

Mr. VERVILLE. I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture when I may expect the return regarding cold storage which I asked for on the 19th of February?

Mr. BURRELL. I will have the return brought down shortly.

RURAL MAIL DELIVERY.

Mr. LEMIEUX. In view of the resolution with reference to rural mail delivery coming before the House in a few days, I would ask the Postmaster General to bring down as soon as possible a statement as to the rural mail delivery routes that have been established since the beginning and all the information which is included in the question which I put the other day and which I was asked to place in the form of a motion. As it is very late in the session I do not think the return to an order of the House could be brought down and I would therefore like the minister to be prepared with these statistics when the resolution is submitted.

Mr. PELLETIER. It will take a very long time to prepare that. If my hon. friend will accept the invitation to come to the department, I will give instructions that he be given the information, because there are so many returns to be prepared that I do not expect to be able to lay them all before the House before prorogation.

Mr. LEMIEUX. I will call and see Mr. Anderson.

Mr. McKENZIE. I wish to call the attention of the hon. the Postmaster General to a question which has been standing in my name for some time. It is important that I should have the answer to this question before the railway estimates are discussed.

Mr. PELLETIER. As I told my hon. friend the other day, I expect to have the answer in three or four days at the outside.

AID TO AGRICULTURE.

Mr. BURRELL moved third reading of Bill (No. 100), for the Aid and Encouragement of Agriculture.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I desire to move an amendment to the Bill similar to the amendment which was moved when the House was in committee on the Bill. The amendment is as follows:

That this Bill be not now read a third time, but that it be referred back to the committee of the Whole House with instructions to amend the same by adding thereto the following as sub-section 2 of section 2:

Any moneys granted under the provisions of this Act shall be apportioned among and paid to the governments of the different pro-

vinces in proportion to the population of each of the provinces as determined by the then last preceding census.

I cannot conceive of any possible reason why this amendment should not be accepted. It is proposed by this Bill to add to the subsidies of the different provinces. Those subsidies have been provided for by the British North America Act and by amendments which have been made from time to time. It was recognized at the time of confederation, and it has always been recognized by parliament since, that when subsidies are granted, they should be granted on a fixed principle, that of the population of the different provinces, so that when those grants are made the people of any province, and the government and the legislature of any province, will feel that they are receiving from the federal government simply what is their right under the law, and not a favour—that they are simply receiving justice and not generosity from the federal authorities. It has always been recognized that it is in the interest of the different provinces and of the whole people of Canada that the provinces shall be kept as independent as possible of the central authority. Now, by this Bill it is proposed to give to the federal government the right to dispose of the subsidies to be granted in aid of agriculture according to the discretion of the government. This is a departure from what has been the well-recognized principle governing provincial subsidies ever since the fathers of confederation met together to frame the British North America Act. My hon. friend the Minister of Agriculture, when he introduced this Bill, stated that it was intended to pay these subsidies in proportion to population. He recognized that that was what ought to be done. Before my hon. friend had called attention to the fact that he had made this statement on a previous occasion, one of the most important members of the government rose in his place and said that it would not do to bind the Governor in Council down to this principle, that cases might arise from time to time where in the opinion of the government it would be desirable to depart from the principle of population and give to a province a larger sum of money than it would be entitled to receive if population were to govern. That showed very clearly the desirability, when we are proposing to grant subsidies in aid of agriculture in the different provinces, to place the principle of apportionment in the statute in black and white, so that no government, either the present or any government in the future, shall depart from that principle, and that the government and people of any province will feel that the amounts they receive for the encouragement of agriculture they receive as a right, as their proper