

far as we could exercise influence, we thought there ought to be large regional divisions of the government railways for the purpose of effective administration. That was approved by the then general manager, the president of the road, and a statement was made publicly; but our statement, I will be frank enough to say, was absolutely beclouded and derided, and the people apparently did not believe it. It was, however, like all our other public pronouncements upon the platform, or of the platform of the party, absolutely true and sincere. The other side were prepared to go to any length, and a railway millennium would dawn if they got back into power. Well, they got power as regards the province of Nova Scotia, got it abundantly; they got it as regards the province of Prince Edward Island to the full extent that that province was capable of giving it. And you have heard the result to-day. They did not get it quite so largely in New Brunswick; but they did get many of the counties in which the old Intercolonial operates, and I will say that, in the city of Moncton and through the counties of Nova Scotia where that railway runs, the people had absolute faith and belief that a Liberal administration would give them a regional administration that would extend at least as far as the city of Montreal; that that portion of the railway would be managed from the common centre of the city of Moncton. Hon. members will recollect that originally the Intercolonial railway ran only to the city of Quebec; but that under the administration of the late Hon. Andrew G. Blair, when he was Minister of Railways, the Drummond County line was bought and the road was extended to the city of Montreal. Now, I am told to-day—my hon. friends will correct me if I am wrong—that this eastern region is to end at Riviere du Loup. I am sorry the Acting Minister of Railways (Mr. Graham) is not in his place, but I would like to know whether that statement is or is not correct. On the assumption that it is correct, I want to point out something which is of a good deal of importance to us in the Maritime provinces. If the bookkeeping of that railway system is to charge up against that particular region the overhead expenses of the general staff, that will be just one nail more in the coffin of the Maritime provincial railway administration. If you take a line from Halifax to Montreal, you can administer, as regards the supervisory portion of the management, with exactly the same number of men as if it were merely from Riviere du Loup to Halifax. But, if you are going to pay as many men for a smaller portion of the road, why necessarily the overhead is dis-

tributed over a smaller amount of receipts and a smaller mileage of the railway. We do not, after all, want something for nothing in the Maritime provinces, but we do want the most efficient use of that railway which was built for us as part of the compact of confederation. We do not want to put an unnecessary dollar of burden upon the country to do that, we want it to be as self-sustaining as it may be, having regard to the absolute necessities of the people in the Maritime provinces, and having regard to conditions of Canadian business as well. But we do not want to have any part of the system loaded up with more unnecessary expense than any other. I think that is a fair business proposition, and I trust that before the session ends, I shall hear from the Minister of Railways whether this statement is a correct one and if so, what reasons have prompted the Government to allow that limited distance to become a regional system.

Last year my hon. friend, whose absence from the House this year we all very much regret, the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Logan), wanted the Intercolonial railway to be restored to its former status. I do not know that I agree with that. I want to see the Intercolonial railway of the best possible benefit to the Maritime provinces, and I believe, whether in public hands or in private hands, it would be better that the whole 22,000 miles of railways should be under one and the same management. I believe that in that way we can get better results, and I believe the people of the Maritime provinces will have faith that under one system or the other we shall get better results by having unified management and control, provided that the local necessities of the railway situation are given fair and sympathetic consideration by that management, whatever it may be. My hon. friend from Cumberland, however was probably relying on the Speech from the Throne for that year, which said:

Conferences have been arranged between the railway authorities with respect to the reduction of rates upon basic commodities.

Last year the government had a programme until the Speech from the Throne was delivered. Then that programme, whatever it may have been, was put under the table and the whole matter was referred to a committee. On the 22nd of June that committee adopted a report which never saw the light in this chamber, and a portion of which was as follows:

Your committee therefore recommend a suspension of the Crownstest pass agreement for one year, from sixth July, 1922, with power to the Governor in Council to