

the cost of direct relief to single homeless unemployed persons.

Administration of relief to those in need in a country such as Canada, whose constitution is a federal and not a legislative union, presents very many difficulties. Difficulties from other angles are encountered by the provinces and the municipalities, but it is gratifying to note that the expenses of providing for those in want have been rapidly decreasing, and that the amount spent by the dominion for relief purposes during the fiscal year 1931-32 amounted to the rather alarming figure of \$41,500,000, and this figure may yet reach \$45,600,000 if commitments which have been made regarding works are fulfilled. During the present fiscal year, by reason of the change of policy which took place after the conference with the provincial representatives in April last, and by reason of the better organization which resulted from experience obtained by municipalities and provinces during the two previous years' administration, we anticipate that the total federal expenditure for relief purposes will not exceed \$25,000,000, and will probably be less. The total to date of accounts paid and of credits against advances amounts to \$11,207,874.72. But, as previously explained, accounts are usually slow in reaching Ottawa, and this probably only represents expenditures up to a month or two ago.

I am firmly of the belief, and I believe the people of this country are steadily growing to believe, that the individual himself is learning that he must not rely too much upon the state; that in a country such as we have, individuals must be individualists, and take advantage of the opportunities that are theirs. I am well aware that for many reasons it is difficult for men engaged in certain vocations, who have their homes established in the urban centres, to take advantage of the opportunities that a great country like Canada affords. But I am confident, having regard to the experience in the administration of relief to the needy during the past twelve months, that the individual is becoming increasingly active to take advantage of such opportunities as there are to make himself self-sustaining. I sometimes wonder if one can draw the line between the responsibility of the state and the responsibility of the individual. Some people advocate destroying individualism, turning everything into system. They advocate mass men rather than individual men. I am not prepared to subscribe to that doctrine. And while in certain parts of Canada to-day things are not at all normal as far as the life of the Canadian people is concerned, and their ability to earn money, yet in many parts of Canada the business of the country is

[Mr. Gordon.]

advancing—I could name parts of Canada where it is—and I am confident that the future holds for the people of this country the promise of better times and the opportunity to sustain themselves. Certainly when you find the direct relief to those who are needy and are practically indigent falling from \$46,000,000 down to less than \$25,000,000, even though the number receiving relief for the varying periods has increased, it is a hopeful sign which I think will be gratifying to the taxpayers of the country, notwithstanding that it may be said that the reduction is due largely to better organization, because no province and no municipality in the dominion, at the outset in 1930, was equipped or organized to take care of the situation which was then upon us. But each succeeding month I believe is teaching the lesson of economy with respect to the administration of the moneys which are being subscribed by the taxpayers to take care of their less fortunate fellow citizens, and I have myself a confident belief that with the gradual turn towards other vocations than those which have afforded a certain sense of security to our people in the past, and better business conditions, it will not be too long delayed when the granting of direct relief to our citizens will disappear.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: May I ask the number now on unemployment relief in Canada?

Mr. GORDON: The last month for which I have any return is January. I have the total number of men, women and children receiving relief, including all those who in normal times are given relief, because we can all feel assured that all these people are receiving relief, and that number,—it is for varying periods—is 1,357,562. That includes all those classes for varying periods of time. It is represented by 252,000 heads of families.

Mr. POULIOT: Does that include all unemployed?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All such questions can be properly asked in committee.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Leader of the Opposition): I am pleased to see that in one particular at least the protests which in previous sessions have been made from this side of the house have had some effect. I must commend the minister for having brought in his proposed legislation at least before the end of the fiscal year, thereby affording the house an opportunity of discussing, at greater length than has been possible in any previous session of