

month, he would say "Yes" again. But if you ask a man if he would rather have \$20 than nothing, I think he would take the \$20.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: The minister does not see his way clear to assume a larger proportion of the cost, and possibly that is asking too much off-hand. It does seem, however, from the discussions which have taken place in this House that there is a very general disposition to advance the proportion, to be granted by the Dominion government. I think it would not be too much for us to ask the minister to allow this particular clause to stand in order to give the cabinet a chance to reconsider it, because we are all anxious that an effective old age pension scheme should be placed on the statute books. I do not want to reiterate what I said the other day with regard to this matter, but the minister has just suggested that some of the provinces would come in anyway, although they would rather have a larger contribution from the federal government. I recall a conversation which I had some time ago with a very prominent Liberal of Nova Scotia, a gentleman who was formerly a member of this House, and he was very keenly interested in the success of the Liberal measures presented to the House. He told me that if only 50 per cent were given by the federal authorities it would mean that his province could not possibly take up the measure, and I have had that situation presented to me by people from different parts of the country. Under these circumstances it does not seem unreasonable that we should ask for conditions which would ensure this becoming a successful measure. As I said the other day, the circumstances connected with this bill have materially altered since it was presented a year ago. The Conservative party is committed to the old age pension idea, and has promised to endorse this bill if it cannot get something better, while the other sections of the House feel the same way. Looked at from the standpoint of getting the bill through this House, therefore, the government is perfectly safe. While it may be technically correct that an amendment such as was offered may not be acceptable, there should be some way by which the House could give expression to its desire to increase an amount of this character, or at least to the idea that it would be well for the government to do so. That appears to be an impossibility and it only remains to us to urge upon the government that the matter be reconsidered.

Not only have conditions altered in this House, but they have altered in the country as well; when the government introduced the

[Mr. Heenan.]

measure twelve months ago no one knew how it would be received. It was received with greater approval than anyone could have anticipated and, as has been said again and again, it was one of the main planks in the platforms as put forward in the hustings by both old political parties. Undoubtedly the public is ready for it. As to the Senate, if they are going to throw out a 75 per cent bill they will undoubtedly throw out a 50 per cent bill also. I do not think the percentage is the trouble; there was nothing to indicate that that was the fact last year, in fact as I recall the debate in the Senate it was the other way about, and many hon. gentlemen thought it should be a federal measure. I am not at all sure that it might not meet with a better reception from the Senate if the figure were made higher. So I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, as the only possible thing left for us to do in the circumstances, that this clause be allowed to stand until the government has a final chance to reconsider the matter in the light of the promised support from all sides of the House.

Mr. CANTLEY: It perhaps is needless for me to say that in company with practically all other members of this House I am in favour of an old age pension scheme for Canada, but I am in favour of a federal scheme, which I claim to be the only fair and honest way of dealing with this question. The hon. member for Queens-Lunenburg (Mr. Ernst) has pointed out that if this scheme now before the House were adopted it would mean a contribution by the province of Nova Scotia of probably \$1,500,000. That may be excessive, but I am quite certain that the contribution would exceed \$1,000,000 at least, and we in Nova Scotia are not in a position to-day to make that expenditure in conjunction with the federal government.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): Are you not providing for these people now?

Mr. CANTLEY: We are providing now for several classes of our people in ways which cannot be abruptly discontinued if at all. We have homes of different kinds in practically every county, built at a very considerable expense, and in addition we have hospitals for the treatment of tuberculosis and other humanitarian institutions which are certainly not behind those of any other province in Canada. These impose burdens which are as great as we can bear, and we cannot add to them by \$1,000,000 or \$1,250,000 yearly, particularly in view of our last year's deficit of practically \$1,000,000.