

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). Would the right hon. gentleman give us some idea as to the service to the country which these commercial agents render?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The minor ones, as the hon. gentleman will see from the salaries fixed which are very small, report from time to time whenever they see any chance of trade and they keep us informed as to what trade is going on with Canada in their particular districts. The ones who receive larger salaries, such as Messrs. Larke, Ross, Jardine, Ball and Poindron, are expected to traverse the country more or less in which they reside, to report to us as a rule monthly, or oftener when required, and generally to advise us in what possible direction the trade of Canada can be developed. Of course, most of these gentlemen have been appointed very recently. Mr. Larke is the only old appointment. He has been in New South Wales for a considerable number of years.

Mr. BLAIN. Have there been any new appointments during the present year?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Yes, I gave them. Mr. Ross was appointed at Melbourne, Mr. Jardine at Cape Town, Mr. Ball at Birmingham and Mr. Poindron at Paris.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). Would the right hon. gentleman give us his opinion as to the practical results which they get from this expenditure? Does he regard this expenditure as well justified?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Well, most of these gentlemen have just been appointed. Mr. Ross has only been appointed for six months, Mr. Jardine for about a year, Mr. Ball for two or three months, and Mr. Poindron for six or eight months. How far these gentlemen will succeed in developing trade and commerce I can hardly say as yet. They all appear to be very zealous in calling the attention of the communities in which they reside to the articles that Canada can produce and in making suggestions as far as they can to Canadian manufacturers and merchants as to what classes of articles are best adapted for the markets, in what way they should be prepared and generally how trade can be increased. I am in hopes that they will justify the expenditure of the sum which we are now asking for them, but in most cases the appointments are too recent to say how much or how little they may accomplish. Mr. Larke's reports which have been received for a period of six or seven years are very carefully prepared and I think he has done his utmost to promote trade with Australasia. This trade has shown a very considerable development within the last few years and I have no doubt Mr. Larke has contributed considerably to it. The other gentlemen, I think, will assist more or less in diffusing informa-

tion, but it will rest, of course, very largely with the manufacturers and merchants themselves who may choose to take advantage of it. These officers discharge to a very great extent the functions which are discharged by the consular agents appointed by European countries under somewhat similar circumstances. You may regard them as Canadian consular agents.

Bounties on iron and steel and on the refining of lead. To cover expenditure in connection with the administration of the Acts, \$5,000.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Most of this will be refunded by the parties to whom these bounties are granted. We are obliged, of course, to check the products and will be obliged to increase considerably our vigilance particularly in the case of lead bounties.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). There is an increase of \$2,500.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Yes, the hon. gentleman is aware that we are increasing the bounties on iron and steel and lead and probably there will be a considerable additional output in both of these cases.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I do not quite see, although the hon. gentleman seems to imagine I should, why an increase in the bounties would increase the expenditure.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. It will increase the output and consequently will increase the amount of work that will have to be done, and moreover I suspect that the justification for giving the bounty is that a number of lead mines will come into operation which are practically idle now.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). If it covers lead also, I admit there is force in the right hon. gentleman's observation.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. It covers lead. We propose to make these parties pay the expense of inspecting them and seeing that they earn the bounty in conformity with the regulations.

Inspection of staples—chief inspectors, inspectors, deputy inspectors and other employees under the general inspection of the Manitoba Grain Acts, \$48,000.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. These officers were in former times paid out of the Manitoba grain fund and they were paid by fees. We have deemed it better that these officers should receive a fixed salary, and that the fees should go into the consolidated revenue fund. We received from the fees collected up to June 30 of the present year \$76,900, and the total expenses have been \$65,000.