

various stations who are bound to ask passengers whether or not they are going on the Canadian Pacific Railway or the Intercolonial Railway. Why should a man who is the agent of the Government be compelled to do this? Being a salaried officer of the Government, he should first and last do everything possible for the line of which he is the agent, and not ask people to go over any other line. I say nothing against the enterprise of the Canadian Pacific Railway. They are wise in their generation, but that the Government should lend them that assistance is not in the interests of our railway, nor should it be encouraged, and I hope the Minister of Railways will at once issue orders that no agent of the Intercolonial Railway can act as agent either for the Canadian Pacific Railway or any other company. Any Government agent acting in that dual capacity is bound to make something out of the tickets he sells for other companies and thus help to draw away from the legitimate business of the Government railway. I hope the assurances the Minister has made will be realized. He will pardon me if I say I do not think he has stated sufficiently to lead me to think he is going to save \$500,000 next year; but if he should do so, I shall be the first to congratulate him. But certainly, to my mind, all he has said does not indicate that he is going to save that amount. If he shall do so, without impairing, as he said, because he put both things together, the service to the Lower Province he will have performed a feat which will entitle him, whatever his other shortcomings may be on account of his connection with the party to which he belongs, to the gratitude of this country.

Mr. WOOD (Westmoreland). I will not detain the House very long, but wish to make a few observations while this item is under discussion. I may say, at the outset, I am very glad to have observed the temper in which this question is being discussed at the present time. It is a very decided contrast to many of the discussions we have had on the Intercolonial Railway matters when they have been brought up before the House on former occasions. We have gentlemen on the other side of the House who have discussed the question, I think, very fairly, and I think the Government and their supporters regret as much as they do the present condition financially of the Intercolonial Railway, and would gladly receive suggestions from hon. gentlemen opposite. My object in speaking at all is to remove some of the misapprehensions which appear to exist in the minds of some hon. members of this House in regard to the Intercolonial Railway. The hon. member for East Grey, in the short address he gave us a few moments ago, told us that the Intercolonial Railway would never have been constructed if it had been known that it would have been operated afterwards at a loss. The hon. gentleman who followed him corrected him on that point, and I would emphasize the fact that it is well known that the Intercolonial Railway was not built simply as a commercial enterprise. It is well known that that was one of the smallest considerations at the time. The Intercolonial Railway was one of the bonds to unite the provinces together, it was built also partly from military considerations, and, if any hon. gentleman will refer to the debates which took place after Confederation, and

the remarks which were made previous to Confederation by those who were favouring the union of the provinces, he will find that the opinion was expressed and was generally felt at that time that this road never could pay. Indeed, this opinion was expressed not only by public men on this side of the Atlantic but by public men on the other side of the Atlantic as well. It is well known that during the first few years after the road was finished, it was very far from paying expenses. In fact the results to-day have far exceeded any expectations that were formed at that time. In the years 1881, 1882, 1883 and 1884, under the able management of the present High Commissioner, this road paid its own expenses and left a small margin of profit. It is to be regretted that this condition of affairs does not prevail to-day, but if we look fairly at the condition of things to-day and compare that with the condition of things at that time, the cause will be very readily discovered. I would like to refer very briefly to the figures which have been presented to the House by the hon. member for North Wellington (Mr. McMullen), and I was very sorry indeed to hear the member for Guysborough (Mr. Fraser) to some extent endorse the line of reasoning which was adopted by that hon. gentleman. The whole tenor of that hon. gentleman's remarks was to show that the management of the Intercolonial Railway was very extravagant when compared with the two other great railway systems, the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway, and the hon. gentleman endeavoured to establish that by comparing the cost per mile of the operations of these three lines of railway. I think any hon. gentleman in this House, whether he be an expert in railway matters or not, will see after a moment's reflection that such a comparison is utterly worthless. The cost of operating a railway on the mileage basis depends upon the number of trains run and the amount of passenger and freight traffic carried over the road. If there are fifty trains under the same condition, the cost per mile of operating the road will be nearly fifty times as much as if there were only one, and the receipts would be in the same proportion. The hon. gentleman seemed to answer his own argument by the figures he presented to the House. As I have them, the whole cost of operating the Grand Trunk amounted to \$4,100 a mile, while the cost of the Canadian Pacific Railway is about \$1,853 a mile. No one would argue from this that there is greater extravagance in the management of the Grand Trunk than in the management of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It only shows that the Canadian Pacific has a greater length of line, and a smaller number of trains running over the greater portion of that line, while the Grand Trunk Railway, which passes through a thickly settled portion of country, has a larger number of trains in proportion to its mileage. Thus the cost per mile on the Grand Trunk Railway is more than double that on the Canadian Pacific Railway. These figures must convince any one that this is a very unfair basis of comparison. The basis which the Minister gave us was the train mileage basis, and he stated that that was the fairest basis on which we could compare the cost of operating different lines of railway. I quite agree with him in that, and that is the opinion held by railway experts