

forth. Therefore, they say, and very properly: While we are prepared to absorb a loss of \$2 or \$2.25 a ton if the railway will reduce its rate, we do not feel we ought to go all the way and take care of this charity proposition, because, Mr. Speaker, that is what it is; it is a charity proposition. All we are asking the people of Canada for is this: Eight or ten or fifteen thousand dollars. Why, this House only a short time ago entered into an arrangement, over the heads of the Railway Commission altogether, whereby carrying charges on certain products in this country were reduced by \$20,000,000, and we in Nova Scotia cannot get \$10,000 to keep our people in the eastern part of the province from starving.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that to appoint a royal commission to inquire into the major portion of the ills of the province of Nova Scotia and the Maritime provinces generally is simply an excellent way of sliding over the difficulties and putting the whole thing into a pigeon hole. It is just getting by a serious situation, instead of tackling the problem as it exists to-day man-fashion.

I had some doubts in my mind, having been away for ten years, as to what the feelings of the central provinces and the rest of Canada was towards the difficulties in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and towards the difficulties in the Maritime provinces, and I confess to you, Mr. Speaker, that I have been absolutely amazed, and delighted at the same time, to find the representatives of the people from the rest of Canada who sit on this side of the House not only willing to consider the problems of the Maritime provinces and of the west, but anxious to help in affording a remedy when a remedy is proposed along sound, businesslike, common sense lines; and so, whereas there might have been a necessity a couple of months ago to get some of the men from the central provinces to come down into the province of Nova Scotia to look into our problems and difficulties, I find that with the delegation we have here from the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, making their position clear in this House, there is not a man sitting on this side of the House who is not willing to give his attention and his earnest consideration and assistance towards the solution of our problems—and that is a very happy thing.

I was not very much concerned as to the question of leadership until I began to examine into the situation. I may say frankly I am here as a supporter of the right hon. the leader of the opposition, not because I am so keen about the results that have accrued to the

[Mr. Foster.]

Maritime provinces by virtue of confederation, for in my humble judgment we have contributed, and are still contributing year after year, far more than we have received; but how can you have a great united Canada unless there is a disposition to bear each others burdens. The problem is to find out how much of a contribution is necessary. Are we contributing more than our proper share? Is a royal commission going to find that out? Why, that is already on the records of Hansard here, and hon. gentlemen opposite have helped to put it there in the last fifteen or twenty years. We need no royal commission for that purpose, for the House is perfectly aware of these contributions and receipts. I am a follower of the right hon. leader of the opposition because he came to Nova Scotia and instead of asking, "What are your difficulties here, what are the Maritime rights so-called?" he recognized our problems, and went as far as he could to commit the party which he led to a sane solution of our problems, or some of them at least; and so I had no alternative but to support him. I was amazed in my home town of Kentville to find the Prime Minister of this country, if he gets a seat, making the statements that he did, surrounded as he was on that occasion by men I have known, some of them, for a considerable number of years. And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, they are not without ability; but they did not seem to be able to impress upon the Prime Minister what the problems of the Maritime provinces were, notwithstanding the fact that every supporter of the Right Hon. Mr. Mackenzie King, after he had left the Maritime provinces, was at great pains to tell the people how the solid sixteen from Nova Scotia session after session at every opportune time had placed before parliament and the Prime Minister the rights of the Maritime provinces. I was driven to the conclusion that the Prime Minister, the leader of the Liberal party, must have been a thick-headed fellow indeed, but I confess to you I think that was an erroneous conclusion. I do not know him very well, but he must have had some ability to get to be leader of the great Liberal party, or what is left of it; nevertheless I was amazed that he should appear in the Maritime provinces and make the statements that he did. A great many of the men from Nova Scotia in the solid sixteen were elected in 1921 on the platform of a redress of the grievances of the province of Nova Scotia; there is no question about that; and seeing that the Liberal party had only a majority of one in this House, any one of the solid sixteen, or any two of them, had more power in this House for bringing about