

for the products of the west to Europe and for the products of Europe to the middle west; then many of the objections which prevail in the east would be entirely removed. The attitude of the east is not one of hostility to the west. We know that our prosperity, such as it is, depends to a certain extent upon the west being prosperous, and any new route that may be opened, any improved conditions of transportation that may be found which will open up the west and give the people there swifter and cheaper transportation to the markets of the world, will, I am sure, receive a large measure of approval in the eastern sections of this country.

With regard to the ordinary business of parliament, the same bills will be introduced which were discussed last year, and with regard to these I have no comment to make at present. Regarding one other matter which is not mentioned, but which is of very considerable interest to a large proportion of the electorate, namely, the constitutionality of the Alberta Act of 1905 which is to be referred to the courts for a clear decision, all I suggest is that when that reference is made it should be made as comprehensive as possible so as not only to elicit a judicial determination of the meaning and intent of the clauses of the Alberta Act of 1905 dealing with school funds, but also to secure a definite opinion from the courts as to the meaning and intent of the Dominion Lands Act of 1908, and as to how far the enactment of that measure, after the passage of the Alberta Act of 1905, affected the powers of the governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan in respect of the distribution of those school funds. I do not pretend to represent a large body of opinion in this country, but so far as I am acquainted with the opinion which does prevail the desire of those who are most interested in the Alberta school question is this, and this only, that under the guise of transferring natural resources of Alberta to the Alberta government, no new rights should be created either for the Protestant minority or for the Catholic minority. They are equally anxious that the old rights which are assured to them by particular clauses of the Alberta Act of 1905, and by similar clauses in the Saskatchewan Act of 1905, should not be abrogated nor diminished indirectly under the guise of transferring the natural resources to either of those provinces. These minorities wish to remain as they are and they are quite willing that the courts should determine what, if any, minority rights subsist to-day, with a view to having those rights preserved and not increased, and with

this further object in view, that if the existing minority rights are to be prejudiced or limited or abrogated, it should be done by direct action on the part of parliament so that there may be a full and clear discussion as to the merits of the case.

There is also in the speech from the throne a reference to the report of the so called Duncan commission. I do not intend to enter at length upon any discussion of that report. I regard it as a mere incident in the assertion by the maritime provinces of certain rights and interests which they think and believe appertain to them. The real problem, the real matter for discussion, will come up when the legislation promised by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) is brought down for consideration in this House. Then and then only, when that legislation is laid before the House, may we determine whether the agitation leading to and the work of the Duncan commission have been successful or not. For my own part, therefore, I reserve decision until the proper measures are brought down. But having been born and bred in one of those provinces by the sea I do believe that all parties in this House including, I hope, some hon. gentlemen who are living now in western Canada and who received their education and training in the maritimes, will consider with sympathetic minds whether that irritating sore which does exist in those provinces should not be healed, however great the price, if that price is within the reasonable limits of the competency of this parliament. I do not agree with some who think that the highest political destiny of the maritime provinces was not bound up with that of the other provinces of Canada. If I were again living there and the matter were to come up anew I would say to the people of the maritimes: "Your highest and best political destiny is to be worked out in association, and only in association, with the other provinces of this great country."

I came of a family whose modest way of living was equal to that of any other family in our surroundings, and I may say that the standard of living in that day was not as high as the standard of living in Nova Scotia at the present time. There is more of comfort and well-being in Nova Scotia to-day than there was in the sixties or seventies. But those provinces have not made an advance commensurate with the progress achieved by the other older provinces, and especially by the western provinces to which the maritimes gave so much, and for the development of which, I repeat—I hope the expression is not an unpleasant one—they