

Mr. EMMERSON. I am glad of that, for I would not wish to affect the nerves of my hon. friend. The other day my hon. friend from Victoria (Mr. Sam. Hughes) was anxious that large sums of money should be handed over to the imperial government for the benefit of imperial interests.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. When was that?

Mr. EMMERSON. In connection with the defences of Halifax.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. If the minister will be good enough to read 'Hansard,' he will not find anything there to support his statement.

Mr. EMMERSON. Well, I am only referring to my hon. friend in a very mild manner, and venturing the statement that he very worthily proposed that Canada should spend a large sum of money in connection with imperial defence.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. You do not put it the right way.

Mr. EMMERSON. It does not relate very much to the present discussion, but, at all events, I think he advocated the expenditure of a large sum of money for imperial interests, and I am just reminding him that if we are ever to build up a national trade in connection with our national ports, we must afford equal facilities at Halifax and St. John to those that are to be found in Portland and Boston. It is no use for us beginning to launch out on imperial ideas until we are content to improve the national interests of Canada, and I conceive one of the most important national interests of Canada is the advancement of its export and import trade via Canadian seaports at all seasons of the year.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. As far as concerns one matter which the minister has mentioned, namely the acquisition of the land south of the station and along the western side of Water street, I advocated the acquisition of that land three or four years ago and on more than one occasion since. I still think it is desirable to acquire it, and while I fully realize that men who have property which is likely to be taken by the government are apt sometimes to put a very high figure upon it, nevertheless the government can always acquire property at a fair valuation by means of expropriation. There is something to be said on behalf of these men on Water street so far as the price of their property is concerned, because, as I pointed out to the committee some two or three years ago, that property has been very seriously depreciated by reason of the fact that the Intercolonial Railway tracks run along the east side of Water street; the width of the street has been seriously diminished and business formerly done on that street has been transferred to other parts of the city.

With regard to the general proposition of the minister, I sincerely hope that his expect-

Mr. COCHRANE.

ations in regard to traffic may be realized. I gather that these expectations are very largely based on the hope of traffic to be gained by means of some arrangement with the Grand Trunk Railway, but in view of the proceedings which are now in progress for alleged violation of an arrangement made some six or seven years ago and in view of what I understand to be the pronounced attitude of officials of that road as to their duty in connection with those agreements, it does not seem to me that the expectations of the department or of the country should be placed too high. The policy of the Grand Trunk Railway, as very frankly announced in those very arbitration proceedings, was to send their traffic to Portland where it pays them best to carry it. I do not know whether the minister's expectation is based on any definite agreement with the Grand Trunk which we have not seen or heard of, or whether it is based on something else, but certainly if it is based on anything else than an absolute and distinct agreement we cannot expect very much from it so far as Halifax is concerned. If it is based on as distinct an agreement as that to which I have referred, we may still in the future be confronted by the necessity of seeking the same remedy by arbitration or otherwise as we are now seeking.

Mr. WM. ROCHE. I desire to say a word in connection with this subject. For a number of years people owning property along the line in Halifax connecting the present passenger station with the deep water station have understood that the government intended to take over the properties; the properties have been allowed to dilapidate and to decrease in value in consequence of repairs not being made upon them. This would be a favourable juncture for buying these properties. If the railway does not take them over now the people who own them will begin to repair and consequently the value will be much enhanced. So far as I have heard from several proprietors along the line they are disposed to take moderate prices, and I would strongly support the intention of the government to purchase the property now and not to wait until it would be enhanced in value when it would be absolutely imperative to take more property.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I suppose this work is done partly by the department directly and partly by contract.

Mr. EMMERSON. It is being done almost entirely by contract.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Are there contracts now outstanding?

Mr. EMMERSON. The contracts are outstanding; the crib work, the wharf and the shed on the wharf, in fact, almost all the work is being done by contract that can possibly be done.