

hon. Minister, the very large quantity of 105,223 tons were sent over the road, being an increase of about 70,000 tons. Although the lowering of the rates was an experiment, still the revenue to the Government was increased by about \$1,000 on that one item alone. Then, with regard to sawn lumber. Although lumber was not one of the commodities of the Island, still a very large quantity is sent over the railway. I was in conversation with a gentleman last summer who owns a large saw mill, and he told me that last year, for the first time in the history of the railway, he was able, in consequence of the lowering of the rates, to send his lumber 100 miles. I find that, in 1880, only 1,589,412 feet of sawn lumber were sent over the railway; while in 1881, in consequence of the reduction in rates made by the hon. Minister, there were sent over the railway 2,901,314 feet, or an increase of over 1,000,000 feet of lumber, giving an increased revenue to the Government of about \$1,000 upon that item. Then, with regard to cordage and tan-bark: in 1880, 1,498 cords were sent over the road, but in 1881 an increase of 500 cords had taken place, giving an increased revenue of \$400 or \$500, thus establishing clearly the success of the experiment of lowering the rates, which would justify the Minister in making a still further reduction in the rates for other articles. The principal commodity of the Island is oats. The farmers almost exclusively raise oats, and these have to be sent over the railway late in the fall; but from 1880 down to the present time I regret to say that no reduction has been made in the rate for the carriage of oats. Last fall an attempt was made to increase the rates over a short distance of the railway, and I find that, notwithstanding the great increase of prosperity which has taken place, the quantity of oats carried over the railway has largely fallen off. In 1880, 575,441 bushels of oats were sent over the railway; in 1881, 412,526 bushels were sent over the road, showing a falling off of over 100,000 bushels, while other articles, notably roots, potatoes, lumber and cordage, have largely increased. This shows clearly that the farmers of the country are not able to send their oats over the railway with profit to themselves in consequence of the high rate, and, therefore, they resort to navigation. In 1880, the revenue arising from the carriage of oats was \$12,422.64; in 1881, the revenue was \$8,89.02, showing a falling off of \$4,000 on that item alone. These facts show the necessity of a further reduction of the rates on oats. In fact, we cannot send oats over that railway with any profit for a distance of more than twelve miles. I think it is most important, not only to the people of the Island, but to the Government, to lower the rates. This will increase the revenue, undoubtedly, as has been clearly shown by the articles experimented upon. With regard to the carriage of passengers over the railway, I may say that the accommodation is of very poor description. The railway being a narrow gauge, the cars are quite contracted, and there is not sufficient room even for two passengers on each seat. Still we are charged on that piece of railway the same rates as are charged on the Intercolonial Railway. It is well known to all that, with steel rails and a solid road-bed, passengers are carried quite smoothly over the Intercolonial Railway; but on account of the sharp curves and steep grades on the Island Railway, passengers are very much shaken up and disturbed, and it is not very good for the health. I trust, therefore, that the Government will view this matter as I do, and will make such reductions in the passenger rates as will meet the views of the Island people. I think the result of the experiment already tried in lowering freight rates will justify the Minister in making further reductions.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. There is, of course, no objection to this motion, and the papers moved for by the hon. gentleman will, as a matter of course, be brought down.

The subject of this motion will receive the careful consideration of the Government. I will be only too glad to find that, by reducing still further the rates on the Island Railway, the net results will be improved. If that can be shown, and if there is good reason to believe that by a reduction in the rates we can improve the net results, which I regret to say are still very unfavorable, it will be a matter of very great pleasure to me to recommend such a reduction. But it is a well known fact that the people of Prince Edward Island have perhaps a larger amount of railway accommodation in proportion to the population than any other people in the world. It is equally well known that it costs a large sum of money to give those railway facilities to the people of Prince Edward Island, and regardless altogether of the cost of the work, the operating expenses of the railway on the Island are still very largely in excess of the entire income. Still, of course, I believe the hon. gentleman is correct in saying that the reduction which has been made, has had the effect of decreasing the very large margin that previously existed between revenue and expenditure, and if it were found that by further reductions we could still more decrease the disparity between revenue and expenditure, I shall be only too glad to effect an improvement in the operations of the road by a measure of that kind.

Motion agreed to.

ADMINISTRATOR OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Mr. KILLAM moved for copies of all correspondence, telegrams and cablegrams between the Government and any person or persons, and of any correspondence, telegrams and cablegrams between any persons, the originals or copies of which may be in possession of the Government, and of all Orders in Council, and of any documents or papers in possession of the Government relating to the appointment, or proposed appointment of an Administrator of the Government, or of a Deputy Governor, to act during His Excellency's absence from the Dominion in November last. He said: In moving for this correspondence, I am not charging the Government, as I might have done, with any dereliction of duty, or with any assumption of prerogative that does not belong to them. But I think it would be interesting to the public, and to members of this House, to know what took place last autumn, when His Excellency was about leaving for Europe, and the manner in which the gentleman on the Treasury benches treated him, compelling his remaining in the country for a fortnight. The reports which appeared in the press of the country in relation to the matter, are interesting, and are such as to excite the curiosity of any one who cares to look into the matter. I am not bringing the question up out of an idle spirit of enquiry, but simply to state the principle, that I do not think it is a proper thing for the Government of this country to assume powers which, I think, hon. gentlemen opposite assumed in this matter. If, however, they are clear of blame, the correspondence will, of course, show that fact distinctly. About the 20th of October last it was announced that His Excellency was about leaving on a visit to the Mother Country, and that a meeting of Council was to be held for the purpose of appointing an Administrator. On the next day it was announced that His Excellency was unwell, which we all regretted to hear, and unable to leave, as he had intended. This was officially contradicted, and it was stated that the matter had been entirely arranged, and that he was going on the next Friday. We heard soon after that his departure was still further delayed, that he would not leave for two weeks, and that General MacDougall was to come to this country to act as Governor. Now the letters patent are perfectly plain, and it seems odd that such occurrences should have taken place as those to which I refer.