

how urgently he required these items: Removal of beacon rock, British Columbia, \$9,800; Guelph Custom house, \$6,378.36; Shippegan harbor, \$9,630.27; Grasshopper relief, \$380.10; Criminal statistics, \$4,558.75; Australian exhibition, \$6,959.20; Cow Bay, Cape Breton, \$1,343.84; military stores, ammunition, &c., \$71,973.34, making, as I said before, a total of \$134,718.63. These warrants were brought down on 9th of February, 1878, and Parliament met on the day previous to the date down to which that return comes. Some of these warrants bear date the 9th February, 1878, and Parliament met on the 7th day of February on that year. The hon. gentleman will see from the language of the heading of his return, that it is a statement of the special warrants drawn from the 1st of July, 1877, to the 9th February, inclusive. Now, Sir, in respect of all these appropriations, the hon. member must admit that there was no authority for them, and no urgency for them, except that these appropriations having been made by Parliament during its previous Session, the work was undertaken by Government and contracts were entered into, and the faith of the Government was pledged to the payment of the contractor when his contract was finished, even though, in the meantime, the vote had lapsed. I stated to the House what the expenditure of the hon. member's Government during the six months prior to the meeting of Parliament in 1878 had been, but I find I have only stated those which fall under the head of Consolidated Fund expenditure. But that hon. gentleman and his colleagues had found that expenditures on capital account were urgently and immediately required to no less a sum than \$236,587.66.

Mr. LANDERKIN. That was when wheat was worth \$1 for half a bushel.

Mr. THOMPSON. I am measuring the hon. gentleman in his own half bushel. The hon. member for Bothwell perhaps will call attention to the urgency of some of the items of capital expenditure which were required, and had not been foreseen or provided for, and he will find them as follows: Ottawa public buildings, tower, \$8,950; Ottawa buildings, western block extension, \$142,325.80; Intercolonial Railway freight cars, \$76,736.72; Intercolonial Railway expenses before the Supreme Court—almost as iniquitous a claim as that of the St. Catharines Milling and Lumber Company—\$8,575.14. And those amounts, extending not over a whole year, but over less than six months, came to nearly \$400,000. Some observations were made by the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake) as to one item of this statement, in respect of which he said it was quite apparent, or, at all events, his argument was to that effect, that there could be no urgent or immediate requirement. That was with regard to the appropriation for the St. Catharines Milling and Lumber Company, and I suppose special attention was called to that item because it might kindle some political feeling in relation to the particular case in respect of which those costs were paid. Let me call the attention of the House, however, to the fact that as regards that item of \$4,000, it is less than one-half of the sum which Parliament voted for that service last Session. The hon. gentleman base some argument on the fact that the Order in Council for the payment of the \$4,000 was made in February and the warrant did not issue till April.

Mr. BLAKE. No, it was not that item. The item for the St. Catharines Milling and Lumber Company was dated 12th April, I think—that is the date of the Order in Council just before we met.

Mr. THOMPSON. That claim, as I said, was less than half what Parliament voted for that service. The costs had been actually incurred under the authority of Parliament, and the amount had not been paid before, for the reason that I gave in reference to other balances, that although costs were being incurred from day to day, the

case had not reached a stage in which they could properly be taxed and payment made.

Mr. BLAKE. I would just say in regard to that point that the expenditure on account of the St. Catharines Milling and Lumber Company is not stated in this return to be any part of a lapsed balance.

Mr. THOMPSON. It is, nevertheless.

Mr. BLAKE. It may be so, and of course it may be another error in printing or otherwise.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I should like to know whether the Minister of Justice has the dates of the Orders in Council passed in 1877, or whether he was simply giving a general statement with respect to the date at which the return was laid on the Table of Parliament. The information will, of course, be given fully when the return for which I move is brought down, but it has a bearing on the question in hand. I am rather inclined to think the hon. gentleman will find that the date given refers to the date of the return. That is my impression. I see the dates do not appear to be given.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. You were wrong.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. If we were in the same box we shall be glad to be put in the right way, and we hope you will be of the same mind. I do not think the hon. gentleman will find it is quite so, for I notice that the dates are 20th and 30th October, and the last date is given as the 17th December. The last of the whole list, I say, is apparently an Order on 17th December, 1877, for public works, approved by the Governor General in Council on 24th December, a good while before Parliament met. I rather think the hon. gentleman will find that the date, 9th February, 1878, simply refers to the date at which the return was presented. And I may observe that I think this form of statement which was used in my time is to be commended for other reasons. Under it the Orders and copies of the reports of the committees were printed, the very thing for which I am going to move; and I think that was drawn in a more business shape, and more in conformity with the dignity of a Parliament, than the one at present in my hands.

Mr. BLAKE. But it would increase the cost of printing.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. No doubt it would add to the expense of printing, but if there are any subjects on which light is wanted it is on points like these. The other matter deserves a little consideration, and I speak under correction in regard to it. I think the Audit Act, under which we now work, was passed as late as 1878, and I am not quite certain as to the terms of the Act under which we worked previously. The First Minister, whose memory is good on these points, can perhaps inform us.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I cannot say.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. It also will be a matter worthy of enquiry to ascertain whether these orders are under an Act passed as late as 1878, because I think we appointed the Auditor General to whom the Audit Act has special reference. I do not attach the same importance to items with respect to lapsed balances that I do to other items being paid, for two or three reasons. One is that the matter having been discussed in Parliament, and parliamentary authority having been obtained, although there might be grounds which my hon. friend pointed out on which they might be objectionable, yet they were not *prima facie* so objectionable. Another point is this, that, as regards public works particularly, I am aware that it was found necessary during Mr. Mackenzie's Administration as well as under other Governments, to push them forward in order to prevent damage being done to the works. As regards public works, no doubt this is a difficult ques-