

try which depends entirely upon our own exertions and upon the adoption of a wise system of expenditure of public money in providing the means for taking advantage of the facilities which are offered to us. I was glad to see that the right hon. gentleman placed in the speech from the Throne the statement that the government intended to invite experts to look into this transportation question and to recommend to the people a system of transportation upon which large sums of money would be expended if necessary. Instead of that the right hon. gentleman and the government have taken the duty upon themselves. They have solved the whole transportation question for this country and they are going to impose a burden upon the people, because the day will come when there will not be that excess of revenue that there is at the present time, which will cramp the enterprise of this country and which will have the effect of imposing a useless expenditure of public money upon the people, thus retarding the development of the country, and preventing us from doing the best we can to make of this country a nation and the first nation on the North American continent. Our position, our resources and our facilities give us that advantage, and the people of the country are equal to it if properly directed.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (Hon. W. S. Fielding). I do not rise for the purpose of discussing the merits of the measure even for a single moment. From our point of view the time has not arrived when the members of this House on either side are in a position to satisfactorily and intelligently discuss the matter. The disadvantage of discussing it before there has been time to read and understand the Bill is already apparent. However, Sir, my only point in rising was to say a word with regard to the complaint of my hon. friend the leader of the opposition as to what he regarded as a discourtesy on the part of the Prime Minister. I think in that respect my hon. friend (Mr. Borden) is mistaken. I can assure him in all sincerity, that among the ministry generally, there is not one, and least of all the Prime Minister, who would desire to extend to the hon. gentleman anything but that courtesy to which he is entitled, both because of himself and the position he occupies. On a moment's reflection the hon. gentleman will see that it was not reasonable to suppose that the Prime Minister could take my hon. friend into his confidence and give him an advance copy of a measure which had not only not been submitted to the House generally, but which had not been submitted to a single member of this House outside of the ministry. I think my hon. friend (Mr. Borden) will realize that while there are occasions where a joint and common action is expected between the leaders on both sides to agree upon some action, yet it was too much to expect, that my hon. friend, in a matter which was notoriously

going to be one of controversy, could be taken into the confidence of the Prime Minister and shown an advance copy of the Bill.

As to the procedure, the Prime Minister on making his statement on the first reading of the Bill, I venture to submit was not only within his parliamentary rights, but he was taking a course which will commend itself to the judgment of the House and of the country. The Prime Minister might have given notice of some bald resolution which after all would not have presented the matter fully to the House. I am satisfied that the House and country will feel, that after the delay that has occurred, after the repeated questions that have been put to the Prime Minister as to the desirability of affording the House early information on this subject, the Prime Minister did what was right and proper when he availed himself of the very first opportunity, not merely to move some formal resolution, but from his place in the House to make a full and frank and thorough statement covering the whole question. At all events, I desire to give to my hon. friend the leader of the opposition, on the part of the Prime Minister and his colleagues, the assurance that nothing was further from our thoughts than that there should be any discourtesy to him.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I may be permitted to say that so far as I am concerned, I have usually received from the gentlemen who sit on the treasury benches, and particularly from the Prime Minister, every possible courtesy in connection with the business of the House. I do not think, however, that a controversial speech of the character that was made this afternoon, a speech which obviously required an answer on the spot, should be made without having acquainted me, as I might have been acquainted with the details of the measure at least an hour or two before hand. It is the practice as my hon. friend well knows, to furnish to the leader of the opposition a copy in advance of the speech from the Throne. I thought that under the present circumstances, the same course might have been adopted to-day, and therefore I made the remarks which I did make. But I accept with the utmost frankness the assurance of my hon. friend (Hon. Mr. Fielding) that no discourtesy was intended, and I may say that judging from the intercourse which I have had with the Prime Minister, anything of this kind was, so far as he is concerned, unintentional, even if I have a right to complain.

Mr. T. S. SPROULE (East Grey.) I rise to a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I wish to ascertain your ruling as to whether this Bill is in order, introduced as it has been. So far as I have yet heard we have had no intimation given to the House that it has received the assent of the Crown, nor has it been introduced in the usual way, by a resolu-