

ence was given for coal and lumber, and wheat had to stand still. That was the condition of things. It was not so much a shortage of cars as of locomotives. The cars were strewn along the tracks for weeks for want of locomotives.

Hon. Mr. SULLIVAN—It was an abnormal crop.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—What about the crop the previous year? The same condition existed.

Hon. Mr. SULLIVAN—It was abnormal too. It ran from fifteen bushels an acre up to forty. No railway could foresee that.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—The crops had been abnormal for the last ten years.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—Could the hon. gentleman tell us what effect the ten million that was provided for rolling stock has had?

Hon. Mr. WATSON—I can say that it will be required, and more. I am satisfied that in the next four or five years there will be two hundred million bushels of wheat to move out of that western country, and you have to provide for it, and you have to provide by your legislation that these railroad corporations, which are supposed to furnish accommodation for the public do furnish that accommodation, and possess the rolling stock. The hon. gentleman from Rockland asks why should you expect railroad companies to furnish cars that they would have to use only three or four months in the year and have them standing idle the remainder of the year? He might as well ask why has a farmer to use his binder only a few days in the year and have it lying idle the rest of the time. The rates charged for the service are sufficient to pay for that short season, and as long as the rates are charged the company could afford to furnish the rolling stock. We expect this commission will compel them to furnish that rolling stock and accommodation. The hon. member from Rockland says he is a free trader, and that competition should regulate everything. I do not know if such a thing exists here or not, but at the present time we have a lumber combine in the North-west—lumbermen and saw-mill men.

Hon. Mr. WATSON.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—He was not connected with that.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—I do not know, and these men are not doing business independently. They have a lumber combine.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—What has that to do with this?

Hon. Mr. WATSON—And they force up the price of lumber two or three dollars a thousand. I will say this about the Canadian Pacific Railway, that they reduced the freight on lumber from British Columbia, but the lumbermen raise the price of lumber to the difference in the extra freight, and let the farmers suffer. I think this clause should stand. I do not think any board will require anything unreasonable of a railway corporation. It is very important that the farmers of the North-west should get their crop to markets as quickly as possible. It requires about 62 per cent of the receipts of the crop to pay expenses, and the farmer surely knows his own business. Last year on account of the shortage of rolling stock for getting the grain to Port Arthur in sufficient time to go by water to the east, some five or six million bushels of wheat were shipped all rail at 19 cents a bushel from there to Montreal. That should not be, and the farmer knows his own business. I venture to say that 50 per cent of the grain grown in Ontario sold in the fall months before the 1st January. The people in the west want to participate in the market. The best season to dispose of the grain is in the fall, and we want to get our grain to market. I trust the committee will see fit to let this clause stand as it is, so that the commission will have all power possible to force the companies to furnish rolling stock for the transportation of goods.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—Before any hon. gentleman rises to reply to the exhaustive speech of the hon. gentleman from Portage la Prairie, I should like to suggest to the hon. Secretary of State and the leader of the opposition whether they cannot make an arrangement as to the time next week to have a vote taken on this clause.

Hon. Mr. KERR (Toronto)—Railway companies have great privileges in Canada. They have the monopoly of being the com-