

Statement showing the approximate earnings of the Canada Eastern section of the Intercolonial railway from October 1, 1904, to March 31, 1909:—

	Total earnings.
Six months ending March 31, 1905. \$ 52,426 68	
Twelve months ending March 31, 1906. . . . .	139,220 95
Twelve months ending March 31, 1907. . . . .	141,426 37
Twelve months ending March 31, 1908. . . . .	149,903 32
Twelve months ending March 31, 1909. . . . .	144,760 71
	\$627,738 03

(Sgd.) W. H. ESTANO,  
Traffic Auditor.

So that hon. gentlemen will see that the disparity between the earnings and working expenses continues right to the bitter end. With respect to the Canada Eastern road, it may be said that it was the most promising of all the roads connecting with the Intercolonial railway, and the authorities of the Intercolonial railway were of opinion that it would be a good thing as a matter of business that they should acquire this road, and hon. gentlemen can see what the result has been from a pecuniary point of view to the Dominion of Canada. The hon. gentleman from Fredericton (Mr. Wood) stated in a former discussion that before the road was taken over it served the purposes of the country very well, and that there was practically as much traffic over this road before the government took it over as there has been since. As we have taken this road over, we have to stand by our bargain; but when the proposition comes up, as we know the proposition has come up, that the government should take over a number of other branches of the railway which do not promise nearly as well as the Canada Eastern did, surely as a business people we should see that there is some guarantee that the country is not going to be mulcted in very large sums without any corresponding advantage to the public. I notice in reading the debate in the other House that the hon. Minister of Railways was at first disposed to concur in the amendments, and I think proposed to move concurrence, and then an hon. gentleman representing a constituency in New Brunswick rose and made rather a fierce onslaught on the action of the majority

of the Senate and a very large majority too, and the conclusion that I drew from reading that hon. gentleman's speech in another place was that he did not wish to have the public protected, and, I suppose, relying upon his local knowledge, the Minister of Railways withdrew from the attitude which he had at first assumed, and the Commons decided not to agree to our amendment, and this is the message which the Commons sent up to us, that the House disagrees to the amendment of the Senate because the said amendment unnecessarily and ineffectually attempts to limit the power of future parliaments. I understand that there was some criticism of the Senate amendments in another place not long since; but if we were disposed to be critical, we might very easily riddle the reason. Hon. gentlemen can see that there is not much substance in the reason for disagreeing, because the third clause of the Bill as it passed the Commons contained a proviso intending to protect the public interest, to the effect that no such lease should have any force or effect until the government railway managing board and the chief engineer of the Department of Railways and Canals should have approved of the terms and conditions of said lease, and until the parliament of Canada had ratified such lease. The amendment further protected the public interest by enacting that further information to enable parliament to form an intelligent opinion should be submitted. The objection to the amendment made by the Senate providing for certain further restrictions appears to me to be ill-founded. I think it is due to our own dignity and self-respect that we should insist upon our amendment. We should send a message to the Commons, if the House adopts my view, that we insist upon our amendment. I understand that they are prepared to modify their decision, and they will ask for a conference and this House will appoint three managers who will meet the managers from the House of Commons, and I assume an agreement will be arrived at a sort of compromise arrangement, which I hope will provide that the substance of our amendment, at any rate, shall hold good.