

Government have since offered \$100. I wrote telling him the offer, and he replied indignantly that he had lived thus far without the money, and if they could not give him something approaching the damage done he would lose the whole rather than accept that offer. That is the position of these four claims, and I desire the Premier to have them looked into and try to come to some arrangement with respect to them. With regard to the management of the Intercolonial Railway, I am not going to say anything about it just now. My views with respect to its management were so clearly laid before the House last year that I do not think it is worth while to occupy time in setting them forth now, particularly when such plain and frank statements have been made by the member from Prince Edward Island (Mr. Davies), the hon. member for St. John (Mr. Weldon), and the senior member for Halifax (Mr. Jones) and, therefore, I will defer any remarks till later.

Mr. McMULLEN. I notice in the Auditor General's accounts last year \$38,000 charged for snow sheds and snow fences. It is a matter of surprise to me that on a road which has been operated so long it should be necessary to invest such a large sum for the purpose of erecting snow sheds and snow fences. It will be remembered that the statement was made by the Government two years ago that the line was well protected as regards snow sheds and they had been erected whenever required, and it was then stated that the appropriation then made was for snow sheds to take the place of sheds worn out. Last year there was charged to capital account \$38,201 for snow sheds. Again, there is an item, heating and lighting cars, \$21,000. I cannot understand how such an item can be charged to capital account. \$24,000 was the appropriation, and \$21,000 has been charged to capital account. The manner in which the Intercolonial Railway is handled is a matter of serious consideration to the people. When we consider the statements made by the member for Queen's (Mr. Davies) that the people are paying \$2,500,000, between the amount we lose by operating the road and interest on the money invested in it, or about 50 cents per head for the entire population, and that from this expenditure we receive no return whatever, it is quite time the House should begin seriously to consider what is best to do with the line. No doubt, for political purposes, expenses have been made in all directions. No doubt expenses have been incurred only to better the condition of members sitting in this House, and money has been spent on building branches or lines which have been competitors to each other and which have run but a very short distance from each other. We will hear later something of the Oxford and New Glasgow line, but I will embrace the opportunity afforded in the Supplementary Estimates to deal with that whole question. When we consider all these facts, it is time the people should consider what course should be adopted in regard to this road. Over \$47,000,000 are now sunk in it, and yearly we are adding to the capital account. When the late Government were in power they closed the capital account of the Intercolonial Railway, but the present Government reopened it, and have added to it yearly items such as I have been speaking of, snow fences, heating and lighting cars and even law expenses. I contend it is quite clear that a sufficient number of cars are not furnished for those worn out during each year, and this is apparent from the report of the Minister of Railways. Of first class cars there are altogether 69. Not one new one was added to take the place of those worn out. Of second class cars there are 76. Only one was put on the road and charged to working expenses. Of conductors' vans there are 79, and only one new one was placed on the road last year and charged to expenses. Of box cars there were 1,635 and only twenty new ones were put on the line and charged to running expenses, and the average life of a box car is nothing like

Mr. MITCHELL.

that proportion. To the number of coal cars we have added 148. Here is an item which proves a matter of serious consequence, and that is the carriage of coal. We are quite willing, in order to assist those in love with the National Policy, to do everything possible to carry coal at reasonable rates; but when the Intercolonial Railway at the expense of the country is burdened with the carrying of coal in the interests of Springhill at an enormous loss, as is frankly admitted by the Chief Engineer of the department, it is high time to consider whether it would not be wise either to lease Springhill coal mine or make the Springhill company a present of the Intercolonial Railway if they agree to run it. It is quite clear to my mind, and I have listened to explanations during the last six years, that this is one of the Dominion's financial sinks of corruption and nothing else. It is on a par with Rideau Hall, and we shall have to have an investigation annually, for every year it is getting worse. In the interests of the people this House should closely investigate the expenditures connected with the road, and we should terminate the extravagance prevailing. I believe in some cases officials are employed and paid large salaries who, if traced up, would be found to be in many cases related to hon. gentlemen opposite. It is too bad to know that only one railway in the Dominion is owned by the Dominion, and that that line causes an annual loss of \$2,500,000. I heard the Minister of Finance state a short time ago the indebtedness of the Australian colonies, and he said their *per capita* indebtedness is far in excess of ours. He did not tell us they owned their own railways and that the Australian colonies drew from the operation of their lines over \$13,000,000 of clear profits a year after paying expenses, while we operate one line and have a deficit of nearly \$3,000,000 annually. The evidence presented to this House of the extravagant way in which matters are handled on the Intercolonial Railway, the constantly increasing expenditure on capital account for items which should be charged to working expenses, furnish proof that the road is worked in the interests of a certain clique who are virtually sapping the life out of the line, for the maintenance of which the people are responsible. It is time this expenditure was stopped, and from year to year it is getting worse. Every year some new recommendation is brought down for a large sum to purchase rolling stock or make terminal improvements or the construction of additional or branch lines. There is some particular constituency that is thought to be not quite safe. In order to make it all right some additional sum has got to be spent in order to build some branch lines. Year after year we are adding to the mileage and to an expenditure which is virtually buried and from which we do not receive one dollar in return. I say that it is time to put a stop to this, and as far as I am concerned I shall always be ready to raise my voice—I do not care what Government is in power—against the continually increasing expenditure which is an actual loss. There is not a man in this House who, if he were conducting his own private business, would conduct it in the way which we are managing the business of the country here. We admitted that at the time of Confederation it was necessary to build the road. It was considered as a Dominion line and a necessity, in order to give us an independent outlet to the seaboard, but the very moment that line was built we should have closed the capital account and never opened it. When the people of any sections of that country wanted to get branches built they should have done it in the same way that the people in the western part of Canada do it. Look at the Oxford and New Glasgow Railway which has cost the country \$1,600,000 for the purpose of accommodating three counties, because those counties are represented in this House by strong supporters of the Government. I notice that there is a considerable amount yet to be spent in order