

Mr. ROSS. I am not sure that next year's Supplementary Estimates will not contain \$20,000 more.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I hope not.

Mr. ROSS. And I too. This is not the only Commission. There is the Civil Service Commission besides, and there may be a great many more, before the Government sees fit to vacate those benches and leave them to other occupants, who, perhaps, may manage our affairs without employing so many Commissions. This is a serious matter.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. We have resisted so far the pressure of the leader of the Opposition to appoint another Commission.

251. Intercolonial Railway.—To refund to Mr. H. G. C. Ketchum, amount of an over charge for the conveyance of rails, &c., in 1866-67-68, over what is now a portion of the Intercolonial Railway..... \$1,637.70

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. This claim comes under the category of old claims. Mr. Ketchum was a contractor for the construction of a railway in New Brunswick to the boundary of Nova Scotia, previous to Confederation; but this railway was not completed until after Confederation. The contract that the Government of New Brunswick made, bound them to carry materials for this contract at cost. The railway was owned and operated at that time by the Government of New Brunswick, and at Confederation it came into our hands. The contractor complained that a portion of this contract had not been carried out, and that he had been charged more than cost, entering this claim. It was pressed upon the Government of New Brunswick, who virtually admitted it, but said, that as the receipts of the road had gone into the Dominion Treasury, this charge ought to be paid by us. This claim had been pressed and discussed for some years. I referred all the papers to Mr. Shanly, who found that Mr. Ketchum was entitled, under the contract, to the amount stated, the payment of which he recommended. This report I referred to the Chief Engineer, Mr. Schrieber, the manager of Government Railways, and he confirmed Mr. Shanly's conclusion, considering that this amount ought to be paid, being an over-charge, and consequently it has been placed in the Estimates.

Mr. BLAKE. Will the hon. gentleman state the date of the reports of Messrs. Shanly and Schrieber?

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Mr. Shanly's report was made on the 5th of May, 1882.

Mr. WELDON. When was the claim made?

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. It has always been made since, and immediately after the work was performed.

Mr. WELDON. I believe that Mr. Ketchum was a sub-contractor.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I said that Mr. Ketchum was the contractor who constructed the road.

Mr. WELDON. Of course he was a contractor, but he was a sub-contractor.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The contract virtually passed into his hands, and the settlement took place between him and the Government of New Brunswick.

Mr. WELDON. The Government of New Brunswick had nothing whatever to do with him, in my recollection. Clark, Major & Co. had the contract, and they sub-let it to Mr. Ketchum. Clark, Major & Co. settled with the Government of New Brunswick; and the latter made a claim in this connection on the Dominion Government. I think that, as far as my recollection goes, I never heard of such a claim as this being made on the Government of New Brunswick in any connection; nor did Mr. Ketchum have any connection whatever with the Government of New Brunswick. He was simply a sub-contractor on account of Clark,

Sir CHARLES TUPPER.

Major & Co., who had to pay him, while the New Brunswick Government settled with them. This matter was finally and conclusively settled between Clark, Major & Co. and the Government of New Brunswick.

Mr. BLAKE. It is utterly impossible for the Minister to expect us to pass an item of this kind with this information. Why is this matter brought forward in the Supplementary Estimates without having previously laid all the papers on the Table? Here is a claim, which he says has been made ever since the work was constructed; that is, ever since Confederation, since 1867-68. It has been pressed on the Government for fifteen years, and yet it has never been communicated to Parliament.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I did not say that. I said it arose out of a contract made before Confederation.

Mr. BLAKE. But to the hon. gentleman who has just sat down, the hon. gentleman said it had been pressed ever since the work was done.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. It was not done until some time after Confederation.

Mr. BLAKE. Well, I find the statement here to be 1866-67-68—that is, partly before, partly during, and partly the year after Confederation. Here we have a claim of that age which, according to the statement of an hon. member for New Brunswick, was a contract made with the Province of New Brunswick by a particular contractor other than the one whose name appears in the vote, that his contract was settled and now we have it started up in this Parliament while no correspondence is before us. Why was this claim not made against the Government of New Brunswick?

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. It was, and the Government of New Brunswick practically admitted the soundness of the claim. But meantime the road passed into the hands of the Dominion, and they thought this Government should pay.

Mr. BLAKE. That is a cheap admission, and I dare say we would all be willing to admit that our neighbors should pay our debts. When did they turn over Mr. Ketchum to the Dominion Government with this valuable admission, and how long has the Dominion Government had the matter under their consideration, and how is it that it comes up now? We now learn that in a particular instance, a portion of the Intercolonial Railway was run at a large profit, because it appears that this claim arose out of the fact that the contractor stipulated that these rails should be conveyed at cost, and it turns out that they were conveyed at a profit of \$1,637. Of course no more was charged for them than for other freight, and therefore the whole freight of the road was carried at a great profit. I think perhaps it would cheer us, and perhaps teach the hon. gentleman how to make money out of the road to-day, if he would give us the particulars of how it was managed that the Intercolonial was run at so large a profit in those good old days, when this gentleman was charged so much over cost for transporting his rails. I never heard so old a claim brought forward before, or a claim having such slight foundation as this one. The hon. gentleman admits that it was the New Brunswick Government which was liable, but he says we have taken over the property, and therefore we should pay the profit. Not so. We took particular railways at an understood price from the Province of New Brunswick, and having done so we had the right to run them at our own terms; and if there was some opposition on the part of the New Brunswick Government to Mr. Ketchum, though, as I understand from the remarks of the hon. member for St. John, there was none,—but it there was such an obligation it was an obligation which the Government of New Brunswick had to implement themselves,—and if that Government chose to charge more than the regular rate, it should be settled by those who made the bargain and not by this Govern-