

salary for the three years previous was something over \$1,000 a year. I am told that in a course of a few days after he was superannuated, he applied for and got a situation in one of the insurance companies in Hamilton, where his salary was \$1,000 a year. He was quite able to attend to his duty as an agent of that Insurance Company, but he was not able, apparently, to attend to his duties as a clerk in Hamilton Post Office. Now, that matter has been discussed a good deal in the city of Hamilton, it has become a scandal there, and I think it is high time that notice should be brought to the Government of the state of the case. This gentleman is, to all intents and purposes, enjoying as good health as men ordinarily. I have the pleasure of seeing him every day when I am at home, and he attends to his duties religiously and is quite able of attending to them properly. While receiving \$1,000 salary he is at the same time a pensioner of this Dominion for a sum equal to 50 per cent. of that besides. I move for these papers with the view of showing that, in the first place, as I am told, the superannuation was granted on the representation made to the Government of the day, by gentlemen who really must have known the state the man was in. He was not in the state represented to the Government and which induced the Government to superannuate him. I, therefore, hope the Government will bring down the papers, and will, if Mr. Eager is able to attend to his duties, ask him to go back into the Post Office.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. I cannot charge my memory with the facts relating to Mr. Eager's superannuation, although I think the papers will show that the late Government acted in this matter upon medical certificates, showing Mr. Eager to have been apparently in a very bad state of health before he was superannuated. But if the facts be as represented, and as I have no doubt the hon. member believes, the Government, if I recollect aright, under the terms of the Superannuation Act, have it in their power to remedy any wrong that may have been committed; because I think they can require Mr. Eager to resume service at any time, either in the Department from which he was superannuated, or any other Department of the Government.

Motion agreed to.

RAILWAY TRAFFIC.

Mr. MILLS, in moving for a return showing the number of passengers who travelled on each of the railways of Canada for the year 1880; the number who might have been carried, had the accommodation afforded been fully occupied; the number of tons of freight carried; the number of tons which might have been carried with existing rolling stock, said: The reason I make this motion is to ascertain to what extent the rolling stock of the railway companies in the country would be available for increased travel and traffic, and to what extent the increased travel and traffic would be accommodated. From information afforded by the different railway companies in England and Scotland, we know that a diminution of charges is accompanied by a corresponding increase of travel and traffic—that, in fact, the rule which has been found to hold good in regard to the Post Office Department holds equally good in regard to these railways. I have no doubt that the same rule would prevail in this country, and that the railway companies would actually lose nothing by a change. The information collected by Mr. Galt and others who have given special attention to this subject in England shows that a diminution of charges has not affected dividends, as the companies would not apply a rule that would be disadvantageous to themselves and the public, and my own impression is that a very considerable diminution in railway charges might be made in this country without ultimately impairing the dividends

which the companies are able to declare. On the contrary, I think it would in the end effect an increase in the dividends, as well as a very great advantage to the country. With the object of obtaining information on this point, I put the motion in your hands.

Mr. PLUMB. I differ considerably from the hon. gentleman in his views about railways. I am not aware that the railway companies in this country are paying such dividends on their capital stock that they could very well afford to reduce their charges. It is news to me that any railway company in Canada is paying a dividend on its stock at all, and I cannot see how any railway company can make a return of the possible business they might have done, or the number of tons of freight, or the number of passengers they might have carried under possible contingencies I regret to see, as I think I have seen, a disposition to attack the corporate interests of Canada. I regret to see it because I believe capital is exceedingly timid, and anything that looks like a disposition to meddle unduly with vested interests will alarm capitalists, whereas we ought in every possible way to show capital that it is secure in coming here, and taking up our projects for the improvement of the country, especially by means of railways. The whole history of railway investment in Canada has been one of disaster. It is true it has been urged that there have been in many cases imprudencies in the letting of contracts, and losses in the capital that ought not to occur. But there are enterprises in which there are no such losses. I do not think anyone can pretend that the Great Western Railway, or many of the railways incorporated by the Ontario Government, have squandered their capital. But I have failed to see any of them pay a dividend. In fact, the history of railways in Canada from beginning to end is one of disaster, and I do not think it is desirable that the Government should interfere in the way suggested by my hon. friend; for this return amounts to nothing if it is not intended to lead to some sort of legislation. Up to the present we need not be guided by English precedents, but we can afford to let railways be governed, in their business by the same rule that governs other businesses. They will do business at the lowest rate they can afford, because they know, as well as my hon. friend that the lowest fares bring the most business. They are compelled to take rate for the purpose of meeting competition which would not otherwise be remunerative; but when a railway is there with its plant, business must be kept going at any price. I see great objection to this tendency to meddle in railway legislation, and to interfere with legitimate business carried on in a legitimate way. This is a proposition made which looks toward the undue hampering of capital. No railway can tell us what its possible amount of business will be under certain circumstances. My hon. friend may know of some mysterious method of getting at the information he seeks, but when got it will not be worth the paper it is written on. I could not allow such a motion to be made, accompanied by the remarks of my hon. friend, without entering my protest against it.

Mr. JONES. I can agree with a great deal that has been said by the hon. member for Niagara, but I do think that many of the railways in this country discriminate very unjustly between different points, perhaps not so much in charges for passage money as for freight. On this subject I will read a letter I received to-night from a clergyman of the Presbyterian Church in Manitoba, a gentleman whom I know very well, and who is a missionary out there. In this letter he points out the imposition practised on immigrants. The letter is as follows:—

"I promised to write you concerning the freights into the country, and have delayed so as to be able to give you figures—a friend was to send me a copy of the railway tariffs, from Montreal and points west to Winnipeg, but it has not reached me; at all events, let me just in a word point out some facts."