

sponsibility is lessened. If you had one man capable, efficient and qualified to hold the position of manager and to administer the railway you would minimize delay, and have decision of action. I know as a fact that during the last two or three years, owing to differences of opinion among the board, expenditures were not made when they should have been, and thousands of dollars have been lost owing to these delays. I am not seeking to in any way embarrass the minister, I am simply representing the views of many students of public affairs and of the people of the maritime provinces generally with the hope that the minister will consider these matters and take action towards remedying the grievances which exist in connection with the railway. I have nothing against the personnel of the management, I am speaking in an impersonal way and it is simply a question as to the administration of a railway by a board as contra-distinguished from the management of a railway by an administrator who would be responsible and feel keenly the responsibility of such a position. There would then be no division of responsibility, and no effort to evade individual responsibility and to shoulder it upon others. With a commission such as they have in Australia, the administration would be entirely removed from the department, and from the government, and the commission would be directly responsible to the parliament of Canada for the results produced. The minister should immediately take the people into his confidence as to the view which he holds in this regard.

There is a proposition to expend \$10,000,000 in the operation of the Intercolonial railway during the year ending March 31, 1913. My hon. friend must have in his mind certain improvements. There cannot be stagnation in connection with the Intercolonial railway any more than in connection with any other business, each year brings new responsibilities and new conditions and if that railway is to advance improvements must be constantly made. The minister must have consulted with his officials, and have determined upon at least some of these improvements. I see a newspaper rumour that it is proposed to introduce the system of having special men other than the conductors to collect the tickets on the trains. I do not as a rule attach much importance to these newspaper rumours, but many people do, and therefore, it is all the more necessary that, with respect to all these matters, he should disclose his intentions. He has stated that the surplus during the past year will be about \$700,000, and that during the preceding year it was some hundreds of thousands.

I know that under the operation of his predecessors in office under the management of the board they rolled up a surplus of \$600,000 or \$700,000, but I hold that this was done at the expense of the roadway, motive power and rolling stock. That is being done to-day, and, if the present methods are pursued, that will be the result in the coming year. No one can travel on the Intercolonial railway to-day without realizing that there is a deterioration in the character of the service, as compared with the service of some few years ago. My hon. friend the minister (Mr. Cochrane), has admitted his want of knowledge, his ignorance with respect to the conditions which prevail on the Intercolonial railway.

The minister cannot be supposed to know all about the Intercolonial railway, and I commend his candour for making the statement he does, but if he goes to any divisional point on the Intercolonial railway to-day, and especially at Moncton, he will find miles of disabled and disused cars. The cry goes up from the people in all parts of the country who have business relations with the Intercolonial railway, that they cannot get cars to enable them to carry on their business, and the answer is made, we cannot give you cars because we have sent them into American territory and they are holding them there. There is something in that excuse, but that must be taken into account, and whatever the difficulty cars should be supplied to the customers of the railway. We know well that on this continent when a car is shipped to a foreign road that road can utilize that car by paying demurrage and so, if there is a shortage of cars, that car may be transferred from road to road and not until after a long lapse of time does it get back to its own line. This condition is intensified by the fact that Canada is not exporting to the United States other than commodities of large bulk. It is the policy of the present government and it has, perhaps, been too much the policy of all preceding governments to curtail trade with the United States. But, we have to buy from the United States. We have to buy the anthracite coal, a great portion of which is transported by rail; we have to buy from the United States our raw cotton, and much of the raw material that is used in our manufacturing industries, but that is so infinitesimal as compared with what we are obliged to send to them, that the traffic does not even up and the railway that gets one of our cars cannot send it back loaded, the result being that if they need cars for their local traffic they utilize our cars and pay the per diem demurrage. The remedy for that is, of course to