

has fallen during the last ten years from 30 to 40 per cent., and in some instances very much more, for the reason I have mentioned, and that alone. It has resources equal to those of any other part of Canada I know of, but it has not facilities for communication with the outside world. If the Short Line Railway is diverted to St. John and made a long line, this Central Railway has the merits, independent of being a through line and a portion of the short line, that should receive attention; and I can assure the hon. Minister of Railways that had we known the policy of the Government had been changed, and that local lines would be subsidized, the different schemes being considered in regard to the resources with which the sections of the country were endowed, the claims of this road would have been pressed more vigorously. As it is, a large petition was presented to the Governor in Council from that district, asking for this railway to be assisted; I do not know the number of signatures attached, but the petition was a large one. I press the claims of this road, but I am not personally interested in it, and it will not bring railway communication nearer to me than it is at present, in the interest of a portion of my constituents, and portions of the counties of Queen's and King's—the member for King's I see before me, and he no doubt will speak for himself. In conclusion, I beg to say that this railway should have received larger consideration, or at all events some consideration, at the hands of the Government.

Mr. ROSS (Middlesex). I regret exceedingly, as was stated by the hon. leader of the Opposition, that we have so little information before us with respect to the railways to be aided. I think it is very desirable, indeed, that in voting such a large sum as \$2,138,000 we should have full information furnished in regard to the various lines of railway to be aided; that we should have a map especially of the Eastern Provinces, so that we could see the various connections to be made. We should also have information as to the nature of the country to be travelled, the traffic to be secured, the resources which the railway is expected to develop so that we might form an intelligent judgment as to the propriety of voting the subsidies. Hon. gentlemen will remember, and particularly the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Rykert) will remember, that in the Ontario Legislature before an Order in Council was passed granting aid to any railway, full information as to the cost of constructing the road, as to the cost of working the road, as to the financial status of the company asking aid, as to the resources of the country through which the railway was to pass, and information of a similar nature, was furnished.

Mr. RYKERT. There is a rule to that effect, but it is very seldom adhered to.

Mr. ROSS (Middlesex). I am speaking of the rule, and it is a very important one, because such information is necessary in order to form a proper judgment as to the propriety of voting the money proposed. I think this legislation is very hasty, that these subsidies are to be voted very hastily. I do not agree with the hon. member for Lincoln, that the hon. leader of the Opposition is inconsistent with himself because he objects to voting these subsidies now, having, when leader of the Government in Ontario, passed several Orders in Council through the House to assist different railways in the Province. I do not think the statement of the hon. member for Lincoln is correct. His statement was that the Ontario Legislature voted money without information as to the railways to be subsidized, that legislation was forced upon the House, that the House had no opportunity of judging as to whether the roads to be aided required the desired aid, that the Orders in Council were forced through the House in a night, and so on. The hon. member for Lincoln should know, for he was in the Legislature at the time, that the House was in

Mr. BURPEE (Sunbury).

full possession of all necessary information in regard to every one of the railways to be aided, and had been in possession of information with regard to some of them for a long time. I will give the hon. gentleman the date and then he can make the necessary calculations. On 21st February notice was given of the railway aid resolutions; on the 22nd the debate commenced, and ended on the 23rd; on the 24th the report was received and Bill introduced founded thereon; the Bill was not read the second time until the 27th; the third reading was on the 28th, and on the 29th the Orders in Council were passed. Let us bear that date in mind, and we will see how long the House was in possession of the information on which they were expected to pass judgment.

Mr. RYKERT. Of what year?

Mr. ROSS (Middlesex). February, 1872. There were ten railway companies aided. Information respecting the Kingston and Pembroke, the Canada Central, the Montreal and Ottawa, and Grand Junction, was laid on the Table on February 5th, and therefore the House had twenty-four days to consider whether aid should be granted to those four companies. On February 7th information in regard to the Midland, Toronto, Simcoe and Muskoka was laid on the Table of the House, so that members had twenty-two days to consider whether aid should be granted to those lines. On February 8th information was laid on the Table with respect to the Wellington, Grey and Bruce, and Toronto Grey and Bruce, and thus members had twenty-one days to consider whether aid should be granted to those companies. And on 16th February information was laid on the Table of the House as to the Toronto and Nipissing and Hamilton and Lake Erie, so that the House had thirteen days to consider the giving of aid to these railways. Further supplementary information was brought down on the 20th, so that hon. gentleman will see that varying from thirteen to twenty-four days the House had ample time to consider all the information laid before it, as to whether various lines of railway should receive subsidies; and I think that the hon. gentleman must have agreed in that view himself. I said that the House was asked to pass judgment on this matter on the 29th of February. Now, my hon. friend says that the Ontario Legislature had not the necessary information on which to pass judgment, but what did the hon. gentleman do? Without that necessary information the hon. gentleman voted for every one of these subsidies from the very first to the very last. The first Order in Council was moved on the 29th of February, and there were only some nine members of the House who voted against it. The other members voted for it. How many of them did so? Sixty-two voted yea, and seven nay; and among those who chose, without information on which to pass judgment, as the hon. gentleman said, to do this, I find the names of Reed, Robertson, Rykert, &c.; and this runs down through to the tenth Order in Council. But what did my hon. friend do when the tenth Order in Council was proposed? He gets up—no, he did not get up, hon. M. C. Cameron, the leader of the Opposition got up, and moved an amendment as follows:—

"That while this House is willing to make all just provision for railways, and assents to the said resolution, it feels bound to express the opinion that the said Order in Council, together with nine other Orders in Council, involving an aggregate appropriation of \$1,500,000, having only been placed on the Table of this House at its Session yesterday, and the Government, to repeated requests, having refused to give information as to the undertakings they intended to pass Orders in Council in favor of, till this House had voted an additional subsidy of \$400,000 and a further appropriation of \$100,000 a year for twenty years, Government has not given this House sufficient time for the consideration of the said Order in Council, to enable it to give an intelligent and just judgment upon the claims of the several enterprises, and that in future Orders in Council requiring the ratification of this House should be submitted at an earlier period of the Session, and should not be taken into consideration by this House until the same has been before the House for at least five days."