

House of Commons Debates.

SECOND SESSION—SEVENTH PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, 10th May, 1892.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READING.

Bill (No. 83) respecting the Chignecto Transport Railway Company, Limited.—(Mr. Dickey.)

SUPPLY.

House again resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

(In the Committee.)

Increased accommodation at Halifax. .\$.152,000

Mr. HAGGART. At the last meeting of the committee, I promised that the next time you took the Chair I would make a statement as succinctly as possible of the changes proposed to be made in the running of the Intercolonial Railway, for the purpose of restoring as nearly as possible an equilibrium between the receipts and expenditure of this road. You are all aware that the railway is divided into two subdivisions, one of 1,145 miles in length, of which 322 miles are in Quebec, 368 in New Brunswick and 455 in Nova Scotia, and another branch consisting of 211 miles in Prince Edward Island. The Intercolonial Railway in 1889-90 was united with what was called the Eastern Extension, and with that portion of the railway which was afterwards completed in Cape Breton. That increased the mileage from what it was before 1889, 971 miles, to 1,145 miles. The maximum earnings of the road were in the year that that Act was passed, in 1889-90, when the total length of the road was 971 miles, the earnings that year amounted to \$3,012,739.87. In the same year the railway connecting Montreal with the Intercolonial system—what was called the Short Line *via* Mattawamkeag to St. John—was completed. That road was built for the purpose of giving increased facilities to the people of the Maritime Provinces to reach the western

provinces and give a shorter line to our seaboard or our eastern ports from this section of the country than we had previously. When that road was finished, on account of the energetic management of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the shorter distance by their line, no doubt a great portion of the traffic was diverted from our line, which was a longer line as it went down the St. Lawrence and took a turn around the coast, having been built more for military purposes than commercial purposes. It thus diverted a considerable portion of the traffic by the Canadian Pacific Railway to St. John and other portions of the Maritime Provinces. Perhaps the most valuable portion of the traffic we had was diverted to the Canadian Pacific Railway, and they carefully avoided the carriage of articles which were not paying, such as grain, coal, stones and other heavy articles, leaving these to be carried at a loss by the Intercolonial Railway. These reasons, however, do not entirely explain the deficit which has happened on the Intercolonial Railway for a number of years past. We have been running a number of trains in excess of the requirements of the freight carried in that country. We have been carrying local freight at a lower tariff than that at which freight is carried upon any other Canadian road, and we have been carrying coal, flour, grain, stone, &c., at a rate which does not pay. Also, our regular passenger trains which we have been running do not have sufficient traffic to pay expenses, and not as much passenger traffic as is customary on other roads in Canada. Then another reason for the Intercolonial Railway not paying is on account of the northern portion of the railway running through a portion of country in which snow storms are much more severe than they are in other portions of Canada, and consequently the cost of ploughing the snow and keeping the track open in winter is greatly in excess of the cost on other roads in Canada. To these causes is to be added, as I stated before, the disturbance of the traffic caused by the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway *via* Mattawamkeag to St. John, and the taking away of the most valuable part of the traffic which it had hitherto carried. Another source of loss is