

be called by any royal commission to furnish the commission with the facts. So I ask, why should we in this House support the proposal outlined in the Speech from the Throne for a royal commission to investigate conditions in the Maritime provinces? The only reason, Mr. Speaker, that I can see for asking support of such a proposal is this: The government has no legislation prepared on this point, they have nothing to submit to parliament, and having nothing to submit to parliament they can get over it for the time being by summoning to their aid a royal commission.

The other night in this House a member asked: "What are Maritime rights?" I submit that after the exhaustive speech of the member for Pictou (Mr. Cantley) in this House a day or two ago—a speech as replete with information as any speech on this subject delivered in this House—hon. members need have no doubt as to some of the things that were regarded in that portion of the Dominion as being Maritime rights. But I place them in order more or less in this way—

Mr. BEAUBIEN: Was I not right in asking the question, in order to obtain the information which I did obtain?

Mr. FOSTER. I think the hon. member for Provencher was quite right, and I greatly appreciate his interest in the matter. I did not mean in my reply—if my tone insinuated it—to say that he ought not to have asked the question. I am delighted to have the question asked, because I want hon. members to my left, in the other corner of the House, to be as much interested in the problems of the Maritimes as I am interested in the problems of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Having travelled over the western country for six or seven months at one time, and at various times for a number of years, and having intimate relations with that part of Canada, I desire to make the suggestion that at some time during this session, if it continues with hon. members opposite in power—although I have no hope my suggestion will be adopted—I would like to bring in a bill or take some other means whereby one or two hundred dollars of the people's money would be placed at the disposal of members of parliament for expenses in order that every member might travel over the Dominion from one end to the other. You will never get people together, as a rule, unless you have something to drive them. I say the greatest thing which we could do in the parliament of Canada would be to

get our members from one section of the country to go and visit the other sections, and find out what their problems are. We would thus place ourselves in a better position to examine these problems, and would have far less difference of opinion in regard to them.

The first and most important of the rights of the Maritimes is the restoration of the Intercolonial to its original status. I am not going to cover the ground traversed by the hon. member for Pictou further than to say this: I am not a constitutional lawyer or a lawyer of any kind. In fact I know some men in the legal profession who would be a lot better outside, and in this connection I once heard a story which I will repeat to the House. A minister stated that he was called in a dream and in the dream he saw the letters "G.P.C.," and he said that he knew he was called to preach because he interpreted the letters, "Go preach Christ". But one gentleman of common sense who listened to him said to him, "Oh you have misinterpreted those letters they meant, 'Go plant corn'". There are many men in the legal profession who should be planting corn. To us members of the province of Nova Scotia it does not make any particular difference how the situation of the Intercolonial railway came about, so far as the divorcement of the management and control from ourselves is concerned; it does not make very much difference to the Maritime provinces who put the Intercolonial into the amalgamation. The question is, who is going to bring it out, and how soon? We understand that the Act of 1919 was enabling legislation. In 1919 and 1920 the financial accounts of all those different railways, the Grand Trunk Pacific, the Intercolonial, the Canadian Northern and I think the Transcontinental, were all kept separate, but for the purposes of administration they were combined under one president, one board of managers and one set of officials. In the broader sense that may have been the proper thing to do at that time; but in the light of years a feeling was engendered amongst the people of the eastern provinces that it was a mistake to take the management of the railway away from the city of Moncton where it had been practically since confederation, of course under the supervision of the Minister of Railways; and a demand has arisen that the Intercolonial be restored to the Maritime provinces. We know perfectly well that the enabling legislation of 1919 provided a way whereby the Intercolonial could be put into the amalgamation, if that were thought desir-