

I have been a resident of that western country we have had very many questions which have occupied the attention of government, both federal and provincial. We have had the question of education, and it has not been without its difficulties, we have had the question of immigration, we have had the question of the administration of justice over so vast an area, we have had the question of the autonomy of the various provinces that go to make up that great country the last west, but in my opinion we have had no question which has caused so much anxiety or which has engaged the attention of the people more than this question of the transportation of the products which that country is capable of producing to the markets of the world. The transportation of our wheat, of our cattle, of our hogs and of many other of the products of that country, has, as I have said, engaged the attention of the very best statesmen and financiers. Yet to-day this House and the country will have to admit that the transportation question is not solved. It is still in a very unsatisfactory condition. As everybody knows, and as our experience shows, our annual blockades are continually increasing in intensity. Although the transportation question is not solved I am prepared to admit perhaps that the railways that already exist in the country have made a fair effort to meet the demands which have been made upon them. I may have something to say about that a little later. However, this fact absolutely faces us to-day that the transportation question is not solved. If we look in the light of the present day at the opposition that is manifested against any improvement in the transportation facilities of that country we wonder why there should be this opposition and ignorance existing. I am prepared to admit that those who have opposed the extension of the railway facilities in that country may have been honest in their opposition, but I believe that the opposition was one that came from those who were absolutely ignorant of the actual conditions. I do not refer to this matter for any political purpose at all because as far as anything I have to say this afternoon is concerned I hope it will be absolutely free from party politics. The opposition that was offered to the Canadian Pacific Railway when the railway first went into that country was put up by men like Mr. Blake and in fact by the Liberal party of that day and I believe it was made because of their ignorance of the actual condition of affairs. Let us look for a moment at the transportation facilities we have in the west. We have the Canadian Pacific Railway and I am not prepared to say to-day that that road has done all it should have done considering the very large amount of money it received from this country. Neither am I here to say that it has not made a fairly honest effort to meet the demands of transportation in that country.

Mr. SCHAFFNER.

As I said a few days ago, speaking on this question, two years ago the Canadian Pacific Railway and all other railways were up against an exceedingly hard proposition. With the storms and snow which existed in that country it was absolutely impossible for any railway company to meet the demands, and the agitation which has been going on for a long time against the railways reached its climax that year. So much for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Now, we have the Canadian Northern, and although some of our friends on the other side of the House have manifested a great deal of opposition to the Canadian Northern Railway, I do not know but what I am prepared to say to-day that this is the first railway that gave us competition. A great deal has been said against the Roblin government, but one of the best things that ever happened the Canadian Northwest was when the Roblin government made the contract they did with the Canadian Northern Railway. We know very well that other governments had been offered a million dollars for a ten cent rate from Winnipeg to Port Arthur and we know that this road has given us the competition, that it has given us a ten cent rate to Port Arthur without costing the country one farthing. We claim that this is a very great benefit to the country. We will soon have, and we cannot have too soon to please me, the Grand Trunk Pacific.

Whatever may be our opinions, political or otherwise, as to how that railroad should have been built, and while a great many feel to-day that a mistake has been made in the manner of its building and would prefer that the Intercolonial should be extended to the great lakes, still the fact is that the contracts are let for the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific, and I for one hope that in a very short time that road will be carrying our wheat and other products out of the country. Besides these three railroads I have mentioned, we have coming from the south the Great Northern, which has already tapped Manitoba at three places crossing the boundary line, and has gone so far north as Brandon, Portage la Prairie and into the town of Morden. The agriculturists and all classes of people in that country hail with delight the coming of these roads to the Territory, and why? Perhaps some of our people in the east who are engaged in industries in their own part of the country think that we in the west have all the transportation that we need. But the best way to convince the House and the country that such is not the case is to give an idea of the extent of the natural products which that country is capable of producing. We have often heard, and perhaps some members of the House may be tired of hearing of that great country and what its possibilities are, but I think it is generally admitted to-day that as Canada becomes a great nation its greatness will in no small