

they had the line wholly in their own hands from River du Loup to Halifax, they could control through freight and business better than one or two individuals leaving a portion of the road. He was sure the Government would have no difficulty in making themselves acquainted with this work. Consider the facilities enjoyed by merchants in the carriage of their goods by the Grand Trunk, from Detroit to Portland, as compared with those furnished by the roads from Montreal to New York. There were four or five companies concerned in them, and there was no end to the difficulties as regards freight and passengers. The trains hardly ever arrived on time. The Government ought to try to work this Intercolonial, an exemplification of the probable benefits of which he had given in his reference to the portion of the Grand Trunk between Quebec and River du Loup. He was sure they would witness a similar result should the Government lease the Lower Province roads to private parties.

Hon. Mr. WARK said the difference between private and Government management was seen in the pressure put on Ministers to reduce freights, which pressure would not be applied to companies. He gave instances of abuses which crept up under the Government system in Nova Scotia when cars used to carry not only drivers, but their horses and wagons, to market, instead of merely the produce to be sold. With regard to the road between Shediac and St. John, there was a pressure brought upon the Local Government to reduce the fares as low as possible. Under the competition with the Gulf Port steamers and other carriers, the freight on flour had been reduced to 15 cts. per brl. between Shediac and St. John. No private company could carry flour 100 miles at that rate. If Government could resist such pressure and keep rate up to a fairly remunerative point, without charging either too high or too low, and could get honest men to run those roads, they should be able to manage them as well as private companies. If men were as careful in spending the Government money as their own, those railways might be worked as economically under the Government as under a company. The 107 miles from Shediac to St. John, was gradually improving every year, under the Commissioners appointed by the Government. It yielded for some time before they entered Confederation \$25,000 a year clear of all expenses.

Hon. Mr. BOTSFORD—One year nearly \$40,000.

Hon. Mr. WARK knew it was paying very handsomely, as well as yielding indirect benefits quite equivalent to the cost of the road although it must be admitted it had cost more than it should have cost. The Government were in a manner forced into building it. They had got others by the aid of subsidies, some for 10,000 acres a mile. The railway from Fredericton to Riviere du Loup had been so far entirely constructed by private capital and 70 miles were already made. With regard to the Intercolonial, he believed the British Government were decidedly desirous of keeping it as far as possible from the American Boundary. But the proper line was not selected. If they had intended to remove it as far as possible from the best route for traffic, they could scarcely have been more successful. It was carried over an elevation of 500 feet, and through as bad a country as could have been selected, while the cost of the Miramichi and other bridges would be enormous. After crossing the Miramichi the road entered a wretched region of barrens and swamps, while it might have been carried through a country cultivable and containing 20,000 inhabitants.

After some further remarks by Hon. Messrs. Ferrier, Wark, Miller and a few observations from Hon. Mr. Ferguson, who thought that a portion of the Intercolonial might have been better located.

Hon. Mr. MCLELAN replied that the task of location had given the engineers and Commissioners a great deal of anxiety, as every one was interested in having the line run properly. After much examination the line was located. The engineers and the Committee of Public Accounts of the other House, had had the subject of the construction of the Intercolonial before them for a number of years, as also the subject of the location, not so much as a question between the Northern and Central Route, but as regards the proper location of the Northern, and after ample investigation, he thought the Committee was satisfied that, taking the Northern route, they had got the best line in the general interest, both as regards the element of expenditure and the traffic likely to be obtained.

Hon. Mr. HOWLAN said the question of the right of Government over railways had occupied the attention of Congress as well as that of the English House of Commons. It had been distinctly laid down by that House that it was not to the interest of any country that any great thoroughfare should be put into the hands