

use and benefit. I would almost have a suspicion that there were agencies at work with a view to placing that railway in such a false position before the people of Canada that the people would say: Oh, give us any relief; let us get rid of it, if it is to be operated in that way; if it is to show such results, any alternative is better than the present condition of things. I would hope that there is no one actuated by such a motive, but the result is just as true nevertheless, because it is tending in that direction. Men who believe that the railway should continue to be operated as part of a government system of railways in Canada, are shaken in their faith by reason of the methods which prevail in regard to the rolling stock and the deterioration of the road-bed. These are matters of serious concern which affect more than the members of this House. The people of Canada, the people of eastern Canada in particular, who are more familiar with the conditions that prevail, have their eyes turned towards the Minister of Railways and towards the government that is responsible for those conditions. Now, I will not refer to many details to which I might make reference. I am simply bringing the conditions to the notice of the minister, in the hope that he will grapple with them. I believe that a change of the personnel of the managing board would not in any sense improve the conditions, because I believe that such a method of management is bound to fail, and miserably fail. I think that one strong man, clothed with the power and authority that these men collectively have, would bring about very much better results than the continuance of any board. My views may not prevail with the minister; he may not attach much importance to what I am saying; but I want to tell him that the people share these views, that the best railway minds on the Intercolonial railway also share them, and that there must be a remedy. I hope that remedy will be applied in the near future. In the meantime, to recapitulate, I think my hon. friend should take us into his confidence as to what he projects in connection with the branch lines, with respect to the extent to which he proposes to operate a car-ferry service, with respect to the methods of administration on the railway, with respect to the running rights and powers which he contemplates or has under consideration to grant to the several railways which are now seeking such rights from the department over which he presides. To these and many other questions I invite his serious consideration, and if he will take us into his confidence with respect to them, he will enable us the more easily to consider his estimates. We need not ask him so many questions with respect to details, because, after all,

principles must prevail. He is responsible for the policy to be pursued by the board of management, and I think we are entitled to a statement from him, full, ample and complete, with respect to the whole Intercolonial railway and the policy which he has decided upon or has in mind in relation thereto.

Mr. COCHRANE. Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat was not present when this matter was discussed pretty fully on the first occasion that I took up my estimates. I stated then that the promises made by the Premier during the late campaign in regard to taking over the branch lines would be carried out.

I do not propose to criticise the board of management, or announce a policy in regard to them. That is a matter I have not been able to take up yet, and I think it would come with very bad taste from me to criticise my predecessor. I have only been in office a few months and have not yet been over the Intercolonial system, except to Halifax and back on a very hurried trip. The board of management may be all that the hon. gentleman says they are, and there may be lots of opportunities to improve that board. It may be that one man only will be better than a board of five members. This is a matter that will have to be taken up and considered on its merits. In reference to the car-ferry all I can say is that I have appointed a gentleman from Queen's College to go down and study the conditions on the spot, and he has been at work for some time. My reason for selecting such a man was that he would have no local bias at all, but would take the question up on its merits and recommend the proper place to locate the ferry, the construction of the best kind of docks and ferries and so forth. The question of running rights has not yet been considered at all. The only corporation that has applied for running rights is the Canadian Pacific railway and their application was in regard to that portion of the Intercolonial between St. John and Halifax. This is a matter that will also receive the attention of the government as soon as the session is over. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Emmer-son) also spoke about special conductors. I have put on some special conductors for the collecting of tickets on one section of the railway.

Mr. EMMERSON. Are these officers to be taken from the Audit office as stated in the press?

Mr. COCHRANE. I do not know where they have been taken from. I left the selection to the auditor of the department and he made the recommendations to me when I assumed charge of the department. I want to make a trial of the system in order