

the conduct of such ferries. This is a matter seriously affecting my constituency as well as the western frontier, at such points as Sarnia, Windsor, Sandwich and Amherstberg, and also at Kingston, Brockville and Prescott on the St. Lawrence. It is very desirable that the Government should deal with this matter, and that such regulations should be put in force by the Governor in Council as would meet the necessities of the several municipalities interested. At Windsor we have a very superior line of iron ferry boats, running constantly between that port and Detroit, from six in the morning until midnight, and carrying a large number of passengers, and a great quantity of freight. It seems to me that it is the duty of the Government to deal with this matter without further delay. The municipal authorities should have full power given them to regulate and control these ferries, and also to enforce the penalties against them for any breach of the conditions of their licenses. It is now nearly twelve years since the passing of the Act referred to. So far, it seems to me to have been inoperative, and should any litigation arise it is doubtful whether a municipality could enforce its authority against the owners of the ferries. I hope the matter will receive the immediate attention of the Government.

Motion agreed to.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND RAILWAY RATES.

Mr. MUTTART moved for a statement showing lists of articles on which freight rates had been lowered, with amount of reduction, on the Prince Edward Island Railway, since the year 1878; also, copies of all correspondence relating to further lowering of rates, including passenger fares charged on said railway. He said: In making this motion, I may say that, on a former occasion, during the Session of 1880, I introduced a motion somewhat similar to the one now submitted. At that time I ventured to assert that I believed, if freight rates were lowered on the Prince Edward Island Railway, on certain articles, especially agricultural produce, it would not only prove a great advantage and convenience to the people, but would also be a source of constantly increased revenue to the Government. Since then a small reduction has been effected in the Tariff rates on some articles. And what has been the result? In the report of the Minister of Railways, laid before Parliament the other day, we are told, by the superintendent of the Prince Edward Island Railway, that "very considerable reductions were made in freight rates during the year, notably on potatoes and on goods ex steamer *Northern Light*, nevertheless, the earnings have shown an increase." This is just the result that was anticipated. But, apart from the subject of the lowering of rates leading, in certain cases, to increased business, and consequently increased receipts, the people of the Island have a right to special consideration in the management of their railway. The Island is essentially agricultural, and, therefore, the first consideration should be to afford the utmost facilities to the farmers in transporting their produce to market. The Island Railway, it will be remembered, is a local road not connecting directly with the railway system of the mainland. Being a surface road, it is by no means a straight one. Consequently, a great distance is travelled in getting from one point to another than if there were fewer curvatures. Farmers are, therefore, charged, in having their produce carried by rail, for greater mileage than they would otherwise be if the road were straighter. Then again, the road only cost about \$16,000 per mile. These, and various other reasons, might be urged in favor of still further reducing freight rates on this road. As regards passenger tariffs on the Island Railway, I certainly think the rates should be lowered. Instead of charging 3 cents per mile, as at present, for first class passenger fare, the charge should be only 2 cents a mile, and return second

Mr. PATTERSON (Essex).

class tickets should be given, as in the case of first class return tickets. I feel confident that, if the passenger rates were lowered as I have indicated, that the next year's report of the superintendent would be able to say, in regard to passengers, what he has this year stated regarding the result of lowering of freight rates. During the recess, the hon. Minister of Railways, in his official capacity, inspected our Island Railway, and I hope, from his personal knowledge of the road and of the exceptional requirements of the people of the Island, he will endeavor to carry out their wishes in this respect, by lowering both the freight and passenger rates on the Prince Edward Island Railway.

Mr. HACKETT. In rising to second the motion of my hon. friend, I desire to say that this question of lowering the rates on the Island Railway is one of great importance to the whole Island. As is well known, and as my hon. friend has stated, the Island Railway cost but a small amount of money in its construction. The people of the Island had begun the construction of the railway before the Island entered the Confederation, and it was intended that the road should be a narrow gauge railway, a surface road, that many curves would be allowed, that the cost of construction would be small, and that consequently freight and passenger rates be over that road would also be small. Unfortunately, however, the Local Government had the fixing of the rates before the Island entered Confederation, after which the Dominion Government assumed the responsibility of running the whole of the road, and of fixing the rates the same as those charged on the Intercolonial Railway. This was considered by the people as very unjust, for the reason I have already stated, because the rates are very much greater on the Intercolonial Railway. There are many short curves on that road, and, fixing the rates on the Island road according to mileage, is very much in excess of what it would be on the Intercolonial Railway. This matter was brought to the notice of the Government in 1880, and I am glad to find that the hon. gentleman who now administers the Department of Railways has thought proper to make a reduction on the carriage of certain articles. The people of the Island are principally agriculturists, and the commodities which they require to send to market are of a bulky and weighty nature, having no very great value. The principal products of the Island are oats and potatoes. These cannot be conveyed over the road at present for more than fifty miles, because it is quite impossible for the farmers to sell their commodities at sufficient prices to enable them to pay the freight of their commodities over more than fifty miles of the railway. It is a well known fact that the fall season on the Island is very short, and that the harbors, with the exception of one or two, close very early, and it is of great importance that the people should move their produce during that short season. To do this they should be allowed to move them to the furthest point, 100 or 200 miles over the railway, but on account of the very high rates charged they are not able to send them more than fifty miles. The consequence is, that many of the products of the Island remain in the hands of the farmers and traders, and they send them by water in the spring. This is a matter that should be considered by the Government. The Island Railway has to compete with water, and carriage by water is much the cheaper, for no part of the Island is more than seventy miles from the water. The Government should lower the rates on these articles so that the farmers can send them over the whole length of the railway, particularly in the fall. With regard to the articles on which rates have been lowered, I have figures to show that an increase has taken place in the transportation of those articles as well as in the revenue. In 1880, when this matter was brought before Parliament, only 34,699 tons of potatoes and roots were sent over the railway. In 1881, after a reduction had been made by the