

SUPPLY.

House in Committee of Supply.

Mr. FIELDING. Two items remain in the main estimates and we might take them up to-night. Of course if hon. gentlemen opposite regard either of them as important and desire to have them stand we will let them stand although the supplementary estimates which will come down very soon, I hope to-morrow, will contain items in relation to most of these things and therefore there will be ample opportunity for discussion.

Charges of management, \$241,400.

Mr. FIELDING. These items, as will be seen, are the same as usual with the exception of two or three small increases in the case of the offices of the assistant receiver general, amounting to the sum of \$1,150 all told. These increases are found necessary owing to our estimate of last year having been found rather close. In the supplementary estimates I find it is necessary to have items relating to some of these votes with a view to making readjustments of the salaries of some of these officials.

A line or lines of steamers to run between St. John and Halifax, or either, and the West Indies and South America, \$80,700.

Mr. FIELDING. That item was held over in consequence of a question being raised as to whether the service should be continued to the same ports. The contractor had made a suggestion of some change involving the dropping of St. John. The conclusion of the government was to continue the service on the same route as before.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. For what time is it continued?

Mr. FIELDING. It is an annual vote but the contract has been continued for five years.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Who are the contractors?

Mr. FIELDING. Messrs. Pickford & Black. The contract will be renewed for a term of five years, the ports to be the same. There is some question of the dropping of some ports in the West Indies; that will be a matter for negotiation with the imperial government. For the present we have not determined upon any change.

Steam communication between St. John and ports on Minas Basin and Cumberland Basin, \$3,000.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Why was that left over?

Mr. FIELDING. I think owing to the absence of the member for Cumberland (Mr. Logan) owing to his illness. As that hon. member is still absent perhaps we should allow it to stand over if any hon. gentleman has a question to ask.

Mr. FITZPATRICK.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I do not know of any particular question.

Mr. FIELDING. Let it go then.

To provide for expenditure in connection with Transportation Commission, \$15,000.

Mr. FIELDING. This item was left over to furnish an explanation in connection with the work of the commission.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I asked that that item should stand until the government gave us a full explanation of what the Transportation Commission have done. I do not think it will take them very long to tell us about that. I wanted to know what they expected they ever would do. But, in short, what I want to know is a statement of what has been accomplished by this commission; how long they have been doing it, and what they are doing now. I want to know all about it from first to last; what its present status is, and what use it is proposed to make of it in the future. I have mentioned this three or four times already this session. If the Minister of Finance would get one of his clerks to turn up the places in 'Hansard' where this item has been mentioned, and one place where I brought it up on the Orders of the Day, he will see what I want.

Mr. FIELDING. My impression is that there was a report showing what progress they had made.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. There was a report of only one place.

Mr. FIELDING. They made an interim report at the beginning of their operations, and I think they have made a later report. However, the hon. gentleman's request is quite reasonable, and I will allow the item to stand.

Prince Edward Island Railway—Murray Harbour Branch and Hillsboro bridge, \$357,400.

Mr. EMMERSON. That item was allowed to stand with the promise that an opportunity would be given later for its discussion.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Has any explanation been given of it already?

Mr. EMMERSON. Yes, and the papers have all been furnished, copies of contracts, and all the papers that have been asked for.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I think we might pass this item with the understanding that it can be reopened.

Mr. FIELDING. It can be taken up on the supplementaries, which will be broad enough to cover a discussion on it.

Mr. EMMERSON. There will be an opportunity of discussing this matter further on the supplementaries.

Some resolutions reported.