

Mr. EMMERSON. My hon. friend (Mr. Cochrane) says 'no'. I am not talking about canals; I am talking about railways.

Mr. COCHRANE. I did not say what the hon. Minister attributed to me at all. I said 'oh'.

Mr. EMMERSON. If my hon. friend said: 'Oh,' I am not surprised, because it must be a matter of surprise, associated as he is and as he was in years gone by.

Mr. COCHRANE. We hear a good deal about that and you have not remedied it much.

Mr. EMMERSON. I say that has been remedied to a very great extent, and I want to call attention to this fact that in the last six months I have not been interfered with by members of parliament in the maritime provinces, or anywhere, in my efforts to establish reforms, in my efforts to cause retrenchment. It is a pretty difficult thing, I admit, to execute a policy of retrenchment. It is not easy in any direction, and it is particularly difficult where things have got a swing, where, during the years that have gone by, the people were led to expect this thing and that, and if these things do not come they are greatly disappointed. When people are brought to the very point of an absolute refusal, and are confronted with the absolute denial of their wishes, then you would naturally expect there would be a great deal of disappointment, a great deal of cavilling and criticism. But I am happy to say that in the efforts I have been endeavouring to put forth I have been loyally supported by hon. members sitting in this House and representing constituencies along the line of that railway. Now, I do not think that in my efforts to bring about these reforms I have had very much assistance from the railway corporations of the country. I see rumours daily in the newspaper press with respect to the sale of the Intercolonial, that certain sums have been offered, that the Minister of Railways in addition to the rebuilding of the shops at Moncton, is recommending to his colleagues and intending to invite consideration by parliament of a proposition to expend \$9,000,000 or \$9,500,000 on the Intercolonial Railway. With what object are these rumours set afloat? Are there any great railway systems in Canada to-day which are solicitous with respect to the Intercolonial? Why is it that they are excited with reference to the expenditures on the railway and as to its future? Have they eager eyes towards the Intercolonial? If so, it must be recognized that there is truth in the remark which I ventured to make last year, that the Intercolonial is the very best asset that Canada has. If they want the railway I could quite understand where such rumours come from. These obstacles do interfere with the proper management of the road. These rumours that are set afloat

with respect to the Intercolonial are calculated to embarrass, and do embarrass. I am not in a position to assert, and perhaps should not assert, that many of these rumours emanate from such a source. But I can say this, that if I were interested in a syndicate or company anxious to secure the Intercolonial, one of the things I would do would be to have coming out daily in the public press of the country, rumours such as we have seen in the public press during the past month.

It is said that we propose to sell the Intercolonial. I want to say that the government of Canada as now constituted, have no intention of disposing of the Intercolonial Railway, and they are determined to maintain it in its entirety as a portion of the transportation system of Canada, in its present status, but in so doing, they are equally determined that it shall be a paying asset of Canada, even though it was not located as a commercial railway and even though it was constructed with regard to the interests of the empire and to political exigencies. It was a military road; we have been endeavouring to make it a commercial, a business road. We are reasonably successful in that and I venture to say that the time is near at hand when the Intercolonial Railway will demonstrate itself to be not merely a surplus gathering work for the profit of the pockets of the people, but that in its book-keeping and in the excess of receipts over expenditure, it will show a balance on the right side of the account. I know how some hon. gentlemen would deplore that fact; I know that their ammunition would run out; but nevertheless it can be made a paying proposition, is being made a paying proposition and it will, as the months pass, prove itself to be a splendid paying proposition for the people of Canada. I want to say that while the earnings have not been banked, nor shown in book-keeping, that there have been earnings and that it has been of great benefit to Canada; that it has contributed to the solidarity of this confederation, that it has brought our peoples together, that it has promoted trade and intercommunication between the several provinces. I want to say in addition to all that, that it has now reached a point where it can lay up month by month, or where it will in the near future lay up month by month, money to its credit. It is all very well to say: 'Oh, no, you cannot do this, but if you put it into the hands of a commission then this could be done. Well, we have had commissions. There is one thing that is beyond dispute, that is that no government can ever hope to escape responsibility for the operation of a railway, or for its success, by putting that railway into the hands of a commission. I suppose hon. gentlemen, some of them at least, will refer to the Temiskaming Railway.

An hon. MEMBER. It is all right.