

Renaud, Robitaille, Ross (Champlain), Ross (Dundas), Ross (Prince Edward), Ryan (Kings), Ryan (Montreal West), Simard, Simpson, Sproat, Stephenson, Tilley, Tremblay, Walsh, Webb, White, Wilson, Wood, Workman, Wright—Total, 94.

The House then went into Committee of Supply, Col. Gray in the Chair—and passed the items—for the construction of Railway between Halifax and Pictou, \$200,000; construction of Railway between Windsor and Pictou, \$200,000; construction of Railway between Windsor and Annapolis, \$300,000; construction European and N.A. Railway, \$31,750. To meet stock in Western Extension, \$180,000; to meet subsidy in Western Extension, \$150,000; to meet subsidies to other lines, N.B., \$141,000; towards location Intercolonial Railway, \$50,000.

The next item was \$95,305.31 for canals.

Mr. Mackenzie said the sum had been spent without any authority whatever from Parliament. He regretted exceedingly that his honourable friend opposite (Mr. McDougall) should have thought it consistent with his honour as a Minister of the Crown to endeavour to smuggle a vote of this kind through Parliament for a work which Parliament had never authorized. It was an entirely new work.

Hon. Mr. McDougall—No.

Mr. Mackenzie—It was, and when the Government asked for money for public works in the early part of the session he declared there were no new works included in those on which the money voted was to be spent. In a case such as the present, according to Parliamentary practice, the Minister should ask for a Bill of Indemnity. The money had been all expended before the matter was brought under the notice of Parliament; and still further to blacken the transaction, he found that one James Goodwin, of Ottawa, got the tender for the work, although his tender was \$12,000 higher than that of others; and still worse, the department allowed Goodwin to break his contract, and whereas he agreed to do the work of excavation for \$1.20 per yard they now gave him \$1.50 merely on his own representation that he had lost money when he held the contract at \$1.20. The department made no inquiry, but quietly gave this man 30 cents per yard more than the fair paying price at which he had contracted to do the work.

Hon. Mr. Johnson agreed with the view the Ministers ought to have brought down a Bill of Indemnity in this matter.

Hon. Mr. McDougall reproved the member for Lambton for speaking dogmatically. The circumstances under which the work had been undertaken fully justified the action of the department. Action which had throughout been taken only after thorough investigation. In the first place the department had necessarily power to deal with these works without the authority of Parliament, so that it could not be said to be unconstitutional to spend money in advance of a Parliamentary vote. The work too was one of very great importance, and it was so necessary the repairs should be made, that private persons trusting to be reimbursed had undertaken the work. As to the tender, it was well known that numbers of persons tendered for public works at such rates as they could not possibly perform the work; for trusting that once the work was begun it would be pushed to completion and more money would be advanced. It was not advisable that any such contractors should get hold of the work, and hence it had been let, though at an advanced figure, to a responsible man.

Mr. Currier explained that if ever there was a work of necessity and one which would turn out profitable, it was this canal.

Mr. Jones took exception to the remark of the Commissioner of Public Works, that the tender had not been let to the other competitors because they were not responsible men. He denied that statement, so far at least, as some of the contractors were concerned. He objected to the mismanagement of the Public Works Department in this particular.

Mr. Alonzo Wright spoke of the immense trade coming through this canal, and thought the expenditure fully justified.

Hon. Mr. Dorion opposed the item.

It was carried, and the House rose at six o'clock.

After the recess.

The remaining items for canal, for harbours, \$11,000; slides and booms, \$10,000; Parliamentary and Departmental Buildings, \$55,000; Rideau Hall, including the purchase of the property and the furniture, \$122,000. This includes the lease for one year of eleven acres of land adjoining the hall, with option of purchase. Custom House, Quebec, \$3,000; being a reduction of \$1,000 on the sum in the estimates.