

ize the granting of subsidies in aid of the construction of the lines of railways therein mentioned." He said: This is a Bill similar to one which we have had before us every Session for a number of years, differing only in this, that it proposes to grant a smaller sum than has ever been before allotted in this way to railway companies. There are a large number of railways affected by it, and these are distributed over every Province of the Dominion. Every Province obtains a share, which appears to be somewhat nearly proportionate to the amount of its population, and therefore of its contribution to the revenue. The total amount of the new vote is about \$2,200,000; the total vote \$3,500,000, but \$1,300,000 is not new. Of course, hon. gentlemen know that these are only provisional votes for provisional assistance, and experience has shown that not more, at the outside, than one-half of the votes has ever been used. The average expenditure of these votes for the past five years has been a trifle under \$1,000,000 per annum, although in every year there has been a larger amount appropriated than is voted this year.

HON. MR. SCOTT—Can you point out those that have been granted before?

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I suppose I could, as I go through, if I were to refer to the statements made in the other House; but the fact is, as I say, that the sum is considerably less than it was last year, or any previous year. In fact, the decrease of this expenditure has for some time past occupied the attention of the Government, and it has been gradually diminished, in the hope that before long it may be entirely discontinued.

HON. MR. PROWSE—The leader of the House has emphasized the statement that every Province has been provided for in the Bill. I am glad to know that Prince Edward Island has at last been admitted to have some claim to a portion of those grants. This Bill makes provision for 14 miles of railway in the island at the expense of the Dominion Government, and that is the amount that has been appropriated since the Province entered the Confederation. I take exception to the statement of the hon. gentleman when we are given to understand that the grants this year are in fair proportion to the

population of the Provinces. I find that the amount appropriated in this Bill is \$3,200,000, and it is generally admitted that Prince Edward Island contains a little more than one-fortieth of the population of the Dominion: consequently, the fair share of Prince Edward Island would be about \$80,000, and instead of that it is only some \$9,600.

HON. MR. McCALLUM—The leader, in moving the second reading of this Bill, says that this appropriation in aid of railways is getting less. I hope it will soon get beautifully less. I regret exceedingly that the Government of the country did not bring down the resolutions earlier in the Session. Here we are requested to vote away over three millions of dollars, in the space of sixteen or eighteen hours, to assist railways. The leader of the House may know whether this is a proper appropriation or not. In some cases I know we are asked to subsidize a railway running right alongside another one. The Government of this country have done this before. Whether that is in the interest of the people or not, of course, it is for the people to judge. We know that the railway already there does not much more than pay expenses, and if there is another one subsidized by the Government to run alongside of it for forty-eight miles, of course the commerce of the country has got to pay enough to keep up both of them. Subsidizing railways is not a new thing. I remember years ago, when I had a seat in the Ontario Legislature, the Premier of the Province brought down a Bill appropriating \$3,900,000 of the people's money to aid railways. He gave us thirty hours to pass the Bill; but we are allowed only fifteen or sixteen hours here. I opposed that appropriation. I am satisfied I was right there, and that I am right now, because we ought to have full explanations in reference to the expenditure of this money. There are no less than twenty-one railways to be subsidized under this Bill. Can any one who hears me say how much new country they are going to open up, how many of them will compete with existing railways, or how many of them will run through portions of the country where people ought to build their own railways? I have had no explanation of that, but I am