

divide the city into several stations, and three or four more post offices will probably be required in the city. Applications are now in for three more. So that even if rural postal delivery comes, post offices will be required. We cannot have delivery without some place for sorting and distributing the mails. Therefore I think the motion of the hon. member for East York is not one that should receive the sanction of the House.

Mr. SCHELL. This discussion seems to have gone along the line of post offices, whereas in the case of Bowmanville as well as the case of Alexandria the accommodation for the customs office has also to be taken into account. I understand from the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Beith) that the revenue derived at Bowmanville from the post office and the customs office together amounts to about \$15,000 a year. So far as the town of Alexandria is concerned, I may mention that when our importations come in from the United States, we never know whether they come by way of Smith's Falls, Cornwall, or Montreal. Sometimes for weeks and months we are unable to get our customs returns. So that this expenditure is not alone for post office purposes, but is also for the convenience of the public in the matter of a custom office.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. I do not think my hon. friend for East York is in earnest in making this motion.

Mr. MACLEAN. I beg pardon. I never was more in earnest in my life.

Mr. FRASER. That may prove nothing.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. The hon. member may be right; but if he wishes to get a fair expression of opinion from this House in regard to the policy of rural delivery, he has taken the very course which any one would take who was opposed to it; because under the present circumstances members will be compelled to vote against the motion no matter what their view may be. The hon. gentleman is experienced enough in the House to know that that must be the result of his action at the present time.

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). I just rise to correct a statement which was made in regard to the Bowmanville post office. My recollection is most distinct that it was made an issue in the last election. Unless my hon. friend from West Durham was safely caged away or knew nothing of what was going on, I can assure him that he must have known that the Bowmanville post office was used throughout the length and breadth of that town for one night at all events before his election.

Mr. BENNETT. It was Cap. Sullivan the night before.

Mr. MACLEAN. There may be a right way of proceeding with this matter, and

there may be a wrong way; but I am taking advantage of the present situation to ask the representatives of the people in this House to-night to put themselves on record as against this expenditure of public money, which is not in the public interest, but, so far as we can gather, is for the payment of political claims. I am quite within my right in proposing to divide the House on this great issue. There is no question before the people to-day that interests them so much as the question of rural postal delivery. The farmers are awake to it, and I am an old enough member of the House to seize this opportunity to bring it before the people, and I intend to put hon. gentlemen on record on the question. I intend to make them say whether they are in favour of these extravagant expenditures for post offices, or whether, like me, they prefer to see the public money put into that experiment of rural postal delivery. Have they seen what it amounts to in the United States to-day? The expenditure is away up in the millions; but in the benefits it confers on the people, it has completely changed life in the rural districts of the United States. These postal routes are being established in that country for \$500 apiece on the average. Look how we are expending public money for the delivery of the mails in this country. I know routes which are costing \$500 or \$600 for a poor service for four or five post offices, when, if the same money were spent on the modern plan, it would give the people ten times the accommodation. There is only one way to bring these questions before the public, and hon. gentlemen are up against a great issue. It may be a bolt from the blue, but it is in the right direction, and I ask them to say whether they are in favour of rural delivery or in favour of spending public money on these country post offices.

Hon. Mr. ROSS (Victoria, N.S.) This is a very important question, and it has assumed a very curious shape. But speaking seriously, if you want a successful rural delivery, you must have a proper place from which that delivery can take place. You must have modern post offices from which rural delivery may take place, and when the hon. member is advocating rural delivery he is at the same time going against it when he does not advocate the building of proper post offices from which this delivery may be made.

Mr. BOYD. As seconder of the resolution of the hon. member for East York (Mr. Maclean), I wish to say that I am heartily in accord with his proposition to establish rural mail delivery. There is no question to-day which is engaging the attention of our farmers to a greater extent. It is only those who have considerable intercourse with the farmers and who go among them who can understand the great benefits that such a delivery would confer on our agricul-