

people, either provincial or municipal, to any greater extent. They said they only asked that we should give them such grants as might seem appropriate, to enable them to discharge their duties. And the right hon. gentleman stands in his place and says that the Dominion government should appoint a commission to do that which the constitution says they may not do—to undertake functions which the provinces have the sole right to discharge.

Mr. DUFF: They could up to 99 per cent, could they not?

Mr. BENNETT: That is a question of grant.

Mr. DUFF: That is what the Minister of Finance said with respect to old age pensions.

Mr. BENNETT: That is a question of the extent to which assistance should be given, but it has nothing to do with administration. That is the very point I am endeavouring to make. Now, we have in some cases borne the cost to the extent of 100 per cent. That is the situation in some provinces where transient, homeless men have been a burden on communities to which they did not belong. In other cases, we have met the wishes of the provinces, their sense of responsibility, the machinery which they have put in motion, their inspection of conditions, their reports with respect thereto, their desire to assist in such manner as they thought best—all which, mark you, varies in the different provinces. It is not the same in one province as in another. We have given them such assistance as we thought proper under the provisions of the statute which we have administered. We have observed our constitutional obligations; we have discharged them generously, and we have met in a broad and general sense with the approval of the governments that have had to administer the law. We have not endeavoured to destroy the constitution nor to substitute a federal for a provincial administration. That we have not done and will not do. Nor have we endeavoured to set up a commission which might attempt to overawe the provinces or the municipalities, without authority. But we have asked the provinces to appoint commissions of men whom we would endeavour to assist in the discharge of their duties, and we have sent our own men to cooperate and assist, and in some instances to suggest what should be done. The expert opinion to which reference has been made has been called upon for suggestions, but not suggestions to us so much as to those charged with administration, to

assist those whose duty it was to discharge the obligations to which I have alluded. This we have done; and, what is more, we are prepared to leave it to the judgment of any judicial tribunal as to whether or not there is anything which we could do that we have not done.

There are at times complaints that we should pay larger sums of money. Well, we have no desire to undermine that high courage, that resourcefulness and ability of our citizens to emerge out of difficulties, strengthened by trials as by fire. We have no desire to remove those characteristics from our citizenship. We know what made this country great; we know what courage the pioneers had. We know how they met difficulties and triumphed, and we are endeavouring, with the advice and assistance of expert minds, which advice we pass on to the provinces, to induce them to have the citizens for whose wellbeing they are constitutionally responsible realize that an effort to better conditions, not to make the government do everything, is the true secret of their ultimate success in winning through. That is what we have been doing; and we have endeavoured at times to press upon some of the provincial administrations as far as possible, with the aid of expert assistance, suggestions that have come to us by reports that have been made for us by those well able to judge what action should be taken. We have endeavoured to learn something of the lessons of Great Britain; for remember that when the unemployment situation in Great Britain first became acute in the eighties, after the great industrial era was beginning to show some signs of slackening, they began to put up public works and to build roads, and the abuses that arose brought about a change in policy. Those who are interested can read in the library the story and realize its significance. Moreover, to construct public works to enable money to be paid without effort, is just as bad as the provinces endeavouring to provide relief for those who need it and cannot find anything to do. Let that not be forgotten. That was the history of Great Britain in that regard. Our policy has been to construct needed and useful undertakings, not undertakings that would be called into being as an excuse, but undertakings that would be required; and since they would be required we anticipated them, noticeably the work on the railways. But to anticipate them beyond a given point would be ruinous for the future and the present alike: for the present from the standpoint of financial resources, and for the future so far as the communities are concerned. That is the history of what transpired in connection with these matters.