

should be dealt with as soon as possible, and that relief should be brought to those men who are getting such small salaries, who could not have foreseen that the cost of living was to be so high as it is now, and who, if they had thought there would be no decrease in the cost of living, would have made some further provision for their old age. I hope the minister will realize that there are a number of cases of hardship suffered by those poor men who have given their days of usefulness and activity to the road and who are not now able to work. They should be provided for in any case by the institution to which they have given the best part of their lives. It is too bad that a man who has given good service for twenty years or more to the Government, and who, under this scheme, has retired, should find himself in want and unable to supplement his means by any other kind of employment.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Does my hon. friend support a general superannuation scheme for Government employees to which they should contribute; or is this somewhat along the lines of a provident scheme?

Mr. McKENZIE: I would be in favour of anything suggested by the minister for those who are now able to contribute towards a fund of that kind. But what I am particularly directing my remarks to is the case of men who gave their days, during which they were able to work, to the service of the railway, and who were making, as they thought, sufficient provision for their old age, but who found that as the cost of living has risen in this country, that provision is not anything like sufficient for themselves and their families. Under such circumstances, this country whose employees they were, should not see them in want, and some steps should be taken to better their conditions.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR (Antigonish and Guysborough): I hope the minister will take that matter into consideration. Wages have increased largely in recent years. An employee on the Intercolonial railway gets a much higher wage now than he did ten or fifteen years ago, and consequently, the percentage that he pays is considerably more, because he pays into the fund one and one-half per cent of the wages that he receives. But the amount paid to the employees out of the fund has not been increased. The ordinary employee gets about \$20 a month as a retiring allow-

ance whereas with the increased cost of living the increase in the amount that he pays in month by month would seem to indicate that he should, when he retires from the railway, get a larger amount than he gets at the present time.

Another matter that I should like to draw to the attention of the minister is the administration of the Provident Fund. I have complaints from employees of the road that the administration is too stringent. I knew a man who had a right to participate in this Provident Fund, who had removed in his old age to British Columbia and who was requested to come back to Halifax in order to be examined by a doctor in that city before he could make his application to go on the Provident Fund. He had to take the journey all the way across the continent to be examined by the doctor in Halifax, as the officials would not consider his case at all unless he was examined by that particular physician. When he arrived in Halifax, he was unable to get in touch with the doctor in question, and so he got another prominent doctor to examine him and certify as to the condition of his health. He then went home to British Columbia, but the board would not consider the certificate of his doctor, because the man did not happen to be examined by the special doctor that they had appointed. Regulations of that kind are impossible to be carried out, and I would like the minister to take some interest in the matter and see if the regulations imposed upon employees by the people in charge of the fund are not too stringent.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: The regulations are administered by the employees themselves.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: Partly.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Wholly.

Mr. REID: There is a representative of the Government on the board administering the fund. Of course, the board, as a whole, would control the situation.

Mr. MICHAUD: Can a railway employee elect to bring his case before the Compensation Board of the province in which he works? In that case, can he avoid paying his monthly dues to the Provident Fund?

Mr. REID: I hardly understand the hon. member's question. All permanent employees of the railway are supposed to be members of the Provident Fund. Of course, if an accident should happen, the case of the employee should and would come before the Compensation Board in the