

The Intercolonial Railway is Now of Some Use to the People, is a Credit to the Dominion of Canada and a Contributor to the Common Fund Instead of a Drain.

Ottawa, July 4.—The position which the Intercolonial Railway occupies today, compared with what it would have been had it been built as a matter of course, is a credit to the Dominion of Canada and a contributor to the common fund instead of a drain.

These Earnings Have Grown Rapidly and Significantly. They have grown until they exceed the earnings of last year, which was a record year, by over three-quarters of a million dollars. The fact that we have over 50 per cent. of earnings in excess of the earnings when the change of government took place in 1896, is a credit to the Dominion of Canada and a contributor to the common fund instead of a drain.

How Much Better a Position the Intercolonial Railway is today, in the year of grace, 1900, than it was under the administration of my honorable friend, I do not know. I am willing to do what I can to help the Dominion of Canada and to contribute to the common fund instead of being a drain.

trouble in showing that there had been anything more than an infinitesimal increase in the actual business of the Intercolonial Railway due to that extension.

Now, we have a very unfavorable condition as respects our locomotive power. I do not hesitate to say that the locomotives in use upon the Intercolonial Railway are of an inferior character, and not worthy of the Intercolonial Railway.

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And, in the supplementary for the current year, and in the supplementary for the year to come.

Mr. Powell—What about this \$1,615,000 capital account in the supplementary brought down last night?

Mr. Blair—I have included the sum in my statement here. I have already mentioned that \$1,615,000 of that amount is for rolling stock. I have shown that the \$1,615,000 in the supplementary, the \$1,615,000 in the main estimates, and the \$1,615,000 in the supplementary for the current year, making a total of \$1,615,000.

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1896-7 \$2,866,028
1897-8 2,117,608
1898-9 2,721,251
1899-1900 4,523,000

A steady, continuous and marked growth, the possibilities of which were entirely unappreciated and denied by hon. gentlemen opposite in their criticisms upon the statements which were made. Now, Sir, there is a parallel in the life of the Intercolonial Railway for such a statement as I have presented to you. No stagnation was there during the Intercolonial during all the preceding years. It has taken a fresh start; it has received a stimulus. I do not care where it gets the stimulus from, the fact remains, and that may be taken as some evidence that the policy and the administration of this government have not been erroneous or mistaken. Now, I ask you to compare the four years which I have given you with the four years just preceding, some of which were as prosperous years as we ordinarily have in the maritime provinces. Put the figures for the two periods alongside of each other, and you will be able to draw your own conclusions. The earnings in those four years were as follows:

1892-3 \$1,602,000
1893-4 2,217,250
1894-5 2,842,500
1895-6 2,867,500

The Service Has Been Satisfactory. The officers of the road from the general manager down, are assured that the results have been much more favorable in every way than under the previous system of contracting. After the first contract expired I thought I would perhaps get a little further, and I said: You will guarantee us 10 per cent. saving, but we will be sure to get it. I thought I would suppose even at that rate it would be profitable to them—they guaranteed that the cost per 1000 miles would be 15 per cent. less than it had been prior to the time they contracted with us. Now we have this arrangement actually entered into. We find that the cost per 1000 miles of the Intercolonial Railway has been year by year coming down, until it is now 25 per cent. less than it was when we first contracted with them. We have pretty nearly struck rock bottom. Under the operation of the old contracts it cost to oil an Intercolonial railway engine per thousand miles \$3.72, to oil a passenger car 80 cents per 1000 miles, and to oil a freight car 52 cents. Now we have got down to the point that for locomotives we are paying 25 per cent. less, for passenger cars 25 per cent. less, and for freight cars 25 per cent. less. We have, therefore, actually saved under this contract \$1,000,000 a year and upwards in the cost of oil for the Intercolonial Railway.

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