

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said with regard to the first question there was an existing contract from Little Glace Bay to Sydney for \$282.50 for a tri-weekly service; from Reserve Mines to Sydney, \$156, and from Port Caledonia to Sydney, for \$564, making a total of \$1,002.50 for this service. An offer was made to the Postmaster General by a responsible person to do the whole service daily for \$900 a year, and temporary agreement was made at that rate for a daily service from Cow Bay to Sydney, covering the three routes above-mentioned.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—Without tender?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said it was without tender. The arrangement being a temporary one no tenders were asked and no contract made, but it was a saving of one hundred dollars a year to the public, and the service was made daily instead of tri-weekly.

Hon. Mr. BOURINOT said it was an extraordinary proceeding on the part of the Government. He had been informed that last year the Government thought proper to establish a daily mail over the routes referred to, and without following the usual course, calling for tenders for the work, they took the contract away from the person who had been doing it to the satisfaction of everybody, and had given it to another party without tender or public notice. How could the Government justify themselves before the public on this matter. Was every contract with rail ways and other public works to be considered temporary? This was a system that the country would never submit to.

Hon. Mr. MILLER said that the Hon. Secretary of State had shown commendable zeal in placing information respecting the first two questions before the House, and he might also be able to give information respecting the third question, which involved a breach of the fundamental principles of parliamentary government, and the well established rules regulating the public service of the country. The honorable gentleman had admitted the arrangement was only a temporary one contrary to the law, and the Government, he hoped, would be able to justify it. He hoped they would also be in a position to ask for tenders and put that contract on a legal basis. The principle involved was a serious one, and, unfortunately, in this case there was a feeling in the Island of Cape Breton that this was a corrupt political job.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said his honorable friend could hardly charge the Government with corruption in this matter, as it was not only a saving to the country, but a better service was secured. If one man could do it for \$900, it might be

possible to discover another that could do it for \$850. The experiment, he fancied, was one very often tried in the Postoffice Department. He assumed the former contracts were given out by tender. He might, or might not, be correct in saying so; but at all events there was patent evidence that under the present arrangement they were getting three times as large a service for one hundred dollars less money.

Hon. Mr. MILLER said, that even admitting what his honorable friend had said to be true, he did not think it was any justification for departing from the mode prescribed by law. He would not undertake to say for what reason the present mail carrier undertook to do the service cheaper than the others, but it was known that the favored party was a political friend of the representative of that district, who was a supporter of the Government. In that part of the country it was looked upon as a piece of political favoritism at the expense of an opponent.

The motion carried.

THE STEEL RAILS.

Hon. Mr. READ moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor-General, praying that His Excellency will cause to be laid before this House a statement showing the use which has been made, during the year 1876, of any portion of the steel rails purchased by the Government in the years 1874 and 1875. He said it was within the recollection of this House and the country at large that a certain quantity of steel rails were purchased by the Government in the years 1874-75, and the public mind was at the time considerably agitated as to the necessity of that purchase, and now, more particularly as to what had become of them. It appeared to him that the contract system had been entirely done away with.

The motion carried.

HUDSON BAY COMPANY'S LANDS.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor-General, praying that His Excellency will cause to be laid before this House, a copy of all correspondence that has taken place between the Government and the Hudson Bay Company in reference to the purchase of the lands of the Company by the Government in Manitoba, District of Keewatin and the North West Territory. At the last annual meeting of the Hudson Bay Company, held in London, reference was made to correspondence which had taken place between the representatives of the Company and the Dominion Government with respect to the purchase of the