

mental road. We have always stood for an enlightened development in our transportation methods. It was not a question of having or not having one more road; it was a question whether a profligate bargain was being made or whether it was a wise undertaking on which the government were embarking. And I think the facts will prove, before we get through, that our side was right, and that the counter proposition of the hon. leader of the opposition was the correct policy and would have saved this country millions upon millions. It is well enough for these hon. gentlemen, to seek to evade responsibility for these figures now. But they deceived the people with these figures in the election of 1904. I used them on the platform in the presence of my opponent, Mr. Heyd, who did not deny that they were used in the House. I stated that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had given \$13,000,000 as the amount, and I asked my opponent whether he would stand by the statement. He said he would not, but that it would cost as well as he could judge \$81,000,000. He made a correct estimate according to his lights at that time, and I give him credit for that; but he never denied that these figures had been used, and that they were used to convince the people that the cost of this road to the country would be \$13,000,000. Of course, Sir Wilfrid Laurier did not make the statement that the road was going to be built for that amount, but that was what he said would be the cost to the country. Now, I think I have made myself fairly clear to the Minister of Finance. I would not wish to use these figures on the platform if I were afraid to use them in this House. If I am misrepresenting the Finance Minister in this or any other matter, I hope I am man enough to take it back and apologize, and that is what I am ready to do if the figures are not as I have given them. I would like to know how much of this \$13,000,000 has been spent in connection with that road so far. It would be more interesting to have that fact given us than the fact that it is not progressing as fast as was expected.

Then, we have a reference to the Quebec Bridge disaster. That goes to profit and loss account. I do not propose to lay the blame of that disaster upon any body, for we do not yet know who was responsible. The country deeply regrets the loss of life and destruction of property which resulted from this error of some body's making. I understand that the government of this country is on the bonds to the amount of \$4,800,000 to pay for the loss on that bridge, and I have heard it rumoured and have seen it stated in the press that the government has been asked to pay up. Sooner or later, there is little doubt, the country will have to pay that bill. The speech from the Throne says that we shall have to devise means for the completion of the bridge. We

Mr. COCKSHUTT.

thought we had already provided for the cost. About as much has been expended as this estimated cost of the Grand Trunk Pacific to the country, and now the structure has collapsed. And this collapse is but emblematic of the collapse which will take place with this government on many of its policies as well as the Quebec bridge.

The next matter mentioned is the Post Office. There is loud acclaim of the management of the Post Office and the revenue it has brought to this country. I stated last session in this House that I believed the Post Office was the most undermanned and underpaid service in the Dominion of Canada. I showed at that time that there were nearly 10,000 people working in the post office service at \$25 per annum, and 11,000 at not more than \$150 per annum, and they were furnishing bonds for good behaviour, providing a building in which to keep the post office as well as light, heat, &c. I stated that the service was a starved one throughout. Our leader (Mr. R. L. Borden) has told us of the breakdowns in the post office facilities in many parts of the west. And not only in the west, but in many parts of Ontario and the east the same want of facilities can be found. As to the boasted surplus of the Post Office Department, that might very well be expended in paying a living wage to those individuals who are carrying on the work and in improving the service, not only in the outlying parts of the Dominion, but in the towns and cities, for, even in the towns and cities, the service falls far short of what wise and economical administration would provide. I think that service should not show a surplus. If that surplus could not be spent otherwise, it could be devoted to establishing a system of rural mail delivery and in other improvements.

Now, I come to the proposed enlargement of the Railway Commission. This is taking a leaf out of the book of the leader of the opposition. I think it is a wise step, provided the appointments made are satisfactory, and that the matters adjudicated upon from time to time are settled and not carried over from one month to another and one season to another, as they have been in times past. I hail with delight the announcement that the Railway Commission, which, I think, on the whole a very useful body, is to be enlarged. I hope that the men appointed will be chosen for their fitness and not for their political services.

Now, we are promised an insurance measure. I pointed out to the Minister of Finance before dinner that, in my opinion, he had done an immense injustice to the insurance people of this country, an immense injustice to all concerned, including the policy-holders, of whom I happen to be one. I do not consider that my property in my insurance policies is as valuable as it was before the government made an attack upon the insurance companies. And, further, I