

Heretofore in elections the instructions to voters and instructions to returning officers and that class of work were printed locally. This work has been done by the Queen's Printer, and consequently it appears here in a lump sum, instead of coming into the returning officers' expenses to be paid afterwards as part of the expenses of the elections. There are items here also for the expressage of the ballot boxes to their various destinations, and there is an item for clerical work, the largest portion of which is paid for the preparation of the return to be presented to the House of the results of the election in the different constituencies. These items make up a total of \$9,381, as follows:—Express charges \$199, clerical work \$966, ballot boxes \$6,600, printing and stationery \$1,380, travelling expenses \$100, telegraphing \$40.

Mr. McMULLEN. In connection with the ballot boxes, it is a pity that the Government did not adopt more care in the construction of those boxes. In my constituency each ballot box is made with a lock, and the key is tied to the handle. When the deputy returning officer has performed his duty, he locks the box and leaves the key attached to the handle. Thus the locking of the box is a fallacy. The Government should have taken some means of obtaining boxes that were self-locking, and the boxes should have been given by the returning officer to the deputy officer, closed, but unlocked. When the deputy returning officer had performed the necessary inspection in the morning before the poll was opened he could close the lock with a spring, and there should not be a key attached to the handle. The hon. member for Grey had a very narrow escape owing to these keys being attached to the boxes, because the premises were opened and the keys being there the ballot boxes were unlocked and ballots were changed and others substituted.

Mr. FOSTER. Who would count the ballots at the close of the poll?

Mr. McMULLEN. There would be trouble on that point; but the ingenuity of the Government engineers would be able to devise some means of overcoming the difficulty. With respect to the printing of the lists, can the Minister of Finance say what rate is now paid to printers at the Printing Bureau. A few years ago the pay was \$10 a week, and it was raised to \$11, I think.

Mr. FOSTER. The same pay now prevails. Is it not a fact that a seal is attached to each ballot box?

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I doubt very much that a seal is attached, although the law may provide for it.

Mr. FOSTER. Something of the kind was done to the ballot boxes in the division in which I voted. I remained there till the close of the poll.

Mr. FRASER. It is not sufficient security unless the returning officer is thoroughly honest. There is security if there is only one key to the box, and it is given to the presiding officer, and that key at the close of the poll is placed in an envelope secured and initialled by the agent of both parties, and afterwards given to the returning officer and opened in the presence of the parties.

Mr. McMULLEN. The reason I asked with respect to the rate of wages paid to the printers is, that it was understood the pay should be \$11 per

Mr. FOSTER.

week, but on speaking to a printer whom I know he told me the rate is \$14 per week.

Mr. FOSTER. I gave the hon. gentleman my own impression. I have not charge of that department, but I do not think any change has been made. However, I will enquire and give the hon. gentleman the information.

Intercolonial Railway.....\$300,000

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. We desire to have very full explanations from the Minister as to the causes of this enormous sum demanded on behalf of the Intercolonial Railway.

Mr. BOWELL. This sum of \$300,000 required for the Intercolonial Railway: \$4,000 for the Windsor Branch, and \$30,000 for the Prince Edward Island Railway, is to make up a deficiency in the running expenses of the road during the present year over the appropriation which was made during the last session of Parliament. The estimates as originally presented by the department included these sums of \$300,000, \$4,000 and \$30,000, but by some means they were omitted from the Estimates when they came before Parliament. These sums are to provide for the amount that was really asked for by those who were managing the department last year. The same sum is asked this year, namely \$3,700,000. It is made up of items for locomotive power, car expenses, maintenance of way and work, station and train expenses and general charges, making as near as they can approximate it \$3,700,000. It is only a repetition for me to say, that had not the Estimates been changed last year by some error, this deficiency would not now have to be asked for.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Of course the hon. Minister of Customs was not Minister of Railways at the time, but I am afraid that the reason for leaving out that sum, after it had been applied for, was because there was a great reluctance to disclose to the House or to the country the enormous extent of the expected deficit on the Intercolonial Railway; more especially as a good deal of attention had been called to the fact that by reason of certain changes, and by reason of the construction of a line across the State of Maine, we were likely to add enormously to the deficit on the Intercolonial Railway. The statement now made by the hon. Minister would appear therefore, without, I think, any unfair straining of the facts, simply to imply this: That last year the Government, or the party in charge, thought it expedient not to take the House into their confidence as to the amount which was likely to be charged, and the amount of the deficit which was likely to be incurred. Now, I would like to know from the Minister if he can inform us, what at the present time is the charge for conveying coal on the Intercolonial Railway per ton per mile; say from Spring Hill mines, for example?

Mr. BOWELL. Three-tenths of a cent per ton per mile.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Three-tenths of a cent is about half a farthing or a little more. On the English lines, if I am correctly informed, the charge for conveying coal is five-tenths of a cent per ton per mile, and if my memory does not altogether mislead me, it was stated last night by the Minister of Customs in reply to a question from