stations, one at Trenton and one at Oxford Junction. The two electric—magneto semaphores cost \$400 each, that is \$800, and the eleven mechanical semaphores cost \$450 each, which makes \$1,650, altogether \$2,540, which, with \$50 added in connection with placing them, makes a total of \$2,500.

Mr. LENNOX. I would like the minister to explain how it comes that these semaphores are charged to capital account. On an old established road, they must be very much in the same position as a new door or window in a building, simply a matter of ordinary, every day repair.

Mr. EMMERSON. These are semaphores, at stations at which there were no semaphores before. There had not been any semaphores at Oxford Junction and it is proposed, because of the situation of that station, at the junction between the two lines, that an electric—magneto semaphore should be placed there and that one should also be placed at Trenton which is at the junction with the Iron Works Railway.

Mr. BLAIN. Is this the introduction to a large expenditure in connection with semaphores, or would the minister say that this will be the total amount required for some years to come in connection with semaphores?

Mr. EMMERSON. These are all we propose now and all that are now required. As new stations are established and sidings put in at these stations, and they become of some importance, it may be that in the future we will have to put in one or more a year.

Mr. LENNOX. These are not put in at new stations.

Mr. EMMERSON. These are stations which have not before had semaphores. They were not of sufficient importance to require them but we have found it necessary to put them in now.

Mr. LENNOX. Are there stations where there are sidings at which there are no semaphores?

Mr. EMMERSON. No; these semaphores are not switch lights.

Prince Edward Island Railway—to increase accommodation at Kensington, \$4,000.

Mr. HACKETT. Is it the intention of the government to build a new station there?

Mr. EMMERSON. Yes; a new station and freight sheds.